

Year 6/7 Background Language Learners

Writing — Average (1)

제 이름은 이에요.

저는 12 살이에요.

생일이 12 월 19 일이에요.

제 가족은: 엄마, 아빠, 언니 그리고 나예요. 내

친구 이름은 에요. 는 긴 머릿서요.

재능 착해요. 내 취미는 음악 들리기예요. 운동은

아무거나 해요. 나는 가고 싶어요. 주말

은 친구래 누래요.

Commentary

Learner Background and Program Context

This student is in Year 6 and is a background language learner. She was born in Australia and both her parents were born in Korea. She declares her first language before schooling to be Korean and English. She has studied Korean for 2 years since she was in Year 5 at a public school in Australia. The school offers two 50-minute Korean lessons per week. She has attended a Korean Saturday/after-hours/community school for a year before she was in Year 5. She has been learning Italian in the current year.

Features of Achievement in this Sample

The student has covered all the topics in the original task description. She writes about most of the topics using single sentences for simple factual information. For example, she lists words for family members in a simple sentence ending with a copula. She uses *그리고* to connect the last two items when she lists her family members. When she describes her friend, she writes in much detail in three sentences using descriptive verbs in different forms (i.e. *긴, 착해요*). She uses both humble and plain forms of the first person singular pronoun to refer to herself. Although this alternation reduces the cohesiveness of the text overall, they are used in their correct forms according to the case and/or the particles attached to them. When she refers to her friend, she uses '자 [*sic*]', a colloquial form of the third person singular pronoun for a child (inaccurately spelt), which is usually used in 'here and now' situations.

Difficulties in expressing ideas or information in writing are evident in the characters selected according to their pronunciation, which may be inaccurate at times; the limited range of particles; and the incomprehensibility of the last sentence.

However, she is able to use some vocabulary/grammatical items beyond their very basic level as shown in the above example of descriptive verbs and her use of 아무거나 (although its spelling is not accurate) and -기 in 음악 들리기. The latter example also shows her difficulties in applying multiple grammatical rules to one item. She also uses an auxiliary verb with an infinitive form of a verb (가고 싶어*요) in spite of the inaccurate choice of a character in its ending. The student may have partially acquired these items from a natural Korean-speaking environment that she is exposed to as a background language learner, and her writing is influenced by the features of her spoken Korean.

Year 6/7 Background Language Learners

Writing — Average (2)

제 이름은 요.

13 살이에요.

생일이 10 월 15 일이에요.

저는 동생이 한명, 엄마, 아빠, 2 할아버지, 2 할머니

친구 이름은 어려서 못해요 저는 모든 운동을

좋아해요. 저는 공원을 가고 싶어요. 주말에서는

한글 학교 강 친구를 해요

Commentary

Learner Background and Program Context

This student is in Year 6 and is a background language learner. He was born in Korea and arrived in Australia at the age of 6 after completing Year 1 in a primary school in Korea. Both his parents were born in Korea. He has studied Korean for 4 years during the 5 years he has lived in Australia. He currently attends a Korean Saturday school that offers a 90-minute Korean lesson per week. He has not learnt a language other than Korean and English.

Features of Achievement in this Sample

The student has covered all the topics as required in the original task description and each topic is expressed in a single sentence. He uses a limited range of vocabulary and forms/structures with some errors. While he produces short sentences in general, he uses some complex structures in a few of them with an auxiliary verb in '가고 싶어요' and with a conjunctive suffix -아/어서 in '친구 이름은 어려서 [sic] 못해요' respectively. In the latter example, where several grammatical rules are required at multilevels, the student uses the conjunctive suffix -어서 and negation correctly although he spells '어려워서' inaccurately and does not fully apply the conjugation rule to the verb '어렵다' in order for the suffix -서 to be bound to it. The student uses some common verbs other than the copula. These verbs are used correctly (in spite of the inaccurate spelling of '좋아*해요') and come at the end of the respective sentences following the subject-object-verb order. In the first sentence where he lists his family members, he writes '동생이 한 명' using a correct structure for the expression of numbers of objects/people using a correct form of the number and an appropriate classifier. However, immediately after this, he writes '2 할아버지, 2 할머니' where he follows the way numbers are expressed in English and the entire sentence does not have a verb.

He maintains the textual coherence by using the humble form of the first person singular pronoun to refer to himself and the informal polite sentence ender consistently. The student may have acquired certain features or rules that are more complex and/or at a higher (macro) level first, but he is still to acquire more basic items (such as spelling, basic particles).

As a background language learner, he may be able to communicate in Korean in an environment where he does not have to attend to basic items accurately.