

2021 VCE Vietnamese Second Language oral external assessment report

General comments

The 2021 Vietnamese Second Language oral examination assessed the Vietnamese Second Language Study Design and examination specifications. It is important that students and teachers familiarise themselves with the specifications for oral examinations, available on the [VCE Vietnamese Second Language examinations webpage](#). Students and teachers are also reminded that a [series of videos](#) has been produced to help with preparation for the oral examinations.

It should be noted that during the oral examination:

- students may be asked a variety of questions of varying levels of difficulty. Questions may also be asked in a different order from the one that students anticipate
- assessors may interrupt students to ask questions during either section of the examination; this should be regarded as a normal process in a discussion
- assessors may also repeat or rephrase questions
- normal variation in assessor body language is acceptable.

Students were well prepared for the examination. Many students participated enthusiastically in the conversation, spoke readily about their chosen subtopic and image in the discussion, and generally interacted well with the assessors.

Students who scored highly displayed thorough familiarity with their chosen subtopic, which is appropriate in the context of the discussion. They spoke with breadth and depth of information, and were able to use engaging and interesting vocabulary, including the successful use of idioms, which made their conversation with assessors more engaging and interesting.

Section 1 – Conversation

Section 1 of the examination involves a general conversation between the student and the two assessors about the student's personal world and their interactions with the Vietnamese language and culture as learners. It is an organic conversation about the student's personal world.

Most students performed well in the conversation. They were well prepared and demonstrated very good pronunciation. Students who scored highly used an outstanding range of vocabulary and grammar structures, and their responses were quite sophisticated. Some students used poor sentence structures or displayed only limited understanding of basic grammatical structures.

It is important for students to practise conversation and not only talk about their personal world but also their interaction with the Vietnamese language and culture. Students need to have considered possible questions related to this aspect of their Vietnamese studies. Assessors may ask, for example, Do you participate in community activities, for example, the Tet festival? What relevance does speaking Vietnamese have in your life? Do you know how Vietnamese culture has influenced Australian society?

It is recommended that students make the most of practising Vietnamese, either within their families or community or with friends.

Most students were able to recognise when they had made a mistake and used appropriate repair strategies, or asked for clarification, for example:

- Dạ xin lỗi thầy cô, em xin được nói lại (I'm sorry teachers, I would like to say it again)
- Xin thầy cô vui lòng lặp lại câu hỏi vì em chưa hiểu rõ lắm (Please repeat the question because I don't understand it very well)
- Em không biết nhưng em nghĩ ... (I don't know but I think ...)

Overall, students were well prepared for the conversation, indicating that they had practised questions and answers to develop their fluency and confidence in carrying on a conversation.

Section 2 – Discussion

Following the conversation, the student will be required to discuss their chosen subtopic and the supporting visual material that they have brought with them.

The specifications require the student to explore aspects of the subtopic, including information, opinions and ideas. It is important to carefully consider the choice of subtopic and supporting image when preparing for this section of the examination. Images that included rich information provided more opportunity for students to be able to offer a greater depth and range of information, ideas, opinions and reflections about the subtopic. While the quality of the visual stimulus was not assessed, students who selected images that were easy to share with the assessors found it easier to communicate their ideas.

Students are reminded that it is not the image that is being assessed – it is the quality of the discussion. Students should therefore select an image that adequately enables them to integrate that image into a discussion about their selected subtopic.

The chosen subtopics were related to the two prescribed themes outlined in the study design: 'The Vietnamese-speaking communities' or 'The world around us'. Students are encouraged to explore subtopics that contain a variety of aspects to talk about so that they can provide an insight that goes beyond basic factual descriptions. Subtopics that would lend themselves to exploration in this way could include, but are not limited to, Tet Festival preparations and some New Year customs, the migrant experience and success stories.

Some subtopics presented by students were not sufficiently detailed and did not appear to reflect adequate hours of practice. The use of a range of learning resources should give students a deeper understanding of some subtopics. Many students should have included more specific detail and opinions to give the discussion more substance. Students who scored highly were able to elaborate on their responses when prompted and were able to impeccably move from one aspect of their subtopic to another. Lower-scoring responses repeated information and had little information to discuss. Students and teachers should choose subtopics that provide the opportunity for depth of study and scope for students to present their opinions and are of interest to the student.

Most students used the image to support their discussion and explained why they considered them to be important. Students who scored highly gave a clear indication of what their chosen subtopic was and how their image related to it. Students who scored lower were only able to describe the supporting image and answer questions insufficiently.

Students are reminded that the visual image must have minimal Vietnamese writing on it.