

Children are reluctant to open their mouths. Does listening to music help?



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Parents expect their children to learn to speak, and the feeling of their children "opening their mouths" for the first time is something that only parents who have been parents can understand. Parents want their children to start talking as soon as possible and do everything they can to guide their children to speak. While oral training is important for the development of speech, parents should not neglect auditory training because it is an important prerequisite for language training.

Relationship between Auditory Stimulation and Speech Expression

Listening and expression, reception and output, are closely related and complement each other. In the early childhood stage, if a child's reception is not sufficient, it has a direct impact on the amount of output. I give a more extreme example for analysis. People with hearing impairment have difficulties in speech expression, but this is not due to problems with their oral muscles or related abilities but to the lack of auditory input. Without the verification and comparison of sound content, even though the mouth is developing normally, there is no "inventory" and therefore no "supply". Therefore, parents should pay attention to whether they are providing their children with adequate auditory

stimulation.

Diversified auditory stimulation

Some parents may say, "Of course I know this, and I try to output a lot of sound to my child: I often talk to my child, tell stories, describe my child's surroundings, etc., and I use different languages to do so. While this is ideal for auditory stimulation, the content is rich but similar in nature - it is all verbal. In fact, auditory reception can be very diverse, and music, for example, is a material that can help improve a child's language skills. Conversely, parents can learn about their children's language development by how well they listen to music.

Music is good for language development

From my years of experience in education, I found that children with poor phonetic ability will have more difficulty in learning music and vocal music, such as pitch, rhythm, range, etc. This is actually related to listening and sound composition skills. Among the different types of sounds, music is the ideal language teaching material, except for the human language. There is a wide variety of music, with different rhythms or themes, from which children can broaden their understanding of sound. In addition to its educational value, some soft music can even help to soothe emotions.

Play the harmonica and experience the sound and breathing changes

The same piece of music can feel very different when played by different instruments. This is also good training for your child's listening sensitivity. In addition to listening to records or playing music files on the computer, it is fun and meaningful for children to get in touch with real instruments and actually play them so that they are more aware of the relationship between different materials and sounds. Harmonica is a good training tool among many musical instruments. When playing the harmonica, children need to exhale through their mouths, thus having the opportunity to experience the changes between sound and breathing. When children play the harmonica, they use their tongues and lips to create sounds that are coordinated with each other, which is an important foundation for the use of the mouth.

撰文：新領域潛能發展中心註冊教育心理學家彭智華

家長期待孩子牙牙學語的心情，孩子第一次「開金口」的感受，大概要當過父母方能體會。家長希望孩子盡快開始說話，以千方百計引導孩子發聲。口部訓練對於說話能力的發展固然重要，但家長也不能忽略聽覺訓練，因為這是語言培訓的重要前提。

聽覺刺激與語言表達的關係

聆聽與表達、接收與輸出，兩者關係密切，也有相輔相成的作用。而在幼兒階段，孩子的接收若不足夠，對於輸出多寡絕對有直接影響。筆者舉一個比較極端的例子作分析，聽障人士在語言表達方面都有困難，但這並非因為他們的口

部肌肉或相關能力有問題，而是源於缺乏聽覺渠道的輸入。沒有聲音內容的驗證與比較，儘管口部發展正常，也會因沒有「庫存」，而未能「供應」。因此，家長要留意有否給予孩子足夠的聽覺刺激。

多元化的聽覺刺激

也許有家長會說，我當然知道這個道理，而且也努力輸出大量聲音給孩子：常常跟孩子說話、講故事和向孩子描述周遭環境等，更會使用不同語言進行。這固然是很理想的聽覺刺激，然而，以上內容雖然豐富，性質卻很相似 — 全部屬於語言。其實，聽覺接收可以很多樣化，例如音樂就是一種有助提高孩子語言能力的素材。反過來說，通過孩子聆聽音樂的表現，家長可以從中了解孩子的語言發展。

音樂有利語言發展

筆者從多年的教育經驗中發現，語音能力較差的兒童，在音樂和聲樂等方面的學習也會較難，例如音準、節奏感及音域等，其實這與聆聽能力及構音能力有關。不同種類的聲音中，除了人類語言，音樂是理想的語言教材。音樂種類繁多，不同的節奏或主題，讓幼兒能從中擴闊對聲音的理解。除了教育意義外，一些柔和的音樂甚至有助緩和情緒。

吹奏口琴 體驗聲音與呼吸的變化

同樣的樂曲通過不同樂器演奏，感覺可以截然不同。這對於孩子的聆聽敏銳度也是很好的訓練。除了聽唱片或電腦播放音樂檔案，如果能讓孩子接觸真實的樂器，實際操弄，讓他們更清楚不同材質的樂器與聲音的關係，也是既好玩又有意義的活動。眾多樂器中，口琴是很好的訓練工具。吹口琴的時候，幼兒需要用口呼氣，從而有機會體會聲音與呼吸間的變化。幼兒吹奏口琴，運用舌頭及嘴唇製造聲音，讓彼此間得到協調，正是口部運用的重要基礎。



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Singing children's songs to learn to speak

In addition to imitating everyday conversations, singing a cute children's song can have the desired effect of enhancing memory and deepening impressions by using music to carry language. If children can sing along, even if they can't produce the right sounds at first, they can develop their speaking skills during the imitation process.

唱兒歌學說話

除了模仿日常生活對話外，唱一首可愛的兒歌亦有理想的果效，用音樂來盛載語言能夠增強記憶，加深印象。假如幼兒能夠跟著唱，即使剛開始時未能發出正確語音，在模仿的過程中也能訓練說話能力。



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A building is built from the ground up, and training in early childhood is very important for children to have good language skills in the future. Through the use of music and musical instruments, children can build a good language foundation in a fun and relaxing way, so parents may want to try it out more often.

萬丈高樓從地起，孩子將來能夠有良好語言能力，幼兒時期的訓練是非常重要的。通過運用音樂和樂器，幼兒可以在輕鬆有趣的方式下奠定良好的語言基礎，家長們不妨多多嘗試。