



Middle Primary and Middle Schooling Speaking: Level 1

New to SAE: drawing on knowledge of the world in Home language [HL] (and in Standard Australian English [SAE] for some), and on HL and SAE language and literacy (to varying degrees).

Will label some objects and use occasional words related to classroom needs (e.g. Toilet, Miss; Water; Pen, Miss; Drink; Sir, Mr, Miss).

May use HL to express immediate needs.

Will use HL gestures to indicate meaning, particular needs, likes and dislikes.

May work through an HL-speaking peer to communicate needs.

May echo words and phrases of other children and adults, especially if hearing impaired.

- May prefer to observe rather than participate in whole class activities.
- Some learners may spend time without speaking in SAE ('silent period'); this will depend on the language learning strategies of the learner, and may depend to some extent on the learning environment.
- Will use HL conventions (e.g. raising the eyebrows for yes, bowing head in shame and not responding to save face, non-eye contact as a sign of respect, shared responses rather than single person turn-taking; silence and waiting before giving response) which may be misinterpreted by SAE speakers (e.g. as disrespect, no manners or resistance).
- May be very shy in a classroom situation where the student may perceive that SAE is the only acceptable language of the classroom. (May not be shy outside the school environment). It is therefore important to communicate through an HL-speaking adult that students' HL is valued and accepted in the classroom and that students are encouraged to use it for communicating their thinking in school tasks.
- May be confident to tell stories in HL using HL oral genres (e.g. yarns, control stories, creation stories [see Two-Way English, pp. 40-42]). This is to be encouraged, because it acknowledges, values and includes the students' experiences, and positions them as storytellers rather than simply as listeners to SAE stories; stories may be explained by bilingual adults/students to assist SAE teacher's comprehension. (See 'narrative structures' comment below.)

Additional Background Information

- May be confident speakers in one or more Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander languages/creoles/dialects and may be exposed to a wide range of oral language varieties, e.g. dialects of traditional languages, creoles, dialects, varieties of English, e.g. Aboriginal English, SAE, American English. The use of HL should be encouraged since self-confidence and a high level of oral competence in HL will assist in SAE development.
- May have highly developed understanding of conventions of social interaction appropriate to their community and home culture and. may have highly developed non-verbal interactional skills in their HL/s.
- May have delays in HL and auditory skills due to conductive hearing loss as a result of otitis media. Students with conductive hearing loss may remain at this level for a longer period of time.

COMMENTS

Supportive Environment for Additional Language Development

➤ Respecting Home Cultures and Languages

Students at this level, returning to the classroom after an extended period of absence, are likely to be aware of their responsibilities within their community and expect to be able to make independent choices about activities in which they engage.

The demands of the classroom (e.g. teacher expectation, structure, written formats), the school and the teacher may be different from the students' cultural/family life and world view and this mismatch may create possible issues for classroom management. In order to cater for this, classrooms need to value and respect the HL/s and culture/s. This can be achieved in a variety of ways including:

- recognising and valuing the students' home literacies;
- making connections between community and school literacies through school-community partnerships;
- recognising, with sensitivity, local histories to understand local attitudes towards SAE and the HLs, and
- providing bilingual support.

Students at this level need to be given some time to become familiar with and confident in the formal school setting – buildings, routines, classroom environment. Students may be from a home environment where well-known adults give advice and the child makes the choices, which could create a mismatch in a classroom where the teacher may perceive their role as the major player/instructor.

➤ Sporadic Schooling and Age Appropriate Learning Approaches

Due to issues such as attendance, mobility, conductive hearing loss and transition, the academic learning of many students is likely to be fragmented. Learning gaps may be apparent, even though school records may indicate that the students have been in the school system for many years. Even though students may be at this level, this should not be confused with their potential ability to learn academically. Teaching/learning approaches need to be relevant to the age level of the student and be culturally inclusive. Older students will benefit from adult literacy learning techniques on their return to school, rather than continually beginning with methodology designed for younger learners (e.g. using early childhood narrative texts as a basis for literacy learning).

Students with sporadic schooling, when at school, need to be given time to observe other students' behaviour, without teacher pressure for engagement in activities. This observation time allows students to establish the 'unwritten' rules for operating in this new environment and become aware of what their 'place' is in the classroom. Respecting these students' initial choices will assist in developing rapport with students and building trusting relationships with them. Students are more likely to engage in activities when they have developed confidence that they can participate without 'shame'. Once students are comfortable in this environment, they will benefit from explicit explanations of these 'unwritten' rules, e.g. following teacher directions; answering questions on their own.

Language acquisition and taking risks demand a lot of the learner. It is respectful to give students time to experiment and practise in a more private setting or in small groups/pairs, rather than in front of larger groups (e.g. whole class/parade).

➤ **Concept Development**

It is essential at this level that concepts are introduced and practised first in HL, before their introduction in SAE. Concepts will more likely be learnt if introduced and *practised* in HL first where possible.

➤ **Facilitating Progress in Speaking in SAE**

Students may disengage from **direct questions** perceived as confrontational which may hinder development of trust and risk-taking (e.g. What are you doing?).

'**Spotlighting**' (whether positive or negative), may also inhibit development of teacher-student relationships, e.g. If a student is late, 'Good to see you here, Michael. I'll need to see you before you go', said in a calm, firm and reassuring manner in close proximity is more likely to create a supportive environment for speaking rather than 'Why are you late?' A post-lesson discussion will not consume curriculum time or draw public attention to a student's behaviour.

Allowing students to tell stories in their HL creates an inclusive atmosphere in the classroom. Part of this inclusivity is to respect **alternative narrative structures** in these oral genres and avoid forcing them into SAE narrative structure for teaching purposes, etc. Translations of these stories would be for the benefit of the SAE speakers/teachers in the classroom, rather than to provide a teaching device.

➤ **Awareness of Language and Cultural Differences**

Silence may indicate that the student is drawing on HL patterns of communication, where silence is an accepted, valued part of interaction and where it is the listener's right to choose whether or not to participate.

Teachers may need to introduce awareness of language differences in communication patterns between HL and SAE (e.g. turn-taking, mmm, yeah, okay).

Middle Primary and Middle Schooling Speaking: Pre-Level 2

Beginning to comprehend and use SAE: drawing on knowledge of the world in HL (and in SAE for some), and on HL and SAE language and literacy (to varying degrees).

Are beginning to use parts of routine and formulaic social language (e.g. Good morning.)

May use short series of single words or 2 to 3 word formulae mostly without connectives, with meaning provided by context and sympathetic SAE speaker to convey basic needs, feelings and experiences. (Teacher, water; Who’s your name; This no good; Me the winner/I win (I’m the winner); On it/off it; off ‘em; on the light; Louden it; Bump ‘em (Hit the kangaroo); Miss, pencil; Teacher, paper)

Are developing a larger vocabulary of single word utterances.

- May be more willing to participate in team games and activities in focused SAE lessons.
- May still be reluctant to answer direct questions, preferring to communicate through peers/HL-speaking adult/HL.
- Will link SAE words with pictures/video images.
- Are speaking more in HL during informal classroom interactions and this is to be encouraged.
- May be more confident in classroom interactions.
- May prefer to respond as part of a group rather than responding to questions asked to an individual (expectation of individual response may hinder future risk-taking).
- May have a higher level of listening comprehension in SAE than SAE-speaking level.
- Are aware of the existence of languages in the community and the wider world.
- Are likely to make active choices about own learning (e.g. will give feedback to teacher; ‘Not yet’).
- May be confident to tell stories in HL using HL oral genres (e.g. yarns, control stories, creation stories [see Two-Way English, pp. 40-42]). This is to be encouraged, because it acknowledges, values and includes the students’ experiences, and positions them as storytellers rather than simply as listeners to SAE stories; stories may be explained by bilingual adults/students to assist SAE teacher’s comprehension.

COMMENTS

Supportive Environment for Additional Language Development

➤ Respecting Home Cultures and Languages

Students at this level, returning to the classroom after an extended period of absence, are likely to be aware of their responsibilities within their community and expect to be able to make independent choices about activities in which they engage.

The demands of the classroom (e.g. teacher expectation, structure, written formats), the school and the teacher may be different from the students' cultural/family life and world view and this mismatch may create possible issues for classroom management. In order to cater for this, classrooms need to value and respect the HL/s and culture/s. This can be achieved in a variety of ways including:

- recognising and valuing the students' home literacies;
- making connections between community and school literacies through school-community partnerships;
- recognising, with sensitivity, local histories to understand local attitudes towards SAE and the HLs; and
- providing bilingual support.

Students at this level need to be given some time to become familiar with and confident in the formal school setting – buildings, routines, classroom environment. Students may be from a home environment where well-known adults give advice and the child makes the choices, which could create a mismatch in a classroom where the teacher may perceive their role as the major player/instructor.

➤ Sporadic Schooling and Age Appropriate Learning Approaches

Due to issues such as attendance, mobility, conductive hearing loss and transition, the academic learning of many students are likely to be fragmented. Learning gaps may be apparent, even though school records may indicate that the students have been in the school system for many years. Even though students may be at this level, this should not be confused with their potential ability to learn academically. Teaching/learning approaches need to be relevant to the age level of the student and be culturally inclusive. Older students will benefit from adult literacy learning techniques on their return to school, rather than continually beginning with methodology designed for younger learners (e.g. using early childhood narrative texts as a basis for literacy learning).

Students with sporadic schooling, when at school, need to be given time to observe other students' behaviour, without teacher pressure for engagement in activities. This observation time allows students to establish the 'unwritten' rules for operating in this new environment and become aware of what their 'place' is in the classroom. Respecting these students' initial choices will assist in developing rapport with students and building trusting relationships with them. Students are more likely to engage in activities when they have developed confidence that they can participate without 'shame'. Once students are comfortable in this environment, they will benefit from explicit explanations of these 'unwritten' rules, e.g. following teacher directions; answering questions on their own.

Language acquisition and taking risks demands a lot of the learner. It is respectful to give students time to experiment and practise in a more private setting rather than in front of larger groups (e.g. whole class/parade).

➤ **Concept Development**

It is essential at this level that concepts are introduced and practised first in HL, before their introduction in SAE. Concepts will more likely be learnt if introduced and *practised* in HL first where possible.

➤ **Facilitating Progress in Speaking in SAE**

Students may disengage from **direct questions** perceived as confrontational which may hinder development of trust and risk-taking (e.g. What are you doing?).

‘**Spotlighting**’ (whether positive or negative) may also inhibit development of teacher-student relationships. e.g. If a student is late, ‘Good to see you here, Michael. I’ll need to see you before you go’, said in a calm, firm and reassuring manner in close proximity is more likely to create a supportive environment for speaking rather than ‘Why are you late?’ A post lesson discussion will not consume curriculum time or draw public attention to a student’s behaviour.

Allowing students to tell stories in their HL creates an inclusive atmosphere in the classroom. Part of this inclusivity is to respect alternative narrative structures in these oral genres and avoid forcing them into SAE narrative structure for teaching purposes, etc. Translations of these stories would be for the benefit of the SAE speakers/teachers in the classroom, rather than to provide a teaching device.

➤ **Awareness of Language and Cultural Differences**

Silence may indicate that the student is drawing on HL patterns of communication, where silence is an accepted, valued part of interaction and where it is the listener’s right to choose whether or not to participate.

Teachers may need to introduce awareness of language differences in communication patterns between HL and SAE (e.g. turn-taking, mmm, yeah, okay).

Middle Primary and Middle Schooling Speaking: Level 2

Beginning to comprehend and use routine SAE and to experiment with SAE in immediate, familiar environment: drawing on knowledge of the world in HL (and in SAE for some), and on HL and SAE language and literacy (to varying degrees).

Can participate in guided face-to-face conversations with a familiar, supportive adult; short responses may reflect HL cross-cultural influence (i. e. short responses may be valued in HL conversations).

Will rely on gestures and/or peers and help from the listener.

Will rely heavily on learned formulaic language and routine phrases that are comprehensible and substitute new words or phrases as they are acquired.

- Will demonstrate a beginning awareness of the differences between HL and SAE; however creole/AE speakers may use routine phrases that have enough shared English vocabulary to communicate the message, even though most of the statement may be in AE/Torres Strait Creole/Kriol, e.g. Louden it (Make it louder); Me the winner (I'm the winner); Give it to we (Give it to us).
- May communicate with teacher in informal settings – asking questions (e.g. Who your mother? Where she? You got childrens? How many childrens?).
- Will use meaningful chunks of language heard from language around them.
- Will use approximations to recognisable structures as they test hypotheses about SAE.
- Will use strategies to substitute unknown vocabulary (e.g. You know Miss, dat ting).
- May show a desire to communicate but will require time to process information and formulate a response.
- May choose to use HL with fellow HL speakers in classroom and other interactions.
- Will draw on HL and cultural and linguistic experiences, including HL knowledge of the world to understand and predict meaning (e.g. observing teachers' conversational speech and gestures) and take part to varying degrees, depending on personality, in school and classroom events (e.g. use of silence, non-verbal gestures, indirect statements).
- May use silence, drawing on HL patterns of communication, where silence is an accepted, valued part of interaction and where it is the listener's right to choose whether or not to participate.
- May use silence to indicate a reluctance to participate in conversations.
- Have difficulty distinguishing between and therefore producing certain SAE sounds (difficulties will vary depending on HL background).

- May choose type and amount of interaction they have with SAE speaker; respect for these choices will facilitate communication and further progress in speaking.
- May take more risks in speaking/practising SAE with Indigenous multilingual speakers than with non-Indigenous speakers.
- Will speak with more confidence out of school settings.
- May be confident to tell stories in HL using HL oral genres (e.g. yarns, control stories, creation stories [see Two-Way English, pp. 40-42]). This is to be encouraged, because it acknowledges, values and includes the students' experiences, and positions them as storytellers rather than simply as listeners to SAE stories; stories may be explained by bilingual adults/students to assist SAE teacher's comprehension.

COMMENTS

Supportive Environment for Additional Language Development

➤ Rate of Progress

It may take Indigenous language variety speakers in remote communities a long time to reach Level 2 (3-5 years) and therefore their achievement needs to be celebrated. The context for Indigenous language speakers in remote communities is very different from the urban immersion context where SAE language development generally progresses at a faster rate.

➤ Respect for Interlanguage

Constant face-to-face correction of students' SAE at this stage may impede language development and hinder risk-taking which is necessary to move to level 3. Making approximations to the target language is a recognised step in second language development. It is important to respect this stage and not insist on grammatical accuracy which is described as falling into place at Level 6 (though social fluency will be apparent at Level 5). This does not mean that language input should not be given at earlier stages, but that accurate output should not be expected. In addition, development of an awareness of language differences between HL and SAE through explicit teaching can take place without continual corrections of students' spoken SAE.

Students will be assisted by being encouraged to take risks and communicate meaning rather than to strive for premature accuracy which may lead to plateauing at an early level.

➤ Transparency (similarity between Torres Strait Creole/Kriol/Aboriginal English and SAE)

Teachers need to develop awareness of language varieties and language differences in the community (e.g. SAE, AE, TSC) so that the speaking needs of their learners can be identified and addressed. As Malcolm (2001) states in reference to AE,

Education systems have, for the most part, implicitly denied its [AE] existence by assuming that if Aboriginal children speak English they speak the same English as non-Aboriginal people, and should be subjected to literacy instruction and testing based on SAE. When they fail to achieve comparable literacy levels in SAE to those of other Australians, what is questioned is never the rightness of denying their cultural identity by ignoring their unique English heritage, but rather the students' ability, or their home situation, or their social disadvantage, or their lack of motivation.

This is equally relevant for Torres Strait Islander speakers of Torres Strait Creole and Aboriginal speakers of Kriol.

Assessing students who speak AE/Creole is likely to be more difficult if high frequency AE/creole vocabulary is comprehensible to the SAE speaker. Assessment may need to be suspended until students have developed more SAE language.

Learners may plateau at this level because of lack of understanding of transparency (similarity between creole/AE and SAE), and have difficulty moving to Level 3. This means that **awareness-raising of differences** in vocabulary and grammar between the languages/dialects needs to be sensitively introduced. This transparency is best explained to students through an HL-speaking adult and SAE-speaking teacher in partnership.

➤ **Concept Development**

At this early stage of additional language development, it is strongly recommended that concepts are introduced and practised first in HL, before their introduction in SAE. Concepts will be more likely to be learnt, if introduced and practised in HL first where possible.

➤ **Facilitating Progress in Speaking in SAE**

Students may disengage from **direct questions** perceived as confrontational which may hinder development of trust and risk-taking, (e.g. What are you doing?).

‘**Spotlighting**’ (whether positive or negative) may also inhibit development of teacher-student relationships, e.g. If a student is late, ‘Good to see you here, Michael. I’ll need to see you before you go’, said in a calm, firm and reassuring manner in close proximity is more likely to create a supportive environment for speaking rather than ‘Why are you late?’ A post lesson discussion will not consume curriculum time or draw public attention to a student’s behaviour.

➤ **Awareness of Language and Cultural Differences**

Silence may indicate that the student is drawing on HL patterns of communication, where silence is an accepted, valued part of interaction and where it is the listener’s right to choose whether or not to participate.

Teachers may need to introduce awareness of language differences in communication patterns between HL and SAE (e.g. turn-taking, mmm, yeah, okay).

➤ **Respecting Cultures and Narrative Forms**

Allowing students to tell stories in their HL creates an inclusive atmosphere in the classroom. Teachers who develop an awareness of **HL narrative structures** are more able to recognise when students are using them and respect their students’ choices to use them. At this stage, translations of these stories would only be for the benefit of the SAE speakers/teachers in the classroom, rather than as an opportunity to teach generic structural differences explicitly.

Equity Issue

➤ **Need for an Interpreter**

Students at Level 2 (and below) will not be at a stage of SAE proficiency to participate equitably in an interview with SAE-speaking authority figures (e.g. if in trouble, and needing to defend actions). Students may use HL features of communication which may contribute to cross-cultural miscommunication because of misunderstanding on the part of SAE interlocutors.

For example, one of these features in AE is gratuitous concurrence which is *the tendency to agree with the questioner regardless of whether or not you actually agree with, or even understand the question.... It is a very common feature of Aboriginal conversations throughout Australia, and is customarily used to indicate a readiness for cooperative interaction, or resignation to the futility of the situation* (Queensland Government (1999 pp. 9)). Other issues relate to questioning strategies, quantifiable specification (using formal systems, particularly numbers, to give specific details) and negative questions (see Queensland Government (1999) for details). Students will require an HL-speaking adult in interviews with SAE-speaking authority figures, to check on comprehension and interpret if necessary (to ensure equity).

Middle Primary and Middle Schooling Speaking: Level 3

Developing a range of social and classroom language and moving into learning through SAE: drawing on knowledge of the world in HL (and in SAE for some), and on HL and SAE language and literacy (to varying degrees).

Can participate in face-to-face interactions in SAE on familiar classroom or personal interest topics but with frequent breakdowns in fluency and meaning due to limited SAE resource; are able to generate own language beyond formulae and 2/3 word utterances. This creative use of SAE is an expected developmental phase.

Are able to participate in class interactions on familiar topics where teacher directs questions towards them individually, using contextual support, repeating and rephrasing and elaborating, but will have difficulty participating in discussions between teacher and learners at SAE-speaker speed.

Can participate in group learning activities with SAE-speaker peers only with a clear role definition (e.g. as the time keeper) which does not require much speaking in SAE.

- Will rely heavily on the context, and on the interlocutor for support (e.g. allowing time for the learner to process what they want to say, giving supportive gestures and facial expressions, rephrasing questions, etc).
- Are taking more risks with language. Can now take longer turns and reformulate utterances for better understanding, if confident with the interlocutor and scaffolding between the learner and the interlocutor occurs.
- Can initiate interactions with SAE-speaking teachers and peers. May negotiate meaning.
- May continue to use HL with HL peers/adults to communicate ideas and concepts that are cognitively demanding, and to discuss issues of content and procedure which the student needs to clarify.
- May use silence, drawing on HL patterns of communication, where silence is an accepted, valued part of interaction and where it is the listener's right to choose whether or not to participate.
- May be frustrated by the gap between what they want to say and what they can say in SAE.
- May 'code mix' (mixing SAE and HL) to convey more complex ideas, feelings and opinions (as a coping strategy) or approximate. Approximation may be difficult to identify without bilingual assistance.
- Will continue to use approximations to recognisable structures as they test hypotheses.
- Will take more risks with language when attempting to carry on a conversation with SAE teacher/community teacher, in that speech may be fragmented or stilted, as children search for language from their developing SAE resource to express themselves.

- May revert to earlier known language structures or HL when under pressure or when being questioned directly.
- May be confident to tell stories in HL using HL oral genres (e.g. yarns, control stories, creation stories [see Two-Way English, pp. 40-42]). This is to be encouraged, because it acknowledges, values and includes the students' experiences, and positions them as storytellers rather than simply as listeners to SAE stories; stories may be explained by bilingual adults/students to assist SAE teacher's comprehension.

COMMENTS

Supportive Environment for Additional Language Development

➤ **Respect for Interlanguage**

Constant face-to-face correction of students' SAE at this stage may impede language development and hinder risk-taking which is necessary for further development. Making approximations to the target language is a recognised step in second language development (e.g. "Kathy me lolly shop go" – using Wik structure with English words). It is important to respect this stage and not insist on grammatical accuracy which is described as falling into place at Level 6 (though social fluency will be apparent at Level 5). This does not mean that language input should not be given at earlier stages, but that accurate output should not be expected ("Keep putting it in, but don't expect to see it immediately"). In addition, development of an awareness of language differences between HL and SAE through explicit teaching can take place without continual corrections of students' spoken SAE.

Students will be assisted by being encouraged to take risks and communicate meaning rather than to strive for premature accuracy which may lead to plateauing at an early level.

➤ **Transparency (similarity between Torres Strait Creole/Kriol/Aboriginal English and SAE)**

Teachers need to develop awareness of language varieties and language differences in the community (e.g. SAE, AE, TSC) so that the speaking needs of their learners can be identified and addressed. (*See Comments Level 2.*)

➤ **Pragmatics (rules of usage)**

A focus on structural language features (e.g. grammar and vocabulary) alone is not sufficient to assist students to develop communicative ability in SAE and move to Level 4. There is a need to focus on pragmatics, that is, "...understanding of the speaker's customary way of interacting with other people, and this is determined largely by cultural background, or socio-cultural context." Queensland Government (1999) pp. 7; Solid English (1999), pp. 25; Shnukal (1996)). e.g. teachers need to understand differences in questioning and response (such as gratuitous concurrence), giving and asking for information, length/detail vs. economy of words, turntaking, role of the listener, the role of silence as a necessary part of the conversation. Conversely, students need to be made aware of SAE pragmatics in order to develop further in their SAE oral skills.

➤ **Concept development**

At this early stage of additional language development, it is strongly recommended that concepts are introduced and practised first in HL, before their introduction in SAE. Concepts will be more likely to be learnt, if introduced and practised in HL first where possible.

➤ **Respecting Cultures and Narrative Forms**

Allowing students to tell stories in their HL creates an inclusive atmosphere in the classroom. Teachers who develop an awareness of **HL narrative structures** are more able to recognise when students are using them and respect their students' choices to use them. At this stage, translations of these stories would only be for the benefit of the SAE speakers/teachers in the classroom, rather than as an opportunity to teach generic structural differences explicitly.

Equity Issue

➤ **Need for an Interpreter**

Students at Level 3 (and below) will not be at a stage of SAE proficiency to participate equitably in an interview with SAE-speaking authority figures (e.g. if in trouble, and needing to defend actions). Students may use HL features of communication which may contribute to cross-cultural miscommunication because of misunderstanding on the part of SAE interlocutors. Students will require an HL-speaking adult in interviews with SAE-speaking authority figures, to check on comprehension and interpret if necessary (to ensure equity). (*See Comments Level 2.*)

Middle Primary and Middle Schooling Speaking: Level 4

Extending the range of language beyond own immediate social environment and experimenting with learning through SAE: drawing on knowledge of the world in HL (and in SAE for some), and on HL and SAE language and literacy (to varying degrees).

Are able to interact socially with familiar SAE-speaking adults and peers in most informal contexts (e.g. discussing events with the teacher and peers in the school vehicle/at the shop; sharing work experiences with teachers/adults).

Can give personal information, and describe past and present events without great difficulty; may use words and phrases in strings to participate in longer speaking turns, and/or answer confidently with short phrases.

Are able to recount an event or a series of events orally (e.g. recount of process of welding in vocational education; group discussions about events in local community; talking to principal).

Can participate in academic learning activities on familiar topics if teacher and contextual support (modelling, scaffolding, recycling of language, etc.) and time are provided (e.g. can describe processes such as ‘The Water Cycle’ in simple terms).

Will still display ESL features (see below) but these will not generally impede overall meaning.

Can give a short prepared formal spoken report with heavy word-for-word reliance on their written text and with little ability to respond to questions beyond giving yes/no answers.

Can give short responses to open-ended questions.

- Are attempting to express more complex ideas and more precision of meaning as their SAE resource grows. Attempts at explaining more complex ideas in SAE (e.g. explaining a problem they have in specific subject areas) may cause errors in syntax, with breakdown in meaning sometimes occurring.
- May experience frustration as they realise the mismatch between SAE they can understand and the SAE they can speak. May wish to use HL for emotional support and as a break from continual use of SAE.
- May use silence, drawing on HL patterns of communication, where silence is an accepted, valued part of interaction and where it is the listener’s right to choose whether or not to participate.
- May begin complex ideas in SAE but revert (move) to HL when it becomes too complicated.
- May demonstrate pride in own culture and express understandings of own cultural background with confidence (e.g. may speak authoritatively about their cultural heritage, family camping, eating of traditional foods).

- May be confident to share features of Indigenous language variety (e.g. vocabulary, gestures, ways of responding, giving information). Alternatively, may choose not to share aspects of language due to family’s historical experiences of language loss (e.g. Everything has been taken away from us – our language is all we have left and I don’t want to share it with you).
- Are producing more complex language (e.g. using subordinating conjunctions such as *because, when, that*). Are able to apply syntactic rules correctly (e.g. subject/verb agreement, appropriate tense) but not consistently as they continue to make hypotheses and place more emphasis on getting their meaning across. Are showing signs of early modality (if, could, might, will, must, perhaps).
- May be confident to tell stories in HL using HL oral genres (e.g. yarns, control stories, creation stories [see Two-Way English, pp. 40-42]). This is to be encouraged, because it acknowledges, values and includes the students’ experiences, and positions them as storytellers rather than simply as listeners to SAE stories; stories may be explained by bilingual adults/students to assist SAE teacher’s comprehension. (See Note.)

COMMENTS

Supportive Environment for Additional Language Development

➤ **Respect for Interlanguage**

Constant face-to-face correction of students’ SAE at this stage may impede language development and hinder risk-taking which is necessary for further development. Making approximations to the target language is a recognised step in second language development. It is important to respect this stage and not insist on grammatical accuracy which is described as falling into place at Level 6 (though social fluency will be apparent at Level 5). This does not mean that language input should not be given at earlier stages, but that accurate output should not be expected (“Keep putting it in, but don’t expect to see it immediately”). In addition, development of an awareness of language differences between HL and SAE through explicit teaching can take place without continual corrections of students’ spoken SAE.

Students will be assisted by being encouraged to take risks and communicate meaning rather than to strive for premature accuracy which may lead to plateauing at an early level.

➤ **Transparency (similarity between Torres Strait Creole/Kriol/Aboriginal English and SAE)**

Teachers need to continue to develop awareness of language varieties and language differences in the community (e.g. SAE, AE, TSC) so that the speaking needs of their learners can be identified and addressed. (*See Comments Level 2.*)

➤ **Pragmatics (rules of usage)**

A focus on structural language features (e.g. grammar and vocabulary) alone is not sufficient to assist students to develop communicative ability in SAE and move to Level 5. There is a continued need to focus on pragmatics, that is, “...understanding of the speaker’s customary way of interacting with other people, and this is determined largely by cultural background, or socio-cultural context.” Queensland Government (1999) (pp. 7 2000; Solid English (1999), pp. 25; Shnukal (1996)). e.g. teachers need to understand differences in questioning and response (such as gratuitous concurrence), giving and asking for information, length/detail vs. economy of words, turntaking, role of the listener, the role of silence as a necessary part of the conversation.

Conversely, students need to be made aware of SAE pragmatics in order to develop further in their SAE oral skills.

➤ **Concept development**

Students at this level are in the early stages of learning to learn new concepts in SAE. Concepts will more likely be learnt successfully if introduced and practised in HL first where possible (e.g. discussion of topics, task requirements, etc.).

➤ **Respecting Cultures and Narrative Forms**

Allowing students to tell stories in their HL creates an inclusive atmosphere in the classroom. Teachers who develop an awareness of **HL narrative structures** are more able to recognise when students are using them and respect their students' choices to use them. At this stage, translations of these stories would only be for the benefit of the SAE speakers/teachers in the classroom, rather than as an opportunity to teach generic structural differences explicitly.

Equity Issue

➤ **Need for an Interpreter**

Students at Level 4 (and below) will not be at a stage of SAE proficiency to participate equitably in an interview with SAE-speaking authority figures (e.g. if in trouble, and needing to defend actions) and may use HL features of communication which may contribute to cross-cultural miscommunication because of misunderstanding on the part of SAE interlocutors. Students will require an HL-speaking adult in interviews with SAE-speaking authority figures, to check on comprehension and interpret if necessary (to ensure equity). (*See Comments Level 2.*)

Middle Primary and Middle Schooling Speaking: Level 5

Consolidating SAE language use in an expanding range of contexts and able to take a collaborative role in academic learning activities: drawing on knowledge of the world in HL and SAE, and on HL and SAE language and literacy (to varying degrees).

Are able to sustain participation in interactions in SAE in an expanding range of contexts expected at their phase of schooling.

Are fluent in social speech with few breakdowns in communication.

Are able to participate and collaborate in class and group learning activities with other SAE-speaking learners, but do not have the “depth” of language required to relate complex ideas which are needed in certain academic learning activities in SAE (e.g. , in a persuasive text in Studies of Society; in an explanation of a science process).

- Are less dependent on the teacher for repetition or reformulation, especially if the topic is familiar.
- Will have difficulty joining in if teacher and/or peers are speaking at SAE-speaker speed and/or if topics are unfamiliar and cultural references are frequent (e.g. eat your words, I know it like the back of my hand).
- Can contribute to new topic-specific discussions if teacher and contextual support is given (e.g. talking around the topic, presentation and explanation of new vocabulary and phrases, diagrams, charts, etc.) and if time is allowed for processing before a response is expected.
- May not be able to contribute specific details because of lack of ‘depth’ of understanding and expression in SAE, e.g. limited range of vocabulary, limited ability to express complexity (e.g. through complex structure and relationships such as modality (might, could), problem/solution (if...then), before and after, compare/contrast (similar to; different from)).
- May choose to explore more complex ideas in HL with HL peers and/or adults.

For Upper Primary/Junior Secondary Learners:

- Have an awareness of language, enabling them to comment on differences and similarities.

COMMENTS

Supportive Environment for Additional Language Development

➤ Respect for Interlanguage

Constant face-to-face correction of students’ SAE at this stage may impede language development and hinder risktaking which is necessary for further development. Making approximations to the target language is a recognised step in second language development. It is important to respect this stage and not insist on grammatical accuracy which is described as falling into place at Level 6 (though social fluency will be apparent at Level 5). This does not mean that language input should not be given at earlier stages, but that accurate output should not be expected (“Keep putting it in, but don’t expect to see it immediately”). In addition, development of an awareness of language differences between HL and SAE through explicit teaching can take place without continual corrections of students’ spoken SAE.

➤ **Transparency (similarity between Torres Strait Creole/Kriol/Aboriginal English and SAE)**

Teachers need to continue to develop awareness of language varieties and language differences in the community (e.g. SAE, AE, TSC) so that the speaking needs of their learners can be identified and addressed. (*See Comments Level 2.*)

➤ **Pragmatics (rules of usage)**

A focus on structural language features (e.g. grammar and vocabulary) alone is not sufficient to assist students to develop communicative ability in SAE and move to Level 6. There is a continued need to focus on pragmatics, that is, "...understanding of the speaker's customary way of interacting with other people, and this is determined largely by cultural background, or socio-cultural context." Queensland Government (1999) (pp. 7 2000; Solid English (1999), pp. 25; Shnukal (1996). e.g. teachers need to understand differences in questioning and response (such as gratuitous concurrence), giving and asking for information, length/detail vs. economy of words, turn-taking, role of the listener, the role of silence as a necessary part of the conversation. Conversely, students need to be made aware of SAE pragmatics in order to develop further in their SAE oral skills.

➤ **Concept development**

Students at this level are in the early stages of learning to learn new concepts in SAE. Concepts will more likely be learnt successfully if introduced and practised in HL first where possible (e.g. discussion of topics, task requirements, etc.).

Students will be assisted by being encouraged to take risks and communicate meaning rather than to strive for premature accuracy which may lead to plateauing at an early level.

➤ **Respecting Cultures and Narrative Forms**

Allowing students to tell stories in their HL creates an inclusive atmosphere in the classroom. Teachers who develop an awareness of **HL narrative structures** are more able to recognise when students are using them and respect their students' choices to use them. At this stage, translations of these stories would only be for the benefit of the SAE speakers/teachers in the classroom, rather than as an opportunity to teach generic structural differences explicitly.

Equity Issue

➤ **Need for an Interpreter**

Students at Level 5 (and below) will not be at a stage of SAE proficiency to participate equitably in an interview with SAE-speaking authority figures (e.g. if in trouble, and needs to defend actions) and may use HL features of communication which may cause cross-cultural miscommunication. Students will require an HL-speaking adult in interviews with SAE-speaking authority figures, to check on comprehension and interpret if necessary (to ensure equity). (*See Comments Level 2.*)

Middle Primary and Middle Schooling Speaking: Level 6

Becoming competent user of SAE in most social contexts. Use of SAE in learning contexts is sound but gaps need filling: drawing on the world in HL and SAE, and on HL and SAE language and literacy (to varying degrees).

Are able to take an active and productive part in all social and academic learning activities (within the range of ability expected at their phase of schooling) though some difficulties in expressing precision of meaning still persist in academic language.

Will be able to take an active and productive part in group activities around academic topics.

- Are able to express more complex ideas (at their level of cognitive development) on both familiar and new curriculum topics as long as the content is well grounded. Similarly are able to explain ideas to other learners.
- Can express ideas and opinions relevant to curriculum areas.
- Can give a prepared talk (e.g. , report, book review, persuasive speech) though cultural factors may still cause reticence for some when talking in front of the whole class, i. e. learners may not be used to such activities being more accustomed to teacher-led classroom activities and individual and class book work.
- Upper primary learners can take part in debates with support in preparation (e.g. , familiarisation with the text-type, and the language of argument; practice of delivery with emphasis on appropriate intonation and stress).
- Are likely to be able to participate successfully in drama and public speaking activities, personality allowing, as they develop more control over intonation, stress and pitch features of SAE.
- Will typically have a particular strength in fluency. Some lapses in tense usage will occur. Occasional gaps in vocabulary will be evident; will use approximations using known SAE to cover gaps.
- Will still have some difficulty contributing to discussions involving evaluation of cultural attitudes, assumptions and beliefs expressed in written texts because of complexity of language needed. (e.g. How would the story of Little Red Riding Hood change if Little Red Riding Hood were a boy?)
- Are able to code-switch in most social contexts.
- Are able to use non-verbal SAE appropriately.
- May still prefer to use HL generic structures when talking about events with family.

COMMENTS

Supportive Environment for Additional Language Development

➤ **Transparency (similarity between Torres Strait Creole/Kriol/Aboriginal English and SAE)**

Teachers need to continue to develop awareness of language varieties and language differences in the community (e.g. SAE, AE, TSC) so that the speaking needs of their learners can be identified and addressed. (*See Comments Level 2.*)

➤ **Pragmatics (rules of usage)**

A focus on structural language features (e.g. grammar and vocabulary) alone is not sufficient to assist students to develop communicative ability in SAE and move to Level 6. There is a continued need to focus on pragmatics, that is, "...understanding of the speaker's customary way of interacting with other people, and this is determined largely by cultural background, or socio-cultural context." Queensland Government (1999) (pp. 7 2000; Solid English (1999), pp. 25; Shnukal (1996). e.g. teachers need to understand differences in questioning and response (such as gratuitous concurrence), giving and asking for information, length/detail vs. economy of words, turntaking, role of the listener, the role of silence as a necessary part of the conversation. Conversely, students need to be made aware of SAE pragmatics in order to develop further in their SAE oral skills.

Middle Primary and Middle Schooling Speaking: Level 7

Competent users of SAE in all social and learning contexts (within the range expected for their phase of schooling): drawing on knowledge of the world in HL and SAE, and HL and SAE language and literacy (to varying degrees).

Are able to communicate fluently and accurately (within the range of ability expected at their phase of schooling) for the variety of purposes and audiences and across the range of social and academic contexts expected at their phase of schooling.

- Are able to explain with facility when they do not know the correct terms in English (e.g. *a burrow – a tunnel under the ground where a platypus lives*; (upper primary example), *an oil slick – the oil that spreads out on the water after an oil tanker accident*).
- May not know the SAE equivalent of some home-centred vocabulary which they would generally know in their HL (e.g. hammock, bedspread, tin-opener) and may be better able to express some features of home traditions and customs in their HL.
- Are able to code-switch effectively to suit context and audience. Have full control over language choices without conscious effort.

Additional Background Information

- Will continue to benefit from using their HL and HL peers and adults (e.g. at home, in the community, at their place of worship) and from being able to draw on their HL knowledge of the world.

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