

HELLO MY NAME IS

CLIMB LAB

Research-Based
Tips!

Complex Syntax

in DHH Children

Why is Complex Syntax Important?

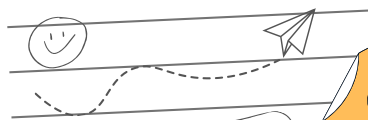
Complex syntax is an essential piece of language development for building academic and social skills. Generally, typically developing children produce most complex syntax types **by age 4**. However, complex syntax is an **area of need** for many deaf and hard of hearing children (DHH). DHH children are more likely to produce less complex syntax than their typically developing peers.¹

A Early Acquired	B Later Acquired
"Let's" Clauses	• Relative Clauses
Infinitive Clauses	• Participle Clauses
Conjunction Clauses	• Complement Clauses
	•
	•
	•

Bust the Myth!

Children start producing complex syntax before mastering basic grammatical morphemes.²

There's no need to wait for mastery. You can target both skills at the same time!



Context & Complexity

We analyzed how different language sampling contexts affect complex syntax production in 42 DHH children who use spoken English. The current results show that **conversation has the greatest density** of complex syntax compared with narrative and play contexts. Consider collecting conversation language samples to analyze all complex syntax types. However, play language samples may be more helpful for capturing emerging complex syntax.

¹Werfel, K. L., Reynolds, G., Hudgins, S., Castaldo, M., & Lund, E. A. (2021). The production of complex syntax in spontaneous language by 4-year-old children with hearing loss. *AJSLP*, 30 (2), 609-621.

²Arndt, K., & Schuele, C. (2013). Multiclausal utterances aren't just for big kids: A framework for analysis of complex syntax production in spoken language of preschool- and early school-age children. *Topics in Language Disorders*, 33(2), 125-139