***The stages of child language acquisition***

**The function of language**

Children use languages for many different purposes. The first and most important function is…

**Practical Functions:**

* To get food, toys and things of interest brought to them when they are very young
* To alert caregivers s to problems and discomfort

Later the function of a child’s language can be classified under David Crystals 6 Function of language categories.

**Emotional expression**

* To communicate their own feelings and attitudes to others

**Social Interaction:**

* To relate with one another
* To negotiate and change rules

**Instrument of thought**

* To develop their own ideas
* To create stories and plan for the future.
* Learn to develop an understanding of other people’s points of view.

**Learning skills to acquire language**

* In order to learn and speak a word, the child must have a picture of the object in their mind.
* The child must realize that language is a tool that can be used to get what they want
* The ‘sound equipment’ in their throat needs to physically develop – this allows them to make the sounds needed for particular morphemes and words
* They need to learn the social contexts in which language is used

**Pre-verbal (0-11 months)**

**Babbling (7-11 months)**

**Holophrastic or one word stage (11-18 months)**

**Telegraphic or two word stage (1.5-2.5 years)**

**Multi word stage (2.5 years and onward)**