



2010 LOTE: Japanese Second Language GA 3: Examination

Oral component

GENERAL COMMENTS

Many students performed well in the Conversation section of the Japanese Second Language oral examination. These students had a good understanding of the topics, presented relevant responses and could expand on their answers and give opinions. However, some students struggled to maintain the conversation and needed frequent support from the assessors.

Students who successfully completed the Detailed Study demonstrated an excellent understanding of their topic and explored their sub-topic in depth. Their information, opinions and ideas were supported with examples and evidence from the resources studied.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Conversation

Communication

High-scoring students provided detailed answers and demonstrated thorough preparation by speaking confidently and fluently throughout the assessment. They spoke with correct pronunciation and appropriate intonation, stress and tempo.

However, over-preparation was often a problem and students are encouraged not to memorise answers. Students should learn to listen carefully to the assessors' questions and address what they are being asked in order to give relevant responses. Students should give the assessors the opportunity to respond to their answers. Students should know how to ask for clarification if needed and learn strategies to carry the conversation forward. For example, それから、そして、つぎに、その後で and ですから. A variety of repair strategies should be learnt and used. However, 言いなおします is not appropriate. Successful students sometimes needed to confirm questions by asking, for example, こまったことですか... in response to 日本にいた時、何かこまりましたか. This was a good communicative strategy that allowed students time to consider their response.

In general, students need to pay closer attention to their pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo. Most students' pronunciation was satisfactory; however, some had difficulty with words such as 四人、(not よんにん)、レストラン (not リストラント)、ヨーロッパ (not ユーロッパ)、オーストラリア (not オーストレリア)、りゅう学生 (not ろうがくせい)、旅行 (not りょうこう) and サッカー (not ソッカー). Pronunciation of しています and しています requires more practice. Many students continued to say ホーストの家族 instead of ホーストの家族, and カリオケ instead of カラオケ.

はい、分かります、なぜならば and むずかしいしつもんですね are not appropriate responses after hearing questions. あいづち should be used instead. It is important to use あいづち to make the conversation flow. A range of linking words such as あの...、そうですね、そして、ですから、ええと、それから、それに and そのうえ are also appropriate ways to continue the conversation.

Content

It was evident that most students had prepared their topics thoroughly. The more successful students expressed their ideas effectively by using grammatical patterns appropriately and by including a broad range of vocabulary.

The less successful presentations were simplistic and lacked evidence of a depth of knowledge about grammar and vocabulary. Furthermore, they exhibited a limited capacity to vary sentence structures. Some students also had difficulties giving relevant, structured responses to questions.

In general, students were comfortable when conversing with the assessors about their families, the holidays they have been on, their schools and/or the subjects they have been studying. However, some struggled with areas of conversation relating to other aspects of their lives such as part-time jobs or their hopes for the future. As in previous years, it is worth noting that close attention should be paid to these areas when preparing for the examination.



Language

The criteria for assessment emphasise the importance of accuracy, range of vocabulary and grammar. Students are expected to use a variety of grammatical patterns and vocabulary in their responses.

Every year the same mistakes occur, including incorrect particles and use of tense. Use of the から/ので、より/ほう、と思う and て form of the verbs needed more attention. Many students still said きれいと思う instead of きれいだと思う. アルバイトがあります is not correct; it should be アルバイトをしています. たりたり should end with します/しました. 私がとっているかもく should replace 私のかもく.

Once again よく and あまり/あんまり were often used incorrectly. よく means 'well' and should be used with an affirmative word, while あまり should be in a negative sentence. For example, チームはよくかちません should be チームはあまりかちません. Using a variety of adverbs enriches the student's delivery.

たことがある still caused problems for some students. Common interrogatives such as だれ、どうして、どう、どこ、どのぐらい、いつ、どんな and どうやって and their appropriate responses should be learnt. Counters and time words such as 二人、四月、一ヶ月、一時間、週に一回、去年 and 来年 should also be revised thoroughly.

It was disappointing that basic vocabulary such as 旅行 (mixed with りょうり)、仕事、国、外国、がっき、けいかく、きょうだい、しんせき、なかよし、かつ、まける、よわい、にがて and そつぎょうする were not known by many students. Students need to be able to correctly use words such as ちがう、つづける、えいが・英語 and やすい・やさしい

Section 2 – Discussion

Communication

It is vitally important that students' discussion topics are structured appropriately. There must be an introduction which contains a title and a clear explanation of the sub-topic. For further information on examination requirements please see the *VCE Japanese Second Language Study Design*.

High-scoring students remained focused on the sub-topic throughout the discussion. They were flexible and prepared to answer assessors' questions in the order in which the assessors asked them. Consequently, the discussion was sustained for seven minutes.

It is inadvisable for students to select topics which are difficult to talk about in a second language. Moreover, it is inappropriate to give memorised speeches and use memorised sentences. Where this occurred, assessors were forced to intervene in order to facilitate the continuation of the discussion in a relevant fashion. It cannot be emphasised strongly enough that students are expected to engage in a discussion.

Assessors occasionally found some parts of students' answers difficult to understand. Previous Assessment Reports have indicated that it is important that students practise the pronunciation of difficult and unfamiliar Japanese words involved in their topic.

It was also noted that some students had difficulties responding to the sequence of the questions asked. Consequently, students should be prepared to be more flexible in their approach. This can be most effectively achieved by repeated practice in Japanese conversation.

Students should note that the expression とくべつけんきゅうでは、いろいろなしりょうをつかって... is **not** required at the commencement of the Discussion section of the oral examination.

Content

The choice of sub-topic is important to a successful performance in this section. Students who prepared their topic thoroughly and had good resources were able to demonstrate an excellent understanding and knowledge of the topic. It was obvious that they had given careful thought to what was involved and had prepared some extra information about their sub-topic. Ideas and opinions were supported by the resources studied.

In contrast, a number of students exhibited little evidence of detailed study of the texts, stating vaguely that their resources were the Internet, books and interviews. With this limited information they were unable to demonstrate adequate knowledge of the topic or express their ideas and opinions with reasons and examples. Students frequently



needed to explore and present their ideas with greater depth. The less successful students did not have enough content in the Detailed Study to enable them to speak for seven minutes. Teachers should ensure that texts have enough scope for detailed discussion and that they assist students to prepare adequately.

Students and teachers are reminded that sub-topics should reflect aspects of life and culture in Japanese-speaking communities. Students who choose sub-topics like *しんたいしょうがいしゃ* or *かんきょうもんだい* need to clearly connect these to Japanese communities.

Some students who selected the sub-topic *日本旅行* talked about their experiences in Japan. Students are reminded that their information should be based on texts, not on their experiences when they were staying in Japan. Students should be able to explore their sub-topic in sufficient depth in order to meet the relevant outcomes.

Language

Students should be reminded that 15 hours of class time are required for the Detailed Study. Therefore it is expected that students have had time to prepare and learn the correct grammatical patterns and the key words associated with their chosen sub-topic. Furthermore, they should have sufficient knowledge to discuss the subject.

There should be new and unfamiliar words in the resources used by students. They should not only master these words but also practise using them in discussion. There were many occasions when students used unfamiliar words in their introduction but were unable to hear and understand the same words when they were used by the assessors.

Students should learn a variety of vocabulary, especially those useful for discussion, such as *わるいてん*・*わるいところもんだいてん*、*お年より*・*ろうじん*・*年をとった人*、*わかい人*・*わかもの*。

Some problematic words in the Discussion were: *しゅるい*、*かいけつ*、*りゅう*、*げんいん*、*へんか*、*ふえる*、*へる*、*もんだい*、*いけん*、*かんがえ*、and (the name of the book)*を読んで分かったことは何か* . It was disappointing that a considerable number of students didn't know *女の子*、*男の子*、*女子*、*男子*、*女の人* and *男の人* . They should be able to respond to questions like *どう思いますか*、*どうしたらいいと思いますか* and *かいけつほうは何ですか* .

Repeated use of *前にも言ったように* is not appropriate and is not polite. Some students asked the assessors several questions; however, this is not appropriate in the oral examination and should be avoided.

Strong students used an excellent range of vocabulary and grammar accurately. They usually self-corrected errors and had correct pronunciation.