

UNDERSTANDING SPOKEN LANGUAGE INVOLVES A RANGE OF SKILLS

Children may have difficulty with one or more of these skills; this will affect how they understand what is being said to them.

Listening and attention

Listening and attending can be difficult and children may become easily distracted.

Auditory skills

Auditory processing is the ability to be able to tell the difference between different sounds. Auditory memory is the ability to remember sounds and words effectively.

Some children can find it difficult to remember enough words or sounds to make sense of what they are hearing.

Understanding words and concepts (semantics)

In order to understand, we need to know the meaning of the words being spoken. Some children find it hard to learn and retain the meaning of new words. It is also necessary to understand the 'idea' within a word; words to do with size or time for example. Some children find it difficult to understand the more abstract concepts.

Understanding sentences (grammar/syntax)

We need an understanding of how sentences are constructed. We need to know how different word endings can change the meaning of words. For example 'I cry' becomes 'I cried' if it has already happened. Some children find it hard to understand sentences with complex structures or lots of information.

Memory

When learning new words, children rely on their memory. This is because they need to compare new words to ones they already know. If a child has difficulty doing this, they will struggle to understand what is being said.

With reference to www.talkingpoint.org.uk