



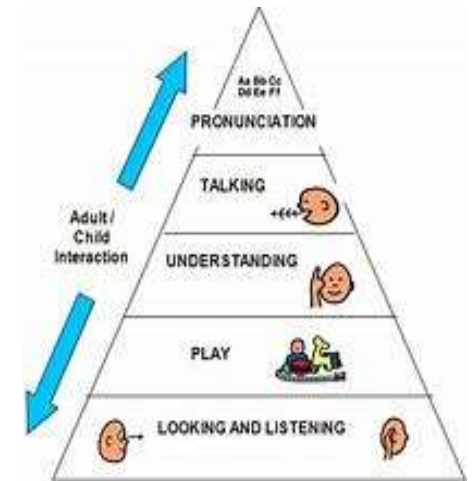
Information Carrying Words

An **information carrying word (ICW)** is a word that carries meaning. The number of ICWs in a sentence will affect the complexity of an utterance.

You cannot determine the number of ICWs in a sentence by counting the words - the words only give part of the message. The child uses other information, e.g. gesture, cues and past knowledge to help make sense of speech.

An ICW can be very helpful for children who are learning language. We can use physical or indicative clues to help the children understand what we mean.

For example, when talking about an object, such as a 'chair', we can either point at a chair or make some distinguishable gesture to guide the child in the right direction.





Information Carrying Words Continued

Some words in a sentence are redundant, (they add nothing to the message)

e.g. Adult: "Give me the ball" + holding out hand.



This instruction only requires the child to understand 'ball'.

This sentence has one ICW.

There must be an alternative for a word to be an information carrying word. In the example above, the child must choose between the 'ball' and 'car'.





Information Carrying Words Continued

One ICW

Items: pencils, pens
e.g. Give me the **pencils**

Two ICWs

Items: pencils, pens, pencil case, tray
e.g. Put the **pens** on the **tray**

Three ICWs

Items: red pencils/blue pencils, red pens/blue pens, pencil case, tray
e.g. Put the **red pencils** in the **pencil case**

Four ICWs

Items: red pencils/blue pencils, red pens/blue pens, ruler, pencil case, tray
e.g. Put the **blue pens** **in/under** the tray

