



The most common way that children learn language is from hearing it, and parents and caregivers play a huge role in a child's language development. Parents and caregivers are the ones spending the most amount of time with the child, so it's no surprise they are who the child learns from the most!

Parents and caregivers can easily learn a few strategies to help boost their child's language development. The strategies of Expansion and Extension are great at targeting grammar, vocabulary, and can help the child form longer more adult-like sentences. The great thing about these strategies is that they don't focus on trying to get the child to say something. Rather, they focus on responding to what the child has already said.

## Expansion

Expansion is taking what the child said and making it more grammatically correct. A good way to think about it is when something expands, it gets bigger but stays the same. You aren't adding new information, you're just making the child's phrase a little longer by adding in the missing words.

Examples:

Child: *Puppy outside.*

Adult: *The puppy is outside.*

Child: *Car go!*

Adult: *The car is going!*

## Extension

Extension is adding new information to what the child has said. Make sure to stay on topic. Extension is frequently used with Expansion by first making the child's phrase longer and then adding new information about the topic.

Examples:

Child: *Puppy outside.*

Adult: *The puppy is outside. He is barking.*

Child: *Car go!*

Adult: *The car is going. It's fast!*

## Practice

Expansion and Extension are easy to use in your everyday routines! Throughout the day children comment and label things they see and hear. These are great moments to use the strategies above to build-on what your child says and help them grow their language skills! Practice using these strategies:

- In the car
- Getting ready in the morning
- During mealtimes
- At the park
- When reading a book
- During playtime
- At the grocery store