

Stage BL progressing towards example 1

The student
Year Level: (11 years old)
Background: Refugee from Iraq; family came via several years in Iran
Language: Arabic; Farsi
Schooling: largely unschooled before Australia; is learning Arabic literacy in Saturday school

The task
 The student was shown a series of pictures of Iraq by the Interviewer [Int] and asked to tell as much as he could about them in English. He had the assistance of an interpreter [Ips].

The text shows that the student:

<p>can identify basic single items of information when talking about pictures</p>	<p>Int: Yes yes, it's in Iraq. What is this? S: Car Int: And what is this? S: Boat Int: And this? S: jamar Ips: he try to remember, he try to remember mosque in English, he knows</p>
<p>borrowes key words from previous speaker</p>	<p>S: [repeating] mosque Int: Mosque. Do you know how to write it? S: mosque? Int: Can you write mosque?</p>
<p>memorises new words and phrases</p>	<p>[child writes, adults help and emphasise /k/ sound] Int: What about this? What do you see here? S: stone stone Int: Do you know this animal? S: Horse? Horses? Int: They look like horses don't they? Donkey.</p>
<p>interacts appropriately in context</p>	<p>... Int: What about in this photo? What do you see here? S: Man with woman ...</p>
<p>constructs 2-3 word utterances</p>	<p>Int: Yeah, OK. Do you know the English for this? What is this? [pointing to a book on a market stall] S: kitab Int & Ips: Book</p>

This text is an example of a student progressing towards Stage BL. He is settling into situations where English is the dominant language. He understands that communication with teachers and peers needs to be conducted in English, but he sometimes still replies in Arabic. He has begun to learn the very basic oral English needed to manage learning in an English-speaking classroom. He is beginning to adapt his limited, emerging English language resources to respond to new communicative and functional demands. He has begun to become familiar with patterns in the sounds, intonation, rhythm, grammar and meaning of English. He is still heavily reliant on other speakers to scaffold the conversation for him.