

Judie Haynes: Stages of Second Language Acquisition

According to Judie Haynes, all new learners of English progress through the same stages to acquire language. However, the length of time each student spends at a particular stage may vary greatly.

Pre-production

- Students do not usually produce their own language.
- Students understand language that has been made comprehensible.

For students in the **pre-production** stage of language learning, the teacher should provide activities geared to tap their knowledge, but do not force production (speaking). Pointing, labeling, and drawing activities work well. Listening is difficult for newcomers at this stage and activities need to provide some clues to meaning.

Early production

- Students have a small, active vocabulary.
- They feel ready to speak in one- or two-word phrases.

At this stage of language learning students can demonstrate their comprehension of material by giving short responses to easy yes/no questions and either/or questions. They can also respond to simple *who*, *what*, *when*, *where* questions.

Speech emergence

- There is a noticeable increase in listening comprehension.
- Students will try to speak in short phrases.
- They will begin to use the social language necessary in the classroom.

Ask students at this stage how and why questions that elicit short responses. They will be able to participate in many of the mainstream academic subjects.

Nearly fluent

- Students understand what is said in the classroom.
- They can express their ideas comprehensibly in both oral and written communication.
- They will be able to read most grade level material

Ask open-ended questions that allow students to create more complicated responses and to use complex sentences. Second language learners in the early grades who have reached this stage will probably not need additional help.

Reference:

Judie Haynes. (1998). Stages of second language acquisition. *Everything ESL.net*. Retrieved May 12, 2005, from http://www.everythingESL.net.inservices/language_stages.php.