

Year 6/7 Second Language Learners

Oral — Average

Content

Students ask and respond to routine, familiar questions about self, family, and friends that require rehearsed factual information. They state their name, age, and nationality, describe their family, and provide some personal information about pets and animals, sports and interests, and school life. Topics may extend to more specific areas such as clothing and colours, food and shopping, and health and the body.

Vocabulary

Students' vocabulary includes high-frequency items related to sharing personal information, family kinship terms, names of animals, clothing, body parts, classroom items, sports, hobbies, and routine activities generally presented in rehearsed chunks. They use greetings and formal titles, especially for addressing the teacher, in regular classroom routines (e.g. 张老师, 您好). Students occasionally use keywords related to their own personal world, for example, 新西兰 (New Zealand). They use verbs of identification 是, ownership 有, or preference 喜欢, and verbs associated with sports, hobbies, and routines. They use numbers for purposes such as stating the time and date, price, and for counting, with measure words generally restricted to the generic 个. Adjectives and descriptive words are restricted to general characteristics such as big, small, long, short, or good, used with simple positive and negative adverbs 很 and 不. Personal and demonstrative pronouns are used effectively. They use high-frequency question words such as 什么, 谁, 几, 多少 when asking about the name, age, activity, or numbers of items, along with the question particle 吗 to confirm specific facts.

Forms and Structures

Students' language use relies upon keywords or rehearsed phrases containing short verb, verb-object phrases or a familiar rehearsed sentence pattern (e.g. 我是澳大利亚人).

When more than one item of information is required, responses rely on listing, often without verbs or connectives, unless the phrase is familiar or well rehearsed. The ability to manipulate linguistic forms or deal with unfamiliar sentence structures or topic areas is limited. Attempts at formulating their own responses generally display English sentence patterns, or confused word order, for example, 十五四岁 (54岁), or omission of the verb (e.g. .我老师... 徐老师, or the measure word 二...姐姐).

Fluency

Rehearsed sentence patterns are offered spontaneously in response to specific questions. Other responses are slow and hesitant.

Intelligibility

Responses are intelligible in the context of well-rehearsed question formats. Students seldom display awareness of tone in their speech. Errors occur regularly in tone (e.g. 爸爸 bàbá, bàbā; 妈妈 māmá, màmā; 新西兰 xīnxīlǎn). Students' ability to pronounce syllables that do not follow expected English symbol-sound correspondences is often variable, for example, qǐng (请), chī (吃), zhōngwén (中文).

Comprehension

Student's interactions rely on high-frequency question patterns and familiar personal information. They comprehend short questions and statements relating to familiar subject matter. Comprehension is restricted when familiar question patterns contain additional information, or when the phrasing of a question is different from what was expected (e.g. 他们是谁? instead of 你家有什么人?). Students regularly require rephrasing, examples, or translation, in order to understand the question and to be able to respond with formulaic answers (e.g. stating what sport they like).

Communication Strategies

Students collaborate with each other in determining the meaning of questions, often relying on the content and structures employed by classmates to respond, inserting their own keyword (name, age, sport, etc.), for example, 我喜欢猫; 我喜欢鱼.

Discourse

Not apparent at this level.