

Year 10 Background Language Learners

Oral — Average

Content

Students interact about their personal, social, and educational world. Topics addressed include factual information about themselves, family members, and friends, personal interests, hobbies, and sporting activities. They talk about their social life and describe their good friends and their interests, including film, music, and TV. They provide detailed information about their school, subjects, and facilities, and express preferences for particular subjects and opinions about learning Chinese. They present information about their linguistic and cultural identity and their bilingual capabilities.

They talk about the linguistic and cultural background of their family, for example, birthplace of parents, language used at home, and parents' occupations. They relate to and explain cultural values and practices in the local Chinese community. They talk about future plans, for example, to go to China, or continue studies of Chinese, and aspirations for university study. They describe their knowledge of travel experiences in China and elsewhere.

Vocabulary

Students use a wide range of vocabulary to talk about themselves and to describe family members, friends, and hobbies.

They use vocabulary related to everyday contexts of use such as school, home, food, and leisure activities with confidence, but are less certain of vocabulary in unfamiliar subject areas. They add descriptive detail to their message, expressing personal opinions, preferences, or emotions.

They occasionally have difficulties in selecting the right vocabulary item when answering questions on unfamiliar topics, and may use English to fill communication gaps, for example, 中文有很多benefit(好), or for proper nouns (e.g. chemist, Adelaide).

Forms and Structures

Students use simple sentence structures and need to be prompted, usually with an additional request, for example, 什么, 什么 候, in order to elaborate.

Additional detail is provided when requested, using a range of structures to describe time, frequency, duration, or sequence of events (e.g. 三十年以前; 先到...住了几年后... 五年没 到他了; 我学中文四年了; 平常上街). Students elaborate on actions by, for example, using verb complements to describe the result, direction, or potential for an action (e.g. 不出来) and elaborate descriptions with a range of intensifiers or negatives (e.g. 最, 比 , 挺, 不太) and make comparisons using 比. Prepositions are used regularly to describe the place or participants in activity. They express conditionality using 如果 and 要是, contrast using 然... 但是... and express cause and effect using 因为. Expression is occasionally influenced by dialect, for example, by Cantonese 有去, or by English expression, for example, saying 打体育 to express 'play sports'.

Fluency

Students answer questions in a natural manner using short responses to provide specific information. They are quick to respond but seldom answer in great detail; however, they maintain the flow of communication in response to further questions. They occasionally have difficulties in answering some questions, as they do not always appear to have adequate vocabulary for a detailed response.

Intelligibility

Pronunciation is native-like with a slight accent often evident because of dialect use. Tones are accurate, with occasional errors (e.g. 玩 wǎn, not wán), or lack of awareness of both neutral tone and tone sandhi (tone changes).

Comprehension

Students readily comprehend native-like interactions and respond to questions on a wide range of topics. Some key vocabulary items may not be immediately understood, but are both comprehended and readily incorporated into their response when explained, for example, terms such as 要求, 区, 位置, 零花 .

Communication Strategies

Students engage in frequent code switching, sometimes relying on English utterances as part of the response (e.g. not really...). Responses are often shorter, as complexity of content increases, but they remain accurate.

Discourse

Interaction overall is limited as students generally respond in short phrases containing a single fact or idea. When uncertain, students may seek closure to the topic by responding with a negative statement (e.g. 不知道), or with English words when unable to formulate a response.

When providing an extended or detailed response, conjunctions are generally used effectively to coordinate the message.