

Year 6/7 Background Language Learners/ First Language Learners

Oral — Average

Content

Students respond to the teacher's or assessor's questions on familiar topics related to their immediate and personal context. They give their names, the length of their residence in Australia and information about their language use at home and about their families, sometimes using English in answer to the questions explicitly asked by the assessor. Most responses are in short utterances of one or two words and are not expanded/elaborated sufficiently when attempts are made by scaffolding by the teacher or the assessor. On a few occasions their initial attempts at elaboration are made, but these are not always successful. On other occasions when the interactions are about some other factual topics, their initial attempts to elaborate/expand them are taken up by more able students.

Vocabulary

Students use a limited range of vocabulary related to their personal immediate context. They use simple high-frequency terms to provide personal information such as self, family members, daily life at school and home, likes/dislikes, and food. They use words such as names of colours, animals, some stationery, food, jobs, and sports, and give the time in response to the picture stimuli shown to them. Most of the students in this group express numbers using both pure Korean and Sino-Korean systems and classifiers (e.g. 개, 시, 분, 살, 년). Students use a limited range of common verbs to express common daily routines or to describe objects/persons in the stimuli (e.g. 하다, 가다, 자다, 있다, 주다, 덥다, 좋아하다). Although the vocabulary that these students use in the interaction consists of simple high-frequency items, most items observed are correctly chosen. Inaccurate choice of vocabulary occurs infrequently (e.g. 축구 차*고...).

Forms and Structures

Students typically tend to respond in a phrasal form or a single word with occasional attempts to produce a full sentence. Although a range of forms and structures are used, it is evident only a limited range of items is available under each category. Students use a range of case particles (-이/가, -은/는, -을/를, -의, -에서) and informal polite sentence enders accurately. Although verb-final word order is observed, students use a limited number of basic common verbs. They use some auxiliary verbs (e.g. 점심 먹고 있어요) and complex idiomatic structures such as -는 것 같다 and -르/을 수 있다 (e.g. 늦게 잘 수 있고...). A few basic conjunctive suffixes (-고, -아/어서, -니까) are also used.

Fluency

Most students maintain a reasonable level of coherence during their speech, but answers to the assessor's questions are usually short. Although most students' responses are spontaneous, relatively long pauses occur when they attempt to elaborate their responses and sometimes the pauses are filled with private speech, typically in English such as 'what's that?' It is evident that there are a few whose pauses are noticeable and who need scaffolding to give a short answer to a simple question.

Intelligibility

While most students' utterances are reasonably intelligible, a few students who are less confident speak in such a soft voice that their speech itself is not intelligible at times. At other times their response is made entirely in English.

Comprehension

Most students appear to comprehend the speech of the assessor, the teacher, and other classmates well. They nod or smile to signal their comprehension of the teacher's questions or comments. However, a few do not actively engage in interaction and these students answer only when they are

nominated and asked a direct question. Given that these students are often able to answer after scaffolding, it is evident that they do not fully understand all the utterances that the teacher or the assessor make.

Communication Strategies

Students request for assistance explicitly when they have difficulties in retrieving certain vocabulary items. They sometimes use paralinguistic strategies such as gestures or pointing at body parts to get the name of them. Although a few students seem to try to keep to Korean, others lapse into English spontaneously and requests for assistance are often made in English. Sometimes they respond to the assessor's questions entirely in English.

Assessor: 왜 좋아하는데?

Student: more attractive

Assessor: more attractive

Discourse

This criterion is not applicable to the performance of this group who are not able to sustain the utterance to a reasonable length.