Jeanne M. Machado

early childhood

Experiences in Language Arts 11e

EARLY LITERACY

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Early Childhood Experiences in Language Arts 11e

EARLY LITERACY

Jeanne M. Machado
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Preface

Early Childhood Experiences in Language Arts: Early Literacy is a teacher-training text designed to help those working in the early childhood education field provide an opportunity-rich program full of interesting, appropriate, and developmental language arts activities that reflect current standards. It is both a practical "how-to" manual and a collection of resources that includes numerous classic, tried-and-true activities.

Because a comprehensive, dynamically planned early childhood language arts curriculum consists of four broad interrelated areas—speaking (oral), listening, writing, and reading—each is fully explored and described in separate chapters. Visual literacy is also covered, as it is closely tied to the other language arts areas, and because young children today have frequent interactions with visual technology.

The text recommends early childhood education students create, design, and prepare classroom activities and environments based on newborn through kindergarten-age children's assessed needs, interests, developmental level, and potential. Beginning teachers are urged to use their own unique teaching talents, skills, and creativity—along with their past memories of the enjoyed childhood language-related experiences—to help guide their instruction. It is hoped that the confidence and skills gained by readers will help to provide young children with enthusiastic, knowledgeable teacher-companions who enjoy and encourage children in their discovery of the language arts.

Organization and Content

Section 1

In Section 1, the first three chapters present a detailed account of language acquisition, young children's early communicative capacities, growth milestones, and age-level milestones (infancy through preschool), along with suggested professional techniques to promote each child's self-esteem and potential. In Chapter 1, the characteristics of attuned and sensitive caregiver behaviors have been highlighted to emphasize their significance. Infant and toddler chapters (Chapters 1 and 2) increase the reader's ability to both tailor and individualize his or her own actions, comments, and activity plans to suit the needs of diverse children. Educators become better equipped to identify child progress or suspected lags in language use and growth. Toddlers' physical development and concurrent mushrooming verbal skills appear in a predictable, yet individual, pattern. Chapter 3 provides the reader with an accurate portrait of preschoolers' emerging language and literacy accomplishments, and also covers other concurrently developing growth systems that affect language and literacy. These are physical, cognitive, perceptive, and socioemotional areas. Finding a typical or average preschooler may be an impossible task, as preschoolers, like adults, display infinite variety. The well-known and well-documented characteristics of the preschool-aged child are presented.

Section 2

Special attention is paid to second-language learners and children with special needs in Chapter 4, *Understanding Differences*. With the number of second-language learners and children with special needs continuing to grow, it has become more critical than ever for early childhood teachers to create language-rich environments and interact as enthusiastic, supportive, and observant companions and collaborators. Chapter 5 covers the basics of developing language arts programs based on identified goals, as well as assessment strategies, and includes information about children's literacy portfolios. Specific teaching strategies are addressed in Chapter 6, *Promoting Language and Literacy*, and Chapter 7, *Developing Listening Skills*, to aid a teacher's knowledge and practice of professional responses and interchanges in daily conversation and discussions. Tips and suggestions are designed to get the most "literacy-developing mileage" possible from daily happenings. Since listening well is a learned skill, Chapter 7 does not leave it to chance, but promotes the teacher's role as cultivator of each child's growing ability.

Section 3

Children's literature is introduced in Chapter 8 and begins with a brief history of picture book development and change over time. Readers are

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urged to discover new and older classics and skillfully share them with children in a way that increases each child's love of story and joy in acquiring new knowledge and skill. This chapter is extensive and alerts readers to the many types of books available and their appeal to young listeners. Text discussions include teacher techniques that build children's comprehension of stories and also their understanding of books' connection to writing (print), viewing, reading, and oral expression. During book readings, educators are directed to share their thinking aloud and to define new words to increase children's vocabulary, analysis, and problem solving abilities.

Chapters 9, 10, and 11 concentrate on developmentally appropriate vehicles to widen children's background and knowledge and experience in storytelling, poetry, and flannel board activities. Teacher skill in the presentation of these language arts subsections is recommended, and suggested stories, poems, and flannel board sets give beginning teachers an initial collection to immediately try out and enjoy with young children. The use of puppetry and classroom dramatization is also included in these chapters.

Section 4

In order to increase children's ability to express their ideas and dramatize real life or fantasy experience, Chapter 12 discusses an early childhood educator's promotion of children's oral expression and symbolic (dramatic) play. The beginning teacher's ability to plan, conduct, and manage small and large groups in a competent and professional manner is the subject of Chapter 13, which also focuses upon the language and literacy producing aspects of children's group experiences. Again many circle time hints are provided, along with suggested games and activities, such as finger plays, poems, songs, chants and choruses, and body movements connected to words.

Section 5

Quality language arts programs in early childhood centers are increasingly focused on the promotion of each child's ability to learn to read with ease when formal reading instruction begins. The alphabetic principle, orthographic and print awareness, sight reading, and invented spelling are clearly explained in Chapter 14, *Print—Early Knowledge and Emerging Interest*. This chapter introduces and outlines the probable sequence of events that proceed a child's printing his first alphabet letter. Using the appropriate form of printscript letters is emphasized as teachers model and write alphabet letters. A number of print-related child activities are included, as well as sample print alphabets with construction arrows. Print-rich and print-appropriate classroom environments are suggested. Children's natural curiosity and their innate ability aids their emergence as competent readers when formal instruction begins in kindergarten. Chapter 15 describes the desirable skills, knowledge, and abilities that promote children's progress in learning to read. The differences in reading instruction methodology are discussed so that early childhood educators become aware of what types of instruction are used in the first grades of school.

Section 6

Chapter 16 looks at the physical features and equipment needed to enhance learning in a literacy-based classroom. Chapter 17 discusses the critical importance of increasing a family's ability to partner with their children's school and teachers. Suggestions are included to increase the beginning teacher's ability to establish fruitful school-home relationships. Parent tips to extend language and provide literacy-enriched home environments and activities are listed. The text urges educators to honor children's homegrown literacy knowledge and skills. Well-prepared educators recognize that families may use various and diverse vocabulary- and literacy-building strategies. Cultural differences are increasingly commonplace in America's classrooms, and each child's unique difference is respected and dignified as teachers promote the English language arts.

New Features

The eleventh edition includes a number of new features to aid the student's mastery of each chapter's content.

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- **NEW Learning Objectives** at the beginning of each chapter now correlate with main headings within the chapter and the Summary at the end of the chapter. The objectives highlight what students need to know to process and understand the information in the chapter. After completing the chapter, students should be able to demonstrate how they can use and apply their new knowledge and skills.
- **NEW and improved integration of early childhood professional standards** helps students make connections between what they are learning in the textbook and the standards. This edition now contains a list of standards covered at the beginning of each chapter, including NAEYC's Early Childhood Program Standards and Accreditation Criteria, 2007; Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP): Focus on Infants and Toddlers (2013); and Common Core Standards for English language arts and literacy. These standards are called out with icons throughout the text; a complete list of the standards can be found in the standards correlation chart on the inside front and back covers.
- **NEW TeachSource Digital Downloads** are downloadable and sometimes customizable practical and professional resources, which allow students to immediately implement and apply the textbook's content in the field. Students can download these tools and keep them forever, enabling preservice teachers to begin building a library of practical, professional resources. Look for the TeachSource Digital Download label that identifies these items.
- **New MindTap for Education** is a first-of-its kind digital solution that prepares teachers by providing them with the knowledge, skills, and competencies they must demonstrate to earn an education degree and state licensure, and to begin a successful career. Through activities based on real-life teaching situations, MindTap elevates students' thinking by giving them experiences in applying concepts, practicing skills, and evaluating decisions, guiding them to become reflective educators.
- **NEW Brain Connection** boxes place additional emphasis on brain-based learning practices.
- **Updated coverage of technology and literacy learning** including information about the joint position statement from NAEYC, the Fred Rogers Center for Early Learning, and Children's Media at St. Vincent College.
- **Additional attention to children's oral language experience** has been included to help beginning teachers increase children's conversation and expression of ideas and discoveries.
- **Newly described teacher interaction behaviors** (Chapter 8) are used in the discussion of children's comprehension of storybook read-alouds and the promotion of their development of analytical thinking while enjoying literature.

Other Features

- **TeachSource Videos**—The TeachSource Videos feature footage from the classroom to help students relate key chapter content to real-life scenarios. Critical-thinking questions following each video provide opportunities for in-class or online discussion and reflection.
- **Discussion Vignettes**—Discussion Vignettes introduce chapters with real-life classroom teaching situations that promote student analysis. The Questions to Ponder that follow promote reflection and class discussion.
- **Additional Resources**—This section follows each chapter's summary. It presents readings for students wanting further depth, reinforcement of chapter topics, and/or pursuit of special interests. Resources such as commercial educational materials, professional organizations in which further information can be obtained, and helpful websites are also included.
- In addition to current research, the eleventh edition continues to use classic findings and recommendations.

Supplements

- **NEW MindTap™, The Personal Learning Experience, for Machado's, *Early Childhood Experiences in Language Arts: Early***

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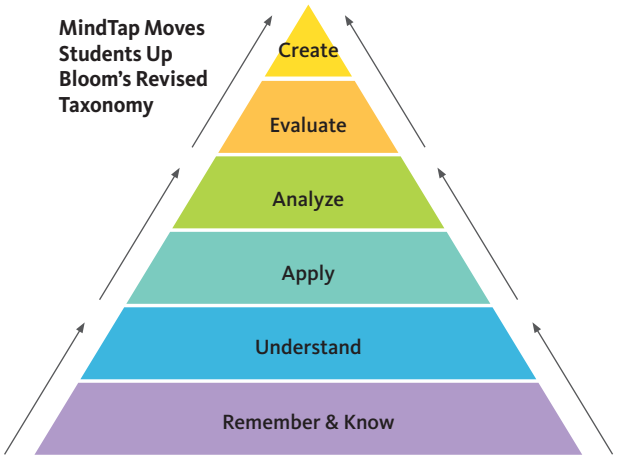
***Literacy*, Eleventh Edition**, represents a new approach to teaching and learning. A highly personalized, fully customizable learning platform, MindTap, helps students to elevate thinking by guiding them to:

- Know, remember, and understand concepts critical to becoming a great teacher;
- Apply concepts, create tools, and demonstrate performance and competency in key areas in the course;
- Prepare artifacts for the portfolio and eventual state licensure, to launch a successful teaching career; and
- Develop the habits to become a reflective practitioner.

As students move through each chapter's Learning Path, they engage in a scaffolded learning experience designed to move them up Bloom's Taxonomy from lower- to higher-order thinking skills. The Learning Path enables preservice students to develop these skills and gain confidence by:

- Engaging them with chapter topics and activating their prior knowledge by watching and answering questions about TeachSource videos of teachers teaching and children learning in real classrooms;
- Checking their comprehension and understanding through *Did You Get It?* assessments, with varied question types that are autograded for instant feedback;
- Applying concepts through mini-case scenarios—students analyze typical teaching and learning situations and create a reasoned response to the issue(s) presented in the scenarios; and
- Reflecting about and justifying the choices they made within the teaching scenario problem.

MindTap helps instructors facilitate better outcomes by evaluating how future teachers plan and teach lessons in ways that make content clear and help diverse students learn, assessing the effectiveness of their teaching practice, and adjusting teaching as needed. The Student Progress App makes grades visible in real time so students and instructors always have access to current standings in the class.



Anderson, L. W., & Krathwohl, D. (Eds.). (2001). *A taxonomy for learning, teaching, and assessing: A revision of Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives.* New York: Longman.

MindTap for *Early Childhood Experiences in Language Arts*, Eleventh Edition, helps instructors easily set their course because it integrates into the existing Learning Management System and saves instructors time by allowing them to fully customize any aspect of the learning path. Instructors can change the order of the student learning activities, hide activities they don't want for the course, and—most importantly—add any content they do want (e.g., YouTube videos, Google docs, links to state education standards). Learn more at www.cengage.com/mindtap.

Online Instructor's Manual with Test Bank

An online Instructor's Manual accompanies this book. It contains information to assist the instructor in designing the course, including: sample syllabi, discussion questions, teaching and learning activities, field experiences, learning objectives, and additional online resources. For assessment support, the updated test bank includes true/false, multiple-choice, matching, short-answer, and essay questions for each chapter.

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PowerPoint® Lecture Slides

These vibrant Microsoft® PowerPoint lecture slides for each chapter assist you with your lecture by providing concept coverage using images, figures, and tables directly from the textbook.

Cognero

Cengage Learning Testing Powered by Cognero is a flexible online system that allows you to author, edit, and manage test bank content from multiple Cengage Learning solutions; create multiple test versions in an instant; and deliver tests from your LMS, your classroom, or wherever you want.

Professional Enhancement Book

A new supplement to accompany this text is the Language Arts and Literacy Professional Enhancement booklet for students. This book, which is part of Cengage Learning's Early Childhood Education Professional Enhancement series, focuses on key topics of interest to future early childhood teachers and caregivers. Students will keep this informational supplement and use it for years to come in their early childhood practices.

About The Author

The author's experience in the early childhood education field has included full-time assignment as community college instructor and department chairperson. Her duties included supervision of early childhood education students at two on-campus laboratory child development centers at San Jose City College and Evergreen Valley College, as well as child centers in the local community. Her teaching responsibilities encompassed early childhood education, child development, and parenting courses.

She received her Master's Degree from San Jose State University and her community college life credential with coursework from the University of California at Berkeley. Her experience includes working as an elementary school teacher, preschool owner/director, work experience instructor/advisor, early childhood and family studies community college and university instructor, and an education consultant in public, private, and parent cooperative programs. Ms. Machado is an active participant in several professional organizations concerned with the education and well-being of young children and their families. She is a past president of California Community College Early Childhood Educators (CCCECE) and the Peninsula Chapter of the California Association for the Education of Young Children. In addition to *Early Childhood Experiences In Language Arts*, she co-authored with Dr. Helen Meyer-Botnarescue a text for student teachers called *Student Teaching: Early Childhood Practicum Guide,* Seventh Edition, ©2011. She also co-authored *Employment Opportunities in Education: How to Secure Your Career*, ©2006, with Romana Reynolds. Ms. Machado consults with parents, teachers, and administrators, and interacts with young children in classrooms in Cascade, Idaho, and San Jose, California.

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To The Student

Because you are a unique, caring individual who has chosen an early childhood teaching career or who is currently working with children, this text is intended to help you discover and share your developing language arts gifts and talents. Create your own activities using your college coursework and life experiences and an assessment of what would be valuable growing opportunities for the children you teach. Design and base your activities on an understanding of current research and theory. Consider the wisdom you have gained through your past experiences with children. Share your specialness and make your classroom memorable as a place where literature and communication thrive.

In this text, I urge you to become a skilled teacher who interacts, converses, and collaborates, and acts as "a subtle opportunist," getting the most possible out of each child–adult interaction. Make your joy in the language arts the children's joy. You can make a difference in young children's lives. Ideally, this text will help you become the kind of teacher who does. Because I am growing, too, I invite your suggestions and comments, so that in future editions I can refine and improve this text's value.

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1 Beginnings of Communication

Objectives

After reading this chapter, you should be able to:

1-1 Discuss the reciprocal behaviors of infants, parents, and caregivers.
1-2 Name four important influences that may affect an infant's language growth and development.
1-3 Compare two theories of human language emergence.
1-4 Name two areas of particular importance to infant care addressed in Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) guidelines.
1-5 Discuss the behaviors and vocalizing efforts that infants use to communicate their needs and desires.
1-6 Describe what caregiver actions should take place when infants develop joint attentional focus.
1-7 Name and comment upon early reading and writing activities in late infancy.
1-8 Identify how infant centers monitor each infant's language and communicating behaviors.

NAEYC Program Standards

1A05 Teacher shares information with families about classroom expectations and routines.
1B01 Teaching staff foster children's emotional well-being by demonstrating respect for children and creating a positive emotional climate as reflected in behaviors, such as frequent social conversations, joint laughter, and affection.
1B11 Teaching staff engage infants in frequent face-to-face social interactions each day.
1B14 Teaching staff quickly respond to infants' cries or other signs of distress by providing physical comfort and needed care.

Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP)

1A2 The infant's primary caregiver comes to know the child and family well, and so is able to respond to that child's individual temperament and needs and cues, and to develop a mutually satisfying pattern of communication.
1B1 Caregivers talk in a pleasant, calm voice, making frequent eye contact.
1C1 Caregivers often talk about what is going on with the infant.
1D2 Caregivers observe and listen and respond to sounds the infant makes.
1D3 Caregivers frequently talk to, sing to, and read to infants.
3B3 Appropriate games are played with interested infants.

Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy

L.CCR 3 Apply knowledge to understand how language functions in different contexts.

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A New Sign

Noah, 10 months, had a new sign for "cracker" that he had used a few times during the day at the infant center. He was very pleased when his "sign" resulted in someone bringing him a cracker. At pick-up time, one of the staff believed it important to talk to Noah's dad. Mr. Soares did not really understand what the teacher, Miss Washington, was talking about when she said "signing." Miss Washington gave Mr. Soares a quick explanation. He smiled proudly and then said, "That's great. I'll talk to his mom and let her know."

Questions to Ponder

1. Miss Washington had a new language-related topic for the next staff meeting. What would you suspect it was?
2. Did this episode tell you something about the language-developing quality of the infant center?
3. What do you know about male infants and their signing ability compared with that of female infants? Could you describe infant signing behavior?

(If you are hesitating, this chapter provides answers.)

In this chapter the reader is acquainted with those elements in an infant's life that facilitate optimal growth in communication and language development. Socioemotional, physical, cognitive, and environmental factors that influence, promote, or deter growth are noted. Recommended interaction techniques and strategies are supported by research and reflect accepted appropriate practices and standards. As foundational aspects of infant communication are presented, *boxed* descriptions of the attuned and reciprocal behaviors caregivers make with infants are provided. Caregivers establish a relationship with each infant in their care, and the quality of that relationship serves to motivate each infant to engage in learning (McMullen & Dixon, 2006). Higher levels of warmth are connected to positive caregiver sensitivity. Gerber, Whitebook, & Weinstein (2007) note that the quality of caregiver practices has been linked to children's brain development and cognitive functioning.

For you to become the kind of educator children deserve, one who enhances language growth, you should begin by believing that most infants are able and natural communicators from birth onward unless some life circumstance has modified their natural potential. Infant care facilities with well-planned, positive, and growth-producing environments—that are staffed with skilled, knowledgeable, and well-trained adults who offer developmentally appropriate activities—provide a place where infants can and do thrive.

Each infant is a unique combination of inherited traits and environmental influences. Structural, hormonal, and chemical influences present before birth may have affected the growth and development of the fetus (Gould, 2002). Newborns seem to assimilate information immediately and are interested in their surroundings. Some suggest an infant possesses "the greatest mind" in existence and is the most powerful learning machine in the universe. During the third trimester of pregnancy, most mothers notice that their babies kick and move in response to music or loud noises. The sound of speech may draw a less spirited reaction, but there is little question that fetuses hear and react to a wide variety of sounds and seem to recognize the rhythm of their mother's voice.

Technology can now monitor the slightest physical changes in breathing, heartbeat, eye movement, and sucking rhythm and rates. Babies begin learning how to carry on conversations quickly and sucking patterns produce a **rhythm** that mimics that of give-and-take dialogues. Infants respond to very specific maternal signals, including tone of voice, facial changes, and head movements.

Greenspan (1999) suggests what may happen when interacting with a one- or two-month-old baby at a relaxed time after a nap or feeding:

> … when you hold him at arm's length and look directly into his eyes with a broad smile on your face, watch his lips part as if he's trying to imitate your smile. (p. 31)

Babies gesture and make sounds and seem to hold up their ends of conversations, but, at times, they appear to suppress output and channel their energy into seeing and hearing. Their eye contact with their caregivers, called **gaze coupling**, is believed to be one of their first steps in establishing communication. Infants can

rhythm — uniform or patterned recurrence of a beat, accent, or melody in speech.
gaze coupling — infant-mother extended eye contact.

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shut off background noises and pay attention to slight changes in adult voice sounds.

An attuned adult responds with sensitivity and accuracy based on an understanding of an infant's (child's) cues.

an ATTUNED adult would:

- notice infant actions, including gestures, body positioning, noisemaking, eye gazing, and any shift from listening to watching.
- make face-to-face contact frequently.
- display admiration, affection, and pleasure and smile frequently.
- provide verbal and nonverbal communication.
- seek to maintain and prolong eye contact. <

McMillen (2013) posits babies are captivating, wondrous, and beguiling beings coming into the world fully equipped to enchant and draw us in. The qualities an infant inherits from parents and the events that occur in the child's life help shape the child's language development. Gender, temperament, and a timetable for the emergence of intellectual, emotional, and physical capabilities are all genetic givens. In the short four to five years after birth, the child's speech becomes purposeful and similar to adult speech. This growing language skill is a useful tool for satisfying needs and exchanging thoughts, hopes, and dreams with others. As ability grows, the child understands and uses more of the resources of oral and recorded human knowledge and is well on the way to becoming a literate being.

The natural capacity to categorize, to invent, and to remember information aids the child's language acquisition. Although unique among the species because of the ability to speak, human beings are not the only ones who can communicate. Birds and animals also imitate sounds and signals and are believed to communicate. For instance, chimpanzees exposed to experimental language techniques (American Sign Language, specially equipped machines, and plastic tokens) have surprised researchers with their language abilities. Some have learned to use symbols and follow linguistic rules with a sophistication that rivals that of some two-year-olds. Researchers continue to probe the limits of their capabilities. However, a basic difference between human beings and other species exists.

It is the development of the cerebral cortex that sets humans apart from less intelligent animals. Our advanced mental capabilities, such as thought, memory, language, mathematics, and complex problem solving, are unique to human beings. Humans have the unique species-specific ability to test hypotheses about the structure of language. They can also develop rules for a particular language and remember and use them to generate appropriate language. Within a few days after birth, human babies recognize familiar faces, voices, and even smells and prefer them to unfamiliar ones.

Infant research has advanced by leaps and bounds to reveal amazing newborn abilities. Long before they can talk, for example, babies remember events and solve problems. They can recognize faces, see colors, hear voices, discriminate speech sounds, and distinguish basic tastes. When you combine the psychological and neurological evidence, it is hard not to conclude that babies are just plain smarter

TeachSource Video 1-1

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Observing and Monitoring Language Development in Infants: The Importance of Assessment

This video provides an example of a body motion play that is taking place with infants.

1. How long were the infants able to attend to the body play before they started turning away?
2. The babbling of a consonant was demonstrated by a child; do you know which consonant?
3. Did you notice infants imitating teacher actions?
4. Did teachers really understand why toddlers were distressed or did they have to guess?

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than adults. This is especially true when it comes to learning something new.

Begley (2009) urges teachers to be aware that a child's genes (inherited DNA) in themselves do not determine intelligence or any other complex human trait. An infant or child's appearance and temperament may elicit particular parent and teacher behaviors. These can include the adult's responsiveness and ability to pay attention to, interact with, speak with, and provide intellect-building interaction to the child. naeyc

1-1 Infant Actions Prompt Caregiver Behaviors naeyc

The human face becomes the most significantly important communication factor for the infant, and the facial expressions, which are varied and complex, eventually will influence infant body reactions (interior and exterior). Caregivers strive to understand the infant's state of well-being by interpreting the infant's face and postures, as infants also search faces in the world around them.

Figure 1-1 identifies a number of signals infants use and their probable meanings. Response and intentional behavior become apparent as infants age and gain experience. Infants initially respond with various preprogrammed gestures, such as: smiling, intent and interested looking, crying, satisfied sucking, and snuggling. Soon these behaviors are followed by active demanding and attention-seeking patterns in which attempts to attract and solicit caregiver attention rapidly become unmistakable and intentional.

Figure 1-1 Born communicators.

Infant Acts	Probable Meaning
turning head and opening mouth	feeling hungry
quivering lips	adjusting to stimuli
sucking on hand, fist, thumb	calming self, feeling overstimulated
averting eyes	tuning out for a while
turning away	needing to calm down
yawning	feeling tired/stressed
looking wide-eyed	feeling happy
cooing	feeling happy
appearing dull with unfocused eyes	feeling overloaded, needing rest
waving hands	feeling excited
moving tongue in and out	feeling upset/imitating

Photo 1-1 "Wow, that is interesting!"

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Researchers are studying the roles of facial expressions, gestures, and body movements in human social communication (Photo 1-1). Early expressions that look like smiling may occur minutes after birth and are apparent in the faces of sleeping babies, whose facial expressions seem to constantly change. When studying infant smiling during an infant's first week of life, observers note that infants smile during brief alertness periods, when drowsy, in active and quiet sleep, and randomly when nothing seems to provoke it. Many parents have noticed that smiling most often occurs in deep sleep.

Caregivers observe that infants search for the source of the human voice and face. An infant may become wide-eyed and crane his neck and lift his chin toward the source. His body tension increases as he becomes more focused and somewhat inactive. Most caregivers respond to these signals by picking up the infant and cuddling him. The National Association for the Education of Young Children in a 2013 publication, *Developmentally Appropriate Practice: Focus on Infants and Toddlers*, points out that it is a caregiver's responsibility to cultivate children's (infants' and toddlers') delight in exploring and understanding their world. They believe early childhood should be a time of laughter, love, play, and great fun.

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an **ATTUNED** adult would:

- be aware of opportunities to soothe and touch and engage in some way with an infant.
- pick up and hold an infant gently while providing firm support.
- note an infant's well-being and comfort.
- attempt to interpret an infant's facial and body signals. <

1-1a Definitions

Language, as used in this text, refers to a system of intentional communication and self-expression through sounds, signs (gestures), or symbols that are understandable to others. Language also refers to a symbol-based, rule-governed, multidimensional system that is used to represent the world internally and to others through the process of communication (Pence, Justice, & Wiggins, 2008). The language-development process includes both sending and receiving information. Input (receiving) comes before output (sending); input is organized mentally by an individual long before there is decipherable output.

Communication is a broader term, defined as giving and receiving information, signals, or messages. A person can communicate with or receive communications from animals, infants, or foreign speakers in a variety of ways. Even a whistling teakettle sends a message that someone can understand. Infants appear to be "in tune," focused on the human voice, hours after birth.

Speech is much more complex than simple parroting or primitive social functioning. The power of language enables humans to dominate other life forms. The ability to use language secured our survival by giving us a vehicle to both understand and transmit language and to work cooperatively with others. Language facilitates peaceful solutions between people.

1-2 Influences on Development

A child's ability to communicate involves an integration of body parts and systems allowing hearing, understanding, organizing thoughts, learning, and using language. Most children accomplish the task quickly and easily, but many factors influence the learning of language.

Research suggests that babies instinctively turn their heads to face the source of sound and can remember sounds heard before birth. This has prompted mothers to talk to, sing to, and read classic literature and poetry to the unborn. Research has yet to document evidence of the benefits of these activities.

Of all sounds, nothing attracts and holds the attention of infants as well as the human voice—especially the higher-pitched female voice. "Motherese," a distinct caregiver speech, is discussed later in this chapter. Dietrich, Swingley, and Werker (2007) note:

> Infants begin to acquire their language by learning phonetic categories. At birth, infants seem to distinguish most of the phonetic contrasts used by the world's languages. However, over the first year, this "universal" capacity shifts to a language-specific pattern in which infants retain or improve categorization of native-language sounds but fail to discriminate many non-native sounds. (p. 16030)

Rhythmic sounds and continuous, steady tones soothe some infants. A number of commercial sound-making products that attempt to soothe can be attached to cribs or are imbedded in plush stuffed animals. Most emit a type of static or heartbeat sound or a combination of the two. Too much sound in the infant's environment, especially loud, excessive, or high-volume sounds, may have the opposite effect. Excessive household noise can come from televisions or other sources. Many have described sensory-overload situations when infants try to turn off sensory input by turning away and somehow blocking that which is at the moment overwhelming, whether the stimulus is mechanical or human. This blocking includes falling asleep.

Although hearing ability is not fully developed at birth, newborns can hear moderately loud sounds and can distinguish different pitches. Newborns' auditory systems are better developed than their sight systems, so the importance of language and voices to children's development is evident from the start (Galinsky, 2010). During the last weeks of pregnancy, a child's auditory system becomes ready to receive and remember sounds.

language — the systematic, conventional use of sounds, signs, or written symbols in a human society for communication and self-expression. It conveys meaning that is mutually understood.

communication — the giving (sending) and receiving of information, signals, or messages.

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Photo 1-2 Sound-making toys attract attention.

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Auditory acuity develops swiftly. Infants inhibit motor activity in response to strong auditory stimuli or when listening to the human voice, and attempt to turn toward it. Some researchers see this as an indication that infants are geared to orient their entire bodies toward any signal that arouses interest (Photo 1-2). Infants' body responses to human verbalizations are a rudimentary form of speech development (Figure 1-2).

Sensory-motor development, which involves the use of sense organs and the coordination of motor systems (body muscles and parts), is vital to language acquisition. Sense organs gather information through seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, and touching. These sense-organ impressions of people, objects, and life encounters are sent to the brain, and each **perception** (impression received through the senses) is recorded and stored, serving as a base for future oral and written language.

Newborns and infants are no longer viewed as passive, unresponsive "mini-humans." Instead, infants are seen as dynamic individuals, preprogrammed to learn, with functioning sensory capacities, motor abilities, and a wondrous built-in curiosity. Families and caregivers can be described as guides who provide opportunity and act *with* newborns, rather than *on* them.

1-2a Beginning Socialization

A child's social and emotional environments play a leading role in both the quality and the quantity of beginning language. Many researchers

Figure 1-2 Auditory perception in infancy.

Age	Appropriate Hearing Behaviors
birth	awakens to loud sounds startles, cries, or reacts to noise makes sounds looks toward then looks away from environmental sounds
0–3 months	turns head to hear parent's or others' speech reacts to speech by smiling opens mouth as if to imitate adult's speech coos and goos seems to recognize a familiar voice calms down when adult's voice is soothing repeats own vocalizations seems to listen to and focus on familiar adults' voices
4–6 months	looks toward environmental noise (e.g., barking, vacuum, doorbell, radio, TV) attracted to noise-making toys babbles consonant-like sounds makes wants known with voice seems to understand "no" reacts to speaker's change of tone of voice
7–12 months	responds to own name may say one or more under-standable but not clearly articulated words babbles repeated syllables or consonant- and vowel-like sounds responds to simple requests enjoys playful word games like Peak-a-boo, Pat-a-cake, etc. imitates speech sounds frequently uses sound making to gain others' attention

auditory — relating to or experienced through hearing.

acuity — how well or clearly one uses the senses; the degree of perceptual sharpness.

sensory-motor development — the control and use of sense organs and the body's muscle structure.

perception — mental awareness of objects and other data gathered through the five senses.

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describe communicative neonatal behaviors that evoke tender feelings in adults. Human children have the longest infancy among animals. Our social dependency is crucial to our individual survival and growth. Much learning occurs through contact and interaction with others in family and social settings. Basic attitudes toward life, self, and other people form early, as life's pleasures and pains are experienced. The young child depends on parents and other caregivers to provide what is needed for growth and **equilibrium** (a balance achieved when consistent care is given and needs are satisfied). This side of a child's development has been called the **affective sphere**, referring to the affectionate feelings—or lack of them—shaped through experience with others (Photo 1-3). Most experts believe that each time an infant takes in information through the senses, the experience is double-coded as both a physical/cognitive reaction and as an emotional reaction to those sensations.

Photo 1-3 Care and attention in the early years influence language development.

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Photo 1-4 An infant who feels comfortable and whose needs are satisfied is alert to the world.

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Textbooks often speak indirectly about the infant's need to feel loved consistently, using words like *nurturance*, *closeness*, *caring*, and *commitment*. The primary goal of parents and caregivers should be handling the infant and satisfying the child's physical needs in a way that leads to mutual love and a bond of trust (Photo 1-4). This bond, often called **attachment**, is an event of utmost importance to the infant's progress. A developmental milestone is reached when a baby responds with an emotional reaction of his own by indicating obvious pleasure or joy in the company of a parent or caregiver (Figure 1-3). Attachment is formed through mutual gratification of needs

equilibrium — a balance attained with consistent care and satisfaction of needs that leads to a sense of security and lessens anxiety.

affective sphere — the affectionate feelings (or lack of them) shaped through experience with others.

attachment — a two-way process formed through mutual gratification of needs and reciprocal communication influenced by the infant's growing cognitive abilities. It is sometimes referred to as bonding or a "love affair" relationship.

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