

Brown's stages of language development

Stages	MLU	Age	Characterised by	Features	Morphological Structure	Examples
I	1.0 – 2.0	12 – 26 months	First words; simple combinations of words	1-2 word utterances (action, object, location)		
II	2.0 – 2.5	27 – 30 months	Modulation of meaning	Emerging grammatical morphemes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Present progressive (-ing verbs) 2. Prepositions (<i>in</i> and <i>on</i>) 3. Regular form plurals (-s) 	<i>Me going</i> <i>In car/on box</i> <i>My toys</i>
III	2.5 – 3.0	31 – 34 months	Development of sentence form	Noun phrase elaboration and auxiliary verb development	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Irregular past tense (ran, drank) 2. Possessive's (it's, mum's) 3. Copula (uncontracted form) 	<i>Him fell down</i> <i>Dad's book</i> <i>Is it Louise?</i>
IV	3.0 -3.75	35 – 40 months	Emergence of complex sentences	Embedding sentence elements (clauses & complements). E.g. I know you are my friend, I know who is hiding)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Determiners/articles 2. Regular past tense 3. Third person singular (Regular forms) 	<i>A/the book</i> <i>She jumped</i> <i>Doggie brings it</i>
V	3.75 – 4.5	41 – 46 months	Emergence of compound sentences	Conjoining sentences (e.g. I have a book and you have a toy)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Third person singular (irregular forms) 2. Auxiliary (uncontracted form) 3. Contractible copula 4. Contractible auxiliary 	<i>She does/has</i> <i>Are they running?</i> <i>She's ready. They're here.</i> <i>They're coming; he's going</i>

Table adapted from: McLaughlin, 2006, pp.308

Order of acquisition of brown's 14 grammatical morphemes

Rank	Stage	Months	Morpheme	Example
1	II	27 - 30	Present progressive inflection	<i>He <u>eat</u>ing</i>
2	II	27 - 30	Preposition <i>in</i>	<i>Juice <u>in</u> cup</i>
3	II	27 - 30	Preposition <i>on</i>	<i>Sleep <u>on</u> bed</i>
4	II	27 - 30	Regular plural inflection	<i>My toy<u>s</u></i>
5	II	27 - 30	Past irregular	<i>I <u>ate</u> biscuit</i>
6	III	31 – 34	Possessive inflection	<i>Daddy'<u>s</u> hat</i>
7	III	31 – 34	Uncontractible copula (form of verb 'to be' when used as the main verb)	<i>They <u>were</u> nice</i>
8	III – V	31 – 46	Articles (determiners)	<i><u>A</u> boy took <u>the</u> ball</i>
9	IV	35 - 46	Regular past tense	<i>He <u>walked</u> fast</i>
10	IV	35 - 46	Regular third person singular	<i>She <u>bakes</u> cakes</i>
11	V	41 - 46	Irregular third person singular	<i>He <u>has</u> some. She <u>does</u> too.</i>
12	V	41 - 46	Uncontractible auxillary	<i><u>Is</u> she reading? You <u>were</u> reading.</i>
13	V	41 - 46	Contractible copula	<i>Mary'<u>s</u> tall.</i>
14	V	41 - 46	Contractible auxillary	<i>She'<u>s</u> reading</i>

McLaughlin, S. (2006). *Introduction to language development (2nd ed.)*. Thomson Delmar Learning.