Children are more likely to learn a word if all the sounds in the word are within their phonological inventory. It is important for SLPs to determine "in" and "out" words.

**"In" words** contain sounds that are within the child's phonemic inventory.

**"Out" words** contain at least one sound that is not in the child's phonological inventory.

Children demonstrate lower comprehension and production of novel words when targets are "out" words.

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**PHONOTACTIC PROBABILITY**

Children learn words with low phonotactic probability better than words with high phonotactic probability.

**Why?**

- Low phonotactic probability have distinct, unique sounds that are easier to keep track of.
- Words with high phonotactic probability may cause confusion for the child, as they may sound like familiar, known words.

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**OBJECT FAMILIARITY**

Children with DLD learn words for unfamiliar objects easier than words for familiar objects.

**Why?**

- Children tend to think a new word refers to a new object, causing confusion. They may use a specific name for a word they already know (e.g., "Daffodil" may be difficult if the child already knows the word "Flower").
- Teaching the word for an unknown object makes the child aware that they need a word for a new object.

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**WORD CATEGORY**

Children with DLD tend to learn nouns more easily than verbs.

**Why?**

- When targeting novel verbs, children with DLD require a higher number of repetitions over more sessions. Research suggests that children with DLD are better able to learn nouns and attributes than actions and affective state words.
- Some word categories may need to be explicitly taught to children with DLD.

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Children with DLD show deficits in retention when learning novel vocabulary words. Research suggests that children with DLD learn better with:

- input variability
- increased exposure to targets
- increased dosage frequency
- more spaced, variable practice

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**REFERENCES:**


