

# Gestalt Language Processing

## What is Gestalt Language Processing?

Gestalt Language Processing is a type of language development where children learn language as whole phrases, also known as scripts. When a child develops language in this way, they move from whole phrases to single words. It is estimated that between 75 – 90% of children with Autism develop language in this way. However, it is important to note that it can also form part of typical language development – these children often move through the phases quickly, compared to children with Autism, who may spend longer in this stage of language development.

## Signs of GLP:

- Copies language from TV shows
- Imitates intonation patterns
- Uses jargon you cannot understand (different from babbling!)
- Starts communicating with long sentences
- Sentences may not be in context

## Stages of Language Acquisition

It is theorised that children who present with traits of Gestalt Language Processing may learn language through different stages

### Stage 1: Echolalia.

During this stage, the child memorises whole phrases and may later repeat them in a range of different contexts (also known as delayed echolalia). These scripts are often tied to different experiences or emotions.

### Stage 2: Mitigated echolalia.

During this stage, the child will begin to combine two scripts they have previously learnt to make a new utterance.

### Stage 3: Single words.

This is the stage where we begin to see single words break free from their scripts. Here, a child might begin to label different objects and pull single words out of previously learnt scripts.

### Stage 4: Self-generated.

This is the stage where the child begins to make their own, self-generated language. Here, we would expect to see an increase in grammatical errors that the child wasn't making before as they begin to combine words by themselves

At Kid Speak, our experienced Speech Pathologists are here to guide you through this process! We can provide initial assessment and intervention

