Speech Ease

What are Gestalt Language Learners?

What is Echolalia and gestalt language ?
Echolalia is the repetition of words or sentences from familiar people or media. There is immediate echolalia : repetition of words or sentences right after hearing them, vs delayed echolalia which can be difficult to interpret out of context. Echolalia is part of gestalt language learning, where children learn language in chunks.

Gestalt Language Processing
There are two types of language learners: analytical and gestalt processors. Gestalt processors learn language in chunks called gestalts or scripts and use delayed echolalia to communicate. This means they repeat phrases or sentences they have heard before in the same intonation or melody. They learn sentences before learning individual words, which is different from the typical path of analytical processors who start with single words and build to phrases and sentences.

There are different stages in gestalt language processing development; with careful analysis of the child's expressive language, a speech pathologist can determine what stage the child may be at in their Gestalt Language development and how to help them.

Gestalt language processing can be seen when children repeat lines from TV shows or movies, phrases other people say, or communicate through songs. To help your child learn language through the gestalt approach,

- listen to their conversations,
- encourage them to use language in meaningful contexts,
- make language learning fun, and
- use visual cues like pictures and gestures.

To read up more about Gestalt Language Learners, visit:
https://www.meaningfulspeech.com/
https://www.assistiveware.com/blog/gestalt-language-processing-aac
https://communicationdevelopmentcenter.com/the-natural-language-acquisition-guide-echolalia-is-all-about-gestalt-language-development/

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