

# Treatment Strategies For a Gestalt Language Learner



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## Abstract

Gestalt language processing is a form of language development in which full phrases or (scripts) are memorized and used before basic units of speech such as individual words. "At first, children produce "chunks" or "gestalt form" (e.g., echolalic utterances), without distinction between individual words and without appreciation for internal syntactic structure" (ASHA, 2022). Current literature suggests various definitions and methods of treatment to support gestalt language learners. Inconsistent definitions of gestalt language have led professionals working with this population to utilize subjective treatment frameworks. The purpose of this review is to provide effective and peer reviewed strategies for speech language pathologists to apply to their interventions in order to maintain evidence-based practice services.

## Defining Gestalt Language

"Gestalt language acquisition is a style of language development with predictable stages that begins with production of multi-word "gestalt forms" and ends with production of novel utterances" (ASHA,2022).

## CCP Procedure

The use of a procedure called cue-pause-point (CPP) is a strategy that may reduce echolalia. Currently, SLPs often "say \_" which prompts the child to also "say \_." The CPP procedure can be applied to effectively reduce echolalia of verbal instructions and increase correct responding (Valentino, 2012).

## Current Strategies for Professionals

## Conclusion

Professionals have been utilizing different approaches and treatment strategies while working with gestalt language learners. This is due to the dissimilarities in definitions and understanding of this type of language development. Many evidence based practice protocols and procedures effective for fostering and developing speech and language skills are available in this review. Specifically, principles derived from research evidence that can be used by SLP's as a framework for responding to gestalt language learners are in the areas of: enhancing functional verbal labeling repertoires, cues-pause-point (CPP) procedure, background in induced vs incidental echolalia in gestalt language processors, and facilitation of intervention.

## Learning Objectives

- A). Give the definition of a gestalt language processor.
- B). List effective treatment strategies for this type of language learner.
- C). Explain the effectiveness of decreasing "say" during instruction with a gestalt language processor.

## Methodology

Published literature regarding gestalt language acquisition is discussed. Specifically, operational definitions, rationales supporting various approaches, procedures used to treat or study echolalic behavior, and reported conclusions will be reviewed.

