

Echolalia Advice

How to help children who are learning to put words together

- This advice is most helpful for children who use echolalia and are starting to put different words together to make new two-word phrases.
- Their phrases or sentences might not be in the right order or use the right grammar at this stage.

How can I help?

- At this stage, we are focused on helping the child to **put two words** together to make **new phrases**.
- To help with this skill, we use a strategy called '**Match and Stretch**'. When the child says a single word, repeat it back to them and add another word. For example, if they say "baby", you could say, "baby bed" or "little baby". You can also 'match and stretch' your own talking.
- You can use this strategy at any time, but it's also helpful to put aside 10-15 minutes for '**Special Time**' **play sessions** where you can focus on modelling language. During this time, you should watch the child's play and then **join in** with what they are doing.
- Try to avoid telling the child how to play or asking questions; they are leading the 'Special Time' session.



Tips to Remember

- Make sure that the child can hear you whilst you play – reduce background noise (e.g. TV, radio, YouTube) as much as possible.
- Make sure you are following the child's lead. We are not forcing them to sit at a table, to play in a particular way, or asking them to repeat things. Children learn best when they are doing things they enjoy.
- Acknowledge what the child says to show them that you are listening– even if you are unsure of the meaning. You can do this by repeating what they say or by nodding.
- At this stage of development, we are not focusing on correct grammar or word order. Instead, we are focusing on helping the child to develop their vocabulary, use single words, and put two words together to make their own new two-word combinations.

Here are some examples of comments you might make during Special Time:

One-word comments	Two-word comments	
Dog	Big dog Soft dog Sleeping dog	Dog's bed Dog stuck Bye-bye dog
Book	Book finished Book down Heavy book	Funny book Book open Next book
Chair	Another chair Comfy chair Daddy's chair	Chair broken Blue chair Soft chair

The information in this advice sheet is based on the Natural Language Acquisition framework (Marge Blanc MA, CCC-SLP) and training provided by Alexandria Zachos, MS, CCC-SLP/L. For more information and resources, visit:
<https://www.meaningfulspeech.com/>

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Telephone: 01226 644331

Email: barnsley.speechtherapy@swyt.nhs.uk

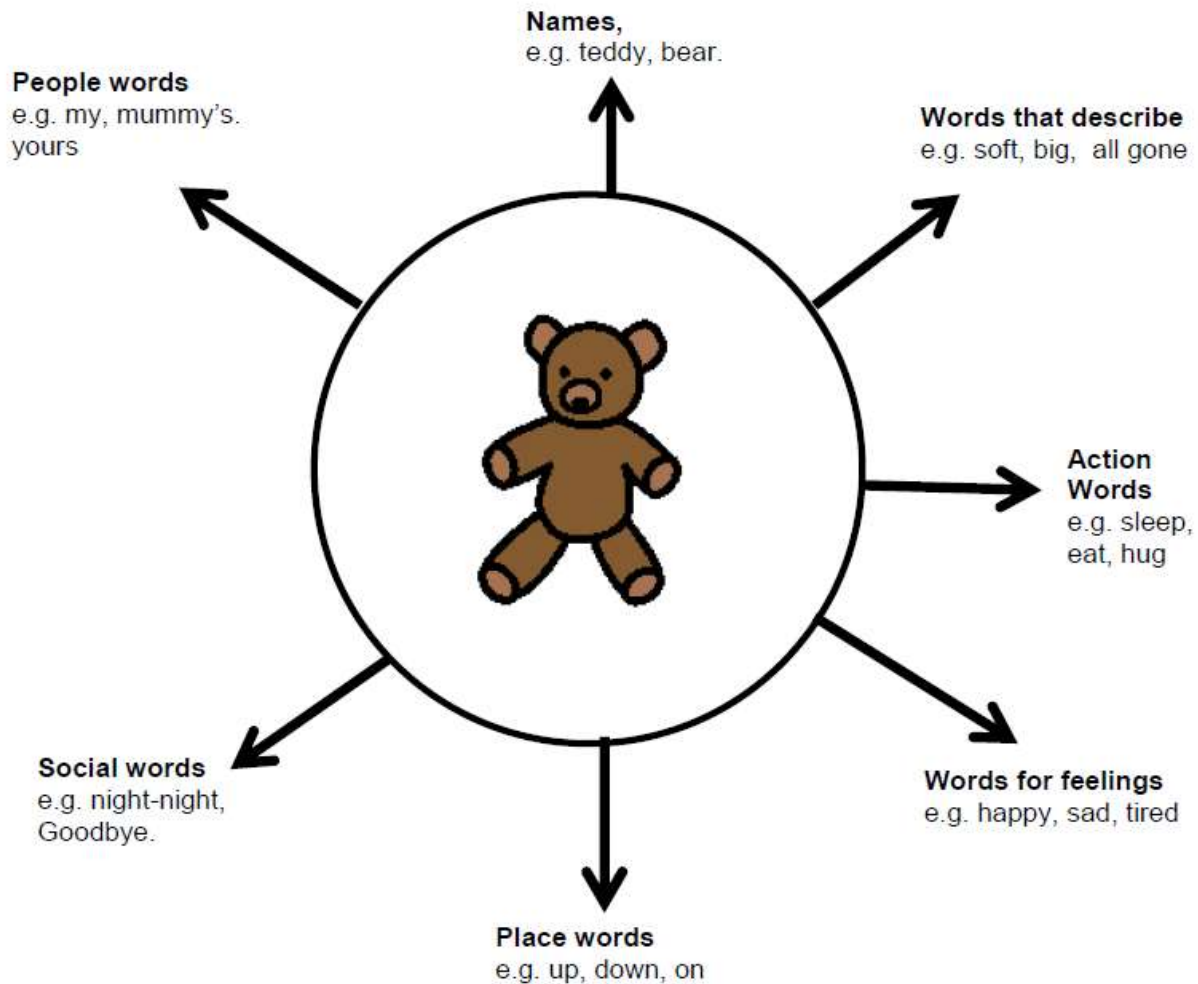
Website: www.barnsleyspeechtherapy.co.uk

www.southwestyorkshire.nhs.uk



**South West
Yorkshire Partnership**
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**Here are some more examples of comments you can make
during Special Time:**



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