

2015 VCE Languages oral examination reports – Second languages

The following information applies to the oral examination for all Victorian and CCAFL second language studies.

Teachers and students are advised to read this entire report, not just the language-specific section, as it contains general and specific information about the second language oral examination.

The Chief Assessor for each study has provided comments on the quality of student performance for each language and this information can be accessed directly by clicking on the links below.

- Arabic
- Armenian
- Bosnian
- Chinese Second Language
- Chinese Second Language Advanced
- Croatian
- Dutch
- Filipino
- French
- German
- Greek
- Hebrew
- Hindi
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- Indonesian Second Language
- Italian
- Japanese Second Language
- Khmer
- Korean Second Language
- Macedonian
- Persian
- Polish
- Portuguese
- Punjabi
- Romanian
- Russian
- Serbian
- Sinhala
- Spanish
- Swedish
- Tamil
- Turkish
- Ukrainian
- Vietnamese
- Yiddish

General comments

The oral examination is divided into two sections: a seven-minute Conversation and an eight-minute Discussion. Following the Conversation, the student gives a one-minute introduction to the topic chosen for the Detailed Study and engages in a seven-minute discussion of the Detailed Study. The assessment for both the Conversation and the Discussion is divided into three sections: communication, content and language. The assessment criteria and descriptors are published on the VCAA website. It is important that all teachers and students are familiar with the criteria and descriptors and that students use them as part of their examination preparation. This will help students to engage in a lively and interesting exchange with assessors.

Although there are similarities between the assessment criteria for the Conversation and Discussion sections of the examination, the criteria assess two very different aspects of performance. In Section 1 – Conversation, students need to speak and interact with assessors in a linguistically and culturally appropriate manner about their personal world. Section 2 – Discussion assesses students' skills in presenting information and exchanging ideas and opinions. Students must be prepared for both sections of the examination.

Students need to be able to use language spontaneously to handle unrehearsed situations. Students should express ideas and opinions on this topic. Students are required to prepare an appropriate topic and be ready to defend it effectively. Sometimes a topic to which students can relate at a personal level may enable them to become more familiar with the content and vocabulary needed, and thus be more skilled to support and elaborate on information, ideas and opinions.

Students are reminded that assessors may ask a range of questions for which students may not be as well prepared. Although students are not expected to be 'experts' and be able to answer all questions asked, they are expected to have learnt strategies in order to respond to these types of questions. It would be valuable for students to learn phrases such as, 'I have not studied this aspect of the topic, but I think...', 'I don't know, but I feel'...' and 'I prefer not to discuss this topic, but can discuss....'.

Students need to be familiar with the terminology and vocabulary of the oral examination in the target language. Students are reminded that they must use the correct register. The setting of the examination is formal and students need to use appropriate language and generally avoid the use of colloquial terms. Teachers and students should refer to the *VCE Language Study Design* for further information regarding the oral examination.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

The majority of students were well prepared and performed to a high standard in this section of the examination. They listened carefully, were articulate and answered questions confidently. They expressed opinions, which were supported by details and reasons, and advanced the conversation. Many students had an excellent range of vocabulary and used a wide variety of sentence structures. However, some relied solely on rote-learned material and struggled when they forgot it or when the assessors asked a question that was different from the questions they were expecting. Other students gave answers that lacked breadth and depth, and some students used anglicisms.

Communication

Most students had prepared possible responses to the main topics; for example, school and home lives, family and friends, interests and aspirations. They expressed ideas and opinions, showed initiative and could discuss related issues. Most students were able to advance the Conversation with original input and some used humour. It is important that students elaborate on their responses and be as detailed as possible. Some students gave simple responses when far greater depth and more sophisticated language was required.

Some students tried to engage the assessors by asking them questions. Students should be discouraged from asking assessors questions as they should focus on demonstrating their skill in communicating their own ideas and opinions.

Well-prepared students used highly effective repair strategies, asked for questions to be repeated or rephrased, asked the assessors to speak more slowly and for time to think about unexpected questions or words they did not understand.

Students should anticipate the possibility of more challenging questions as they offer the opportunity to demonstrate their skill and grasp of the language. As the topics are generally familiar, students should be careful to learn the correct pronunciation of key words and be able to respond with appropriate intonation, stress and tempo.

Content

Many students could express opinions about the type of school they attended and elaborate on such topics as the advantages and disadvantages of school uniforms. They presented facts and ideas about their leisure activities and their future. It is advisable that students be able to discuss their plans for after VCE and explore the reasons, advantages and disadvantages of these choices. It is also an advantage if students who have part-time jobs are able describe them and express opinions about various aspects of their work.

Students should be prepared to clarify, elaborate on and defend their opinions and ideas as assessors will sometimes deliberately express a contrasting opinion simply to encourage students to justify their answers. Students might find it helpful to practise explaining their opinions or preferences to someone who disagrees.

Language

High-scoring students used a wide range of vocabulary, structures and expressions in an accurate and appropriate way. Some showed an ability to use relative clauses correctly. Mistakes were frequently made with verbs, particularly subject and verb agreement, expressing the future, the formation of the past, confusion in the use of tenses such as between the past and the future, the formation of the conditional and the position of the verb in subordinate clauses. Nouns about nationalities sometimes proved a challenge.

Section 2 – Discussion

Teachers and students should note that 'Following the Conversation the student will indicate to the assessor(s) the sub-topic chosen for detailed study and, in no more than one minute, briefly introduce the main focus of their sub-topic, alerting assessors to any objects brought to the support the discussion' (*VCE Languages – Second Language Assessment Handbook 2005–2018*, page 15). After this introduction, references to the texts studied may be made.

Discussion of the Detailed Study requires an objective approach and the language used may be less predictable than in the conversation. Students cannot simply rely on rote-learned information. A number of students supported their discussion with objects such as photographs, diagrams and maps, elaborating and stating why they considered them important. This was often a useful prompt. It must be stressed, however, that support material must be free of all but minimal writing. Material with more than minimal writing was removed prior to students entering the examination room.

A wide range of texts was used; for example, interviews, articles, short stories, films, poems, songs and photographs. Texts must always be appropriate for the student and the topic studied. Students are more likely to be inspired to take an active and appropriate part in the discussion if they understand the resources and have empathy for the material studied. Students should have in-depth knowledge of the texts they study and have a variety of things to say about them. Students must be able to reflect on their topic, to express their own opinions and be prepared to discuss and justify information.

Communication

Most students used the one-minute introduction appropriately. They stated their Detailed Study topic and sub-topic concisely and steered assessors towards areas they could discuss with confidence and strength. However, some students simply named their topic and then began retelling the content of the texts they had studied. These students had not formulated their own opinions on the sub-topic. At times the topics did not suit the linguistic ability of the students; they were not able to pronounce words correctly, carry the discussion forward, deal with a variety of questions or demonstrate good repair strategies when in difficulty.

In the seven-minute discussion that followed, most students demonstrated a sound knowledge and appreciation of their chosen topic. Most students spoke confidently and were skilled in expressing and elaborating on ideas and opinions, supporting them with appropriate evidence from the specific texts studied. They used a wide range of vocabulary and complex sentence structures, and had a high degree of interaction with assessors. They were able to advance and at times lead the discussion.

Practising a range of impromptu answers to a variety of likely and less likely questions may help students to improve their performance.

Content

Many students had obviously enjoyed their Detailed Study and spoke enthusiastically about their sub-topic. Only a small number of students showed little interest in their chosen sub-topic and relied on rote-learned passages. Students should be aware that relying solely on prepared responses hinder them from pursuing a meaningful discussion.

Students should be able to link their texts to their sub-topic and connect common themes in the material. When preparing for the oral examination students may find it useful to make notes, summarising the sources and writing down how their chosen texts relate to one another, rather than seeing them in isolation. They should try to analyse and think for themselves and be prepared to give some clear opinions rather than repeat ideas from texts or discuss the topic broadly. At times students referred to resources without appreciating the ideas they contained and were not able to develop their own opinions and ideas.

Students are expected to have dedicated 15 hours of class time to the Detailed Study and to have a variety of resources on which they can draw in the discussion.

Language

Students should be able to use a range of sophisticated vocabulary and grammatical structures, indicating that they have mastered the vocabulary associated with their chosen sub-topic. Most students had good knowledge of the vocabulary required, were able to use the correct grammatical structures, presented an excellent range of information, ideas and opinions, and used an excellent range of vocabulary.

2015 VCE Arabic oral examination report

General comments

Students performed well in the 2015 Arabic oral examination and it was evident that they were well prepared. Students and teachers need to be aware of the examination requirements as prescribed in the study design.

Some students communicated well despite poor pronunciation. Poor pronunciation affected many students' communication strategies and capacity to link with assessors.

Some students spoke either very quickly or too slowly. Fast-speaking students do not always communicate better than students who speak more slowly and clearly. Speaking too slowly can have the effect of disrupting the intonation required in order to communicate effectively.

Students must be prepared to converse on topics related to their personal world. Some students had little to say unless they were prompted by assessors' questions. This gave the impression that they were unprepared.

Many students gave in-depth responses and were confident about using a range of structures and vocabulary. While students must learn material for the different sections of the oral examination, it is how well they internalise and master it to present in the examination that contributes to their success.

The topics and subtopics chosen for the Detailed Study should reflect Arabic life and culture, and be suited to each student's interests. Some students lacked the linguistic ability to tackle some topics. Care should be taken with the choice of subtopic for the Detailed Study.

The assessors may ask questions for which students are not well prepared. Students need to develop strategies for handling unexpected questions.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

It was evident that students who scored highly had completed thorough and sophisticated preparation of prescribed topics (such as family, studies and plans for the future).

Some students moved easily between topics and displayed a lively interest in communicating with assessors.

Many students presented content of a very high standard. These students were able to expand on their comments and introduce new, pertinent ideas.

Some students used poor sentence structures, omitted verbs or displayed only limited understanding of basic grammatical structures, most notably the use of different verb formats (e.g. past and future). While many students used complex grammar competently, others used overly complex expressions that did not fit well with their true level of language competency.

Section 2 – Discussion

Students must clearly indicate the subtopic chosen for the Detailed Study.

Some students were unable to elaborate on or defend their ideas. In addition to being familiar with their topic, students could practise possible questions and answers so that they can expand on their themes. Many students gave confident responses.

Some students provided information that demonstrated their command of the topic. Other students were not adequately prepared for this part of the oral examination.

Students who scored highly used a wide variety of structures. Other students used simple and/or predictable language.

Common errors included:

- inability to move the Discussion forward
- lack of preparation for the structure of the examination.

General comments on the Detailed Study

- Some students presented topics that lacked details and did not reflect adequate preparation.
- Specific details and clear opinions gave substance to topic discussion.
- Students who scored highly summarised their topic and provided effective, interesting references to their resources.
- Some students lacked knowledge related to their topic.
- Students should choose topics that they are comfortable with.

Topics that worked well included ones that:

- focused on a student's own interests
- required analysis and offered the opportunity to take a stance.

Topics that worked less well included ones that:

- were purely descriptive
- were superficial and did not provide students with opportunities to highlight their opinions
- allowed students only to 'present a topic' rather than engage in a discussion.

2015 VCE Armenian oral examination report

General comments

In general, students were well prepared for the 2015 Armenian oral examination, maintaining the high standard of previous years. Students were familiar and confident with the format of both the Conversation and the Discussion.

Students' vocabulary, fluency and expression were of a good standard. Pronunciation was accurate, with clear and audible utterances, crisp consonants and correct intonation and stress. Students were able to engage the assessors using the correct register and appropriate grammar.

Discussion topics were well prepared. There was evidence of substantial research in all topics studied in this section. Students' use of rich vocabulary was impressive, and they responded well to logical and spontaneous questions.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

A wide range of topics were covered in the Conversation, including students' personal background, current studies, family structure, career aspirations, hobbies, travel plans or experiences, part-time employment and future plans. Some students also commented on relatives overseas and their family's migration experience. All students engaged with the assessors confidently, and responses were direct, highly relevant and spontaneous. As in past years, it appeared that many students could have continued for much longer than the allocated time for this section, demonstrating good preparation for the examination.

Students used an excellent range of vocabulary, structures and expressions accurately and appropriately. Sentence structure, pronunciation, register and expression were very good, as was the depth, breadth and complexity of the conversation, especially in response to open questions. A good standard of grammar was demonstrated; students easily used the correct tense and appropriate cases in sentence construction.

Section 2 – Discussion

Students were very well prepared and had researched their chosen subtopic well. Follow-up questions of an open nature were fielded well. The ensuing discussion flowed comfortably and students demonstrated a capacity to engage the assessors by using appropriate responses. Students also influenced the direction of the Discussion by clarifying or elaborating on answers.

Students demonstrated comfortable body language, good expression, sentence construction and an affinity with the topic area, and had mastered most of the subject matter. This was evidenced by the excellent answers given to questions, both in the content and quality of language used. Probing questions were handled spontaneously, logically and linguistically correctly.

2015 VCE Bosnian oral examination report

Most students performed very well in both the Conversation and Discussion sections of the Bosnian oral examination.

It was evident from students' use of the appropriate greetings and correct language that they had prepared well for the oral examination.

Section 1 – Conversation

In the Conversation, students talked about themselves and their families, friends, future plans, school, pets, music, travel, ideas, sport, interests and employment.

Most students demonstrated the ability to converse with assessors, presenting a good range of information and manipulating language and vocabulary well. However, in some aspects they needed to elaborate further on their opinions or when presenting their ideas. Assessors needed to prompt some students to support the flow of the Conversation. The language structures used were within the range of simple vocabulary and tenses and lacked detail.

Section 2 – Discussion

In general, the majority of students presented a wide range of information from a number of sources, and demonstrated the ability to confidently defend their personal opinions and original ideas. They succeeded in demonstrating depth and breadth in the use of vocabulary and were able to present relevant facts or ideas to create an interesting Discussion.

Some students presented a limited range of information and this interrupted the flow of the Discussion. Students should focus on extending their vocabulary and presenting well-thought-out arguments by preparing and practising for the oral examination.

Students who were well prepared used complex sentences and correct grammar and delivered excellent presentations on their topic.

Some students should have paid more attention to sentence structures and moved further from basic grammatical structures. Students must pay attention to verb conjugation and agreement, and to the building and agreement of participles (such as *radni glagolski pridjev*, which has three genders).

The sources referred to by students for their Detailed Study included newspaper articles, images, documentaries, music, short films, literary works, electronic texts and interviews.

2015 VCE Chinese Second Language oral examination report

Section 1 – Conversation

The majority of students understood assessors' questions and were able to present relevant responses. However, some students needed to improve their repair strategies and communicative skills. When they didn't understand assessors' questions, instead of saying '我不知道 (I don't know)', they could have said, '老师, 请您再说一遍, 好吗? (Teacher, could you please repeat the question?)' or '老师, ... 是什么意思? (Teacher, what do you mean by saying ...?)'.

Some students found it difficult to adapt when a question was asked in a different way from the one they had anticipated. Students need to be aware that assessors may ask a question using wording that students did not anticipate, and should be prepared to answer appropriately.

Most students were able to express themselves clearly by using accurate language, an excellent range of vocabulary and complex structures. Some used idiomatic Chinese phrases and proverbs in their conversation; however, some students used them indiscriminately and should have understood the meaning of these phrases and proverbs rather than just learned them by heart and included them for effect.

Some students needed to pay attention to the appropriate use of measure words and grammatical structures. The following are common mistakes made in their conversation. The correct version is given in brackets.

- 一篇书 (一本书/a book), 一个车 (一辆车/a car), 七十多个年 (七十多岁/over seventy years old), 20 多个度 (20 多度/more than 20 degrees)
- 昨年 (去年/last year), 下年 (明年/next year), 不有 (没有/don't have)
- 我当医生想去中国 (我想去中国当医生/I want to be a doctor in China)。我做功课在我家 (我在家做功课/I am doing homework at home)。
- 他的中文是很好 (他的中文很好/His Chinese is very good)。他的头发有黑色的 (他的头发是黑色的/His hair is black)。
- 比.....不同 (和.....不同/different from...), 散步一下 (散散步/to go for a walk), 黑头发也黑眼睛 (黑头发和黑眼睛/black hair and black eyes), 男女同学校 (男女同校/coeducation)

Some students needed to improve their four tones in order not to mispronounce 教室 (classroom) as 教师 (teacher), 有用 (useful) as 游泳 (swimming), 十 (ten) as 是 (is), 春节 (Spring Festival) as 春卷 (spring roll).

Section 2 – Discussion

The majority of the students gave a clear indication of which aspects of the topic they had covered and wanted to discuss. Some students tended to give a mini-presentation and tried to steer the discussion towards what they wanted to say or what they had prepared. These students were interrupted by assessors in order to have an interactive discussion. There were a couple of students who brought visual materials in order to support their discussion, but they didn't make effective use of them.

Several topics chosen by students were too broad and each aspect of these topics could be used as a subtopic. Therefore, it was challenging and frustrating for students to respond to assessors' questions. In addition, some students prepared too many aspects and didn't give assessors an opportunity to explore each aspect in depth.

Some good topics included:

- 三国志/Three Kingdoms
- 长江三峡/Three Gorges
- 茶馆/Teahouse
- 唐服/the Clothes of the Tang Dynasty
- 敦煌壁画/Dunhuang Frescoes
- 丽江古城/Lijiang Old Town
- 文成公主/Princess Wen Cheng

The resources students used in students' Detailed Studies included biographies, television series, movies, the internet, DVDs, interviews and textbooks. Many students used a wide range of appropriate vocabulary and correct grammar. Several students did not appear to know the meaning of some of the vocabulary they used. Some students used English words such as, 'sorry', 'I mean' and 'okay'. Students need to practise pronunciation of 'z, c, s' and 'zh, ch, sh' in order to express themselves more clearly and effectively.

2015 VCE Chinese Second Language Advanced oral examination report

General comments

Overall, students performed well in the Chinese Second Language Advanced oral examination. Their high standard of performance was demonstrated through their ability to integrate logically structured content into both sections. They listened carefully to assessors' questions and responded with fluency.

Some students were insufficiently attentive to accurate sentence order or unclear in their use of grammar patterns. For example, the response '长得很着急' (my appearance makes people feel anxious/worry) did not receive high marks.

It is recommended that students do not comment on assessors' questions, as a few students made comments such as, 'You have asked this question very well'. This is not appropriate within the context of the examination.

During the oral assessment, students should listen to and answer the assessors' questions as fully as possible, and not try to negotiate their preferred questions, with responses such as, 'Which part would you (assessors) like to hear?'

When beginning the presentation, students do not need to bow to 90 degrees, as this is not normal Chinese social etiquette and manners.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

Many students tended to recite a prepared dialogue, which is not required. The conversation is an unrehearsed interaction between the student and the assessors.

Students are not required to mention their name or the name of their school.

A few students contradicted themselves, saying, 'I have never done part-time work' at the commencement of their conversation, only to state later that, 'I think it is worthwhile to do part-time work as I have had the experience'.

Section 2 – Discussion

Many students chose either a historical figure or current public figure as their Detailed Study topic. Quite a few students believe these topics to be complex enough to be marked at a higher level, which is not necessarily the case.

Other students chose topics that did not match their talk or discussion. The topic 'Summer Palace', for example, focused on the life of a sculptor who designed a sculpture for the Summer Palace. A more specific topic would have provided a better match with the content of the Detailed Study.

Some topics such as, 'The advantages of paper cutting (剪纸的好处)' lacked sufficient content. Topics with a broad relevance, such as 'high-speed railway (高铁)', should be discussed with relevance to Chinese-speaking communities.

Some topics chosen this year included:

- 汉服：起源，制作，礼仪(Han costume: origin, making process, etiquette)
- 舞狮：起源，派别，禁忌，比赛 (Dragon dance: origin, schools, taboo, competition)
- 岳麓书院：历史，文物收藏，精神和影响 (Yuelu College: history, cultural relics collection, spirit and influences)
- 项羽：生平，军事才能 (Xianyu: all his life, military talent)
- 席慕容：个人简历，诗的风格，散文特色，席慕容现象 (Murong Xu: brief life, style of her poem, the characteristic of her prose, Murong Xu phenomenon)

2015 VCE Croatian oral examination report

General comments

Students were very well prepared for the 2015 Croatian oral examination, demonstrating commitment to language learning and the ability to communicate in a confident and appropriate way.

Specific information Section 1 – Conversation

Most students were able to respond promptly and accurately to a variety of questions in the Conversation, which focused on students' personal world. A familiarity with everyday vocabulary and expressions helped the majority of students to perform with confidence.

Students need to be reminded to use the correct formal register ('Vi') when addressing assessors and avoid using colloquial terms.

Communication

Most students maintained the exchange with assessors, volunteered extensive replies and carried the Conversation forward with minimal support. Some students gave minimal answers and waited for the assessors' next questions, rather than expanding on their response. Students should be encouraged to expand on their responses and not always wait for the assessors' questions.

On the whole, students demonstrated good repair strategies and were able to quickly recognise and correct their mistakes.

Content

Many students presented an interesting range of information, opinions and ideas when speaking about their personal world. Some students were unable to communicate their views or elaborate on their opinions in greater detail.

Language

In general students used a wide range of vocabulary, structures and expressions in an appropriate way. Some students used poor sentence structures and displayed only limited understanding of basic grammatical structures. The most notable errors included cases, case agreements between two words and the third-person plural present tense.

Section 2 – Discussion

The majority of students were very well prepared for the Discussion and presented topics that were carefully researched, rich in details, insightful and well communicated.

A wide range of texts was used for the preparation of the topic. Many students supported their presentation with posters containing images and maps, which worked well.

Communication

Students who were thoroughly prepared interacted well with assessors, moved the Discussion forward with their own input and were able to self-correct mistakes.

A small number of students were not sufficiently prepared for the Discussion – they lacked detailed knowledge about their chosen topic and so were not able to engage in a meaningful exchange of ideas with assessors. Some students prepared well but did not sustain the discussion. When students either didn't know enough facts or lacked the appropriate vocabulary to answer questions, they used meaningless fillers such as, '*je*', '*to ti je to*' and '*kužiš*'. It is recommended that students use a range of texts when preparing for their Detailed Study so as to develop and then present in-depth knowledge about their chosen topic.

Content

Many topics proved to be excellent choices as they engaged students' interest and were broad enough to allow students to adapt the focus to their special interests.

Language

The majority of students used an excellent range of vocabulary and were able to express themselves using complex sentence structures. Low-scoring students struggled to find the right word or the appropriate grammatical structure.

If students are studying the history of a place, they should learn some sentence starters related to adverbs of time, such as, '*krajem 5. stoljeća*' (at the end of the 5th century), '*od 1300-1900 godine*' (from the year 1300 till 1900), '*kroz stoljeća*' (throughout centuries), '*stoljećima*' (for centuries), '*na početku*' (at the beginning), '*na kraju*' (at the end), etc.

Students should spend further time learning how to create possessive pronouns from the names of places; for example, '*dubrovačke zidine*' (the walls of Dubrovnik), '*dubrovačka povijest*' (history of Dubrovnik), '*u Dubrovačkoj Republici*' (in the Republic of Dubrovnik), etc.

The most frequent mistakes included cases, agreements and occasional English interference.

2015 VCE Dutch oral examination report

General comments

Overall, students showed an excellent understanding of the requirements of the oral examination, demonstrating an awareness of the need to use sophisticated grammatical structures in their responses.

Section 1 – Conversation

Most students engaged with the assessors well through their use of effective eye contact and appropriate body language, and by incorporating typical Dutch idioms and expressions into the Conversation.

Common problems with grammatical and syntactical structures included:

- use of English words
- incorrect tenses
- incorrect gender with *het* and *de*
- lack of agreement between subject and verb
- incorrect use of vocabulary
- differentiation between *na* and *naar*
- word order
- incorrect auxiliary (i.e. *hebben* or *zijn*) in the perfect tense
- incorrect inflection of adjectives.

Students who scored highly used a wide range of vocabulary and good repair strategies. Students who did not score well had insufficient vocabulary to draw upon, which adversely affected the flow of conversation and their general fluency.

Section 2 – Discussion

The majority of students had prepared their Discussion topic in depth and were able to engage in a meaningful exchange with the assessors. Some students missed the opportunity to expand on their answers by waiting patiently for the next question to be asked. It seemed that these students had rote-learned their answers and they also used a limited vocabulary.

The list of linguistic errors that occurred in the Conversation also applied to the Discussion.

Students who scored highly demonstrated that they had thoroughly prepared their topic so that they were not only able to reply to searching questions but also expand on their responses. All students are advised to prepare their topic by reading widely around the set text(s).

2015 VCE Filipino oral examination report

General comments

All students were well prepared and performed well on the 2015 Filipino oral examination.

Chosen topics were varied and very informative, showing that students had researched their topics thoroughly. Some prepared appropriate visual materials related to their chosen topics.

On the whole, students demonstrated the ability to communicate with assessors effectively and appropriately. They discussed their Detailed Study topic effectively, using sophisticated and culturally appropriate vocabulary. Their sentence structures ranged from simple to complex. Students' fluency in the language and their preparedness enabled them to express and elaborate on their ideas confidently and spontaneously, and use repair strategies when necessary.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

Almost all students responded readily and confidently to assessors' questions. Some used humorous stories. Their spontaneity, body language, correct pronunciation and clarity of expression kept the conversation lively.

The topics of conversation were families, studies, friends, household chores, unusual experiences and future plans. Students should be prepared to answer a variety of likely and less likely questions related to the general conversation about their personal world. Please refer to the *VCE Filipino Study Design* for more information about the oral examination.

Some students mispronounced some syllables; for example, *kabutihán* was pronounced as *kabut'han* or interchanged the syllable in *katipunan* into *kaputinan*. The vowel 'A' in Filipino is always pronounced as a short 'A'; however, some students pronounced it as a long 'A'.

Section 2 – Discussion

Some students brought visual materials such as maps, pictures and diagrams to support their Discussion. Students generally answered questions readily and elaborated on answers appropriately.

Most students were articulate in discussing their topics and most expanded on them without being prompted.

To enable students to communicate effectively and appropriately, preparation and practice for the oral examination is vital. Teachers and students should refer to the *VCE Exams Navigator* for information on the oral examination and what may or may not be taken into the exam.

2015 VCE French oral examination report

General comments

Many students' spoken French language skills were of a high standard. Students who had prepared thoroughly for the examination communicated confidently and knew how to advance the Conversation and the Discussion. Overall, students were better prepared for the Discussion than for the Conversation.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

Students who scored highly conversed in a spontaneous manner and developed their ideas in original ways. For instance, to describe their professional future, they went beyond just telling the name of their chosen profession, commenting on the various opportunities offered and speculating about their future. When discussing their families, they talked about relationships and family activities such as travelling or going to restaurants. Students who did not score highly had limited vocabulary, gave succinct answers and used simple sentence structures with little elaboration. Many were unable to properly pronounce the names of subjects studied at school, such as '*la chimie*', '*l'éducation physique*' and '*le français*'. They also did not use the appropriate article with the name of the subject. Students confused '*je fais des études*' with '*j'étudie*', which was often pronounced '*j'étude*'.

Section 2 – Discussion

Students who scored highly demonstrated a sound knowledge of a broad topic, followed an in-depth line of argument and articulated sophisticated opinions. If no specific line of argument was offered, topics such as 'the environment', 'feminism' or 'immigration' were too wide-ranging; others such as 'the Eiffel Tower' or 'football' were too narrow. Most students handled well topics such as '*les banlieues*'. Students who did not score well displayed a lack of in-depth knowledge of their topic; they had often rote-learned their responses and were unable to explore the topic from all angles. Visual aids were useful if they were relevant to the study or when they assisted students to extend ideas and add value to the Discussion; however, many students made poor use of their aid and some did not refer to it at all. If the Detailed Study topic is World War II or the Resistance, students are expected to know the political leaders of the time (e.g. Général de Gaulle, Maréchal Pétain). If the topic is 'the biography of a film director: François Truffaut', students should be able to name some of his films and comment on his cinematographic originality. Students need to be able to offer ideas and opinions on the topic chosen.

Students often used the infinitive form instead of the conjugated verb. The use and correct forms of tenses such as present perfect, imperfect and, particularly, conditional and future were problematic.

2015 VCE German oral examination report

General comments

It was clear that students had prepared very well for the 2015 German oral examination and had learned appropriate responses to many questions that are typically asked in the examination. The overall level of performance in the core criteria of content, language and communication was good.

Students were encouraged to respond to a range of question styles and types in both sections of the examination, involving use of a range of tenses, such as the past, present, future and conditional. Some students struggled with questions that were not phrased using familiar structures, but usually asked for clarification or repetition of questions to ensure they had comprehended the words correctly.

While students are encouraged to advance the exchange during the Conversation or Discussion, and present their ideas fluently and with confidence, it is also important to understand that they will often be interrupted, particularly when the assessors would like to explore another topic or ask a specific question. Occasionally, students insisted on returning to a previous theme or stated that they wanted to continue talking about a topic rather than respond to a new question.

Students should anticipate that assessors may ask one or two difficult questions in each section of the examination to allow students to demonstrate their comprehension and perform at a higher level.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

Most students had practised the familiar topics very thoroughly, and they often presented original and interesting facts and personal opinions, rather than trying to keep to a factual formula of information regarding their school, family or future plans.

Students were often asked questions considering possibilities and alternatives, encouraging the use of the more complex structures such as the conditional, pluperfect and future tense.

However, a large number of students struggled with core vocabulary on familiar topics, and misused gender and case when describing common themes.

Section 2 – Discussion

Students presented a very wide range of themes and issues, and some new and innovative topics. Familiar themes, such as the environment, migration or the German Democratic Republic (DDR), were approached in new ways, including *Atomausstieg, eine neue Heimat* and *Sport in der DDR*. Other students presented such themes as *Essensverschwendung, moderne deutsche Musik* or *Jugendgruppen im zwanzigsten Jahrhundert*.

New and unusual topics often capture students' interest, but it is important to ensure that students have prepared sufficient content to be able to speak for seven minutes – including information, ideas and opinions – on the topic. Very factual or one-sided topics sometimes limited the students' ability to express opinions, as may occur with historical topics (for example, World War II, Stasi in

DDR, *Widerstand*, etc.) where it may be difficult to state alternate views on good/bad, successful/disastrous, depending on the approach taken.

Effective choices of topics and resources included consideration of a range of aspects on the topic, comparison between the resources and invited different ways of considering the same issue.

Some students struggled to explain concepts and the implications of themes in short stories and some poetry. It can be quite difficult to explore concepts such as modern childhood experiences using 19th century poetry, or to compare World War II childhood experiences with modern films or short stories.

Some students had practised how to express their ideas and opinions using a range of grammatical and vocabulary structures very effectively. However, other students appeared to need more practice in linking ideas and opinions with their materials.

2015 VCE Greek oral examination report

General comments

While all students controlled simple grammatical structures well in both sections of the 2015 Greek oral examination, some basic grammatical and syntactical errors continue to appear and more time should be spent on these areas. Common errors included:

- errors with common verbs: saying *πρέπεις, πρέπειω, πρέπειουν, χρειάζει, προσπαθάνω, αρέσω* instead of *πρέπει, χρειάζομαι, προσπαθώ* and *με αρέσει*
- incorrect stress (*δικήγορος, ο πατεράς, κατάστροφη*)
- incorrect word use: *είμαι έλληνας* instead of *είμαι ελληνίδα, ιστορική* instead of *ιστορία, εγώ δε μου αρέσει* instead of *εμένα δε μου αρέσει*
- incorrect use of articles and gender (*οι έλληνας, η άντρας, της μητέρα, η σπίτι μας, το τελευταία μέρη, το τανία*)
- incorrect plural form of nouns and adjectives (*οι άνθρωπους, πολλά έλληνες, πολλές φτώχια*)
- overuse of the nominative case: *είδα ο φίλος* instead of the correct case (*είδα τον φίλο*)
- incorrect use of the genitive case (*του φίλος μου, της γυναικών, τη πατέρα μου*)
- lack of agreement between nouns and adjectives (*η μητέρα μου έχει δύο φίλοι, το πλοίο ήταν ο Πατρίς*)
- incorrect use of the active and passive voices and verb endings in general: *ονειρεύω* instead of *ονειρεύομαι*
- incorrect use of the past tense: *αγάπησα* instead of *αγαπούσα, διάβαζα* instead of *διάβασα*
- inability to distinguish between continuing past and simple past tense: *έτρεχα* instead of *έτρεξα*
- using English words: city, and, no, yes, well
- use of anglicisms: (*το γιάρι, το φάρμα*)
- translating expressions from English (*δεν πάντα βλέπεις, από του αδελφού μου το σχολείο*)

Students need to take every opportunity to practise speaking Greek outside school and listen to well-modelled Greek as this will assist them to perform more effectively in both sections of the oral examination. Preparation for and practice of their Detailed Study is essential for end-of-year oral examination preparation. Teachers and students are advised to refer to the *VCE Greek Study Design* (pages 24 and 25) for information regarding the Detailed Study and also page 31 for information regarding the end-of-year oral examination.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

Most students were well prepared, able to maintain and advance the exchange, and expand effectively on aspects of their personal world. They were able to discuss more than one topic related to their personal world and develop more than one aspect with breadth and depth, expressing opinions effectively. They needed minimal support and had good repair strategies.

Higher-scoring students used an excellent range of vocabulary and grammatical structures accurately. Low-scoring students had a more limited vocabulary; for example, they did not know the correct words for the subjects they were studying at school, saying *κάνω ψυχολογικά* instead of *μελετάω ψυχολογία*. Common errors included the use of *σπουδάζω* instead of *μελετάω* and *δάσκαλος* instead of *καθηγητής*.

Most students were able to express their ideas clearly, paying particular attention to pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo. A very small number of students did not use the correct pronunciation and intonation.

Section 2 – Discussion

Students used the one-minute introduction well, stating the focus of the subtopic, highlighting the issues and perspectives they would be exploring and steering assessors towards areas they could discuss with confidence and strength. A few students simply named their topic and then began retelling the content of the texts they had studied. These students had not formulated their own opinions on the subtopic and found it difficult to express and discuss them effectively. Students cannot rely solely on rote-learning.

Well-prepared students had a high degree of interaction with the assessors. They spoke confidently and were skilled in elaborating on ideas and opinions, supporting them with appropriate evidence from the texts studied. They advanced the Discussion by using a wide range of vocabulary and complex sentence structures.

Some students were unprepared. The range and depth of vocabulary required to carry the discussion forward had not been mastered, and these students were unable to deal with a variety of questions asked or demonstrate good repair strategies. Students must invest more time in preparation for the oral examination. Appropriate resources must be selected to enable students to present opinions and ideas that they can defend effectively.

2015 VCE Hebrew oral examination report

Section 1 – Conversation

Most students communicated effectively and performed well. They were able to maintain and carry the Conversation forward successfully with little hesitation.

High-scoring students listened to questions and responded appropriately and with spontaneity. Mid-range students, however, gave prepared answers and struggled to cope with unexpected questions. This limited the progress of the Conversation and hindered its flow.

Most students gave interesting responses about their families, hobbies and future plans. They presented a wide range of ideas, elaborating on them and defending them effectively. When students spoke spontaneously about their interests, the discussion deepened and broadened. However, students who were determined to present prepared answers, irrespective of the content and direction of the subject matter under discussion, were unable to respond adequately to the natural flow of the conversation.

Most students were well versed in Hebrew grammar and applied it appropriately. Some students used unsuitable words because they were in a register that was too formal.

Some students refrained from using modern Hebrew and applied the rarely spoken pattern of the possessive noun too often. When students conversed with assessors in modern Hebrew, the quality of their conversation was enriched.

Section 2 – Discussion

The topics and subtopics chosen for Detailed Study reflected Jewish life and culture. Most topics enabled students to acquire knowledge about Hebrew-speaking communities and they generally showed a high level of interest and understanding. High-scoring students responded well to open questions that elicited from them understanding beyond the resources they had used. At times, however, the topics they had chosen were too theoretical and less relevant to their worlds.

Most students prepared well for the Discussion, especially when the topic engaged their interest. They had familiarised themselves well with their resources and drew on them to support and develop their points, which led to a lively discussion. When the resources were of contemporary relevance, students were more easily able to identify with them and therefore connect them to their presentation. Almost always this led to a better discussion. Some students, however, would benefit from choosing their topic before they select their resources so that the resources are related and serve them to achieve depth in content, rather than the other way around.

Some low-scoring students presented rote-learned information. Together with the use of overly complex language taken from the resources, this prevented the students from engaging in meaningful discussions and made it more difficult for them to present their opinions creatively.

2015 VCE Hindi oral examination report

General comments

Generally, students performed very well in the 2015 Hindi oral examination.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

Most students communicated well in this section of the examination. They used a variety of vocabulary and appropriate sentence structures.

Most students not only gave responses to the question they were asked but also explained the topic through the use of idioms and proverbs. They demonstrated good knowledge of grammar and used a range of vocabulary, such as विवेक, अनुच्छेद, चिकित्सक, सक्षम, सेवानिवृत्त, तत्पश्चात्, मनोबल, वार्तालाप, नैतिक, विचलित, घनिष्ठ है आदि. However, some students needed the assessors' support during the conversation and used irrelevant words. For example:

- sentence structure

आकर्षक नहीं होते, (आकर्षित नहीं होते) देखने जाने में मिलता है (देखने को मिलता है). वह विद्यालय में (उस विद्यालय में), सोच को चौड़ा करता है (विस्तार से सोचने का अवसर देता है)

- pronunciation

सिखा (शिक्षा) विध्यालय (विद्यालय) तथा (तथा) बोहत (बहुत)

Section 2 – Discussion

Generally, students were well prepared for the discussion. However, some students presented rote-learned responses and were unable to carry the discussion forward.

Examples of excellent vocabulary, good sentence structure and pronunciation included:

चकित, आश्चर्यजनक, अभिव्यक्ति, हिंसात्मक व्यवहार, प्रत्यक्ष, पृथक्, सहर्ष, समुदाय, वंचित, उपलब्धिया, अदम्य प्रयास, उल्लेखनीय- योगदान, लौह तत्त्व, मास पेशिया, अवसाद, प्रताड़ना, कगार पर, वृत्तचित्र, स्नातकोत्तर, प्रेरणा, विशिष्ट, कुरीति आदि

Examples of idioms and proverbs included: 'सोने की चिड़िया', 'मन खुशी से खिल उठा'² 'स्वतंत्रता जीवन का वरदान है' आदि

The range of topics chosen by students was wide and interesting, for example:

- Social issues: status of women
- Lifestyles: differences between rural and urban lifestyles
- History and tradition: festivals, famous people
- Arts and entertainment: Hindi films
- The world of work: impact of technology

Some students were not aware of the procedure of the examination and were unprepared. Low-scoring students struggled to explain the words they used. Further attention should be given to understanding the language and vocabulary they use in their discussion on prepared topics. Teachers and students need to refer to the *VCE Hindi Study Design* for information regarding the study of Hindi and end-of-year examination requirements.

Students should focus on:

- **pronunciation**
बरे-बरे (बड़े-बड़े), आकरे (आकड़े), पराई (पढ़ाई), परी (पढ़ी), विश्रत अध्ययन (विस्तृत अध्ययन) आदि
- **use of masculine and feminine gender**
विवाह होती है (विवाह होता है), ज्वाला होता है (ज्वाला होती है), तुलने में (तुलना में) आदि
- **sentence structure and grammar**
नये- नये खाना भी बनाते हैं, (विभिन्न प्रकार का खाना भी बनाते हैं), रोज़ दिन नये नये कपड़े पहनते हैं (हर रोज नये नये कपड़े पहनते हैं), बहुत ही अंतर में फ़र्क है (इन दोनों में बहुत फ़र्क है or इन दोनों में बहुत ही अंतर है), कुप्रथा मनाई जाती थी (कुप्रथा थी) आदि

Most students prepared their topic very well and were able to respond to all questions asked. Some students struggled to answer questions in detail, but their language, grammar and vocabulary was good and they used appropriate sentence structures.

2015 VCE Hungarian oral examination report

Section 1 – Conversation

Students spoke clearly, were able to link with the assessors effectively and confidently conveyed a range of information using excellent communication and repair strategies. Although pronunciation was good, some improvement with 'r' and 'l' and double consonants is needed.

The information students gave was well developed, but some students were repetitious. As most students had much information about family, school, recreation and the future, there were good opportunities for them to elaborate on their ideas.

Vocabulary was well used and accurate, and some students had an impressive range. Expressions such as '*megleckéztette*', '*áldomás*' and '*kiváló*' showed knowledge of nuances of meaning.

Some grammatical errors persist. Translating in the mind before speaking can result in Hungarian idioms being transliterated into often puzzling English, and vice versa. The two kinds of conjugation in Hungarian – the direct and the indirect – were frequently confused. For example, '*Nem tudom játszani*' instead of '*nem tudok játszani*' whatever it may be, piano or chess. The rule of suffixes regarding movement is: *-ba/-be* governs movement towards a place and *-ban/-ben* being in the place.

Another grammatical error included confusion of the indicative verbal form with that of expressing command; for example, '*mutatják*' with '*mutassák*', '*meglássák*' instead of '*meglátják*'.

Grammar was appropriate to the audience and context of the examination. Greetings were culturally correct.

Many students used a variety of vocabulary. Often the 'l' of the accusative was omitted or the case ending, *-ba/-be* or *-hoz/-hez*, interchanged; for example, somebody *iskolához jár*. Anglicisms occurred frequently.

The instrumental *-val/-vel* was used by some students instead of the assimilation with doubling the terminal consonants as in the case of terminal *-z*, *-s*, *-g* and others; for example, '*Kézvel*' instead of '*kézzel*'; '*szüleimvel*' instead of '*szüleimmel*', etc. The use of singular nouns following definite or indefinite numerals is incorrect; for example, '*minden tárgyakat*'.

Section 2 – Discussion

Most students were well prepared. They showed familiarity with their chosen topic and evidence of careful reading of their references, resulting in a good interaction with assessors.

Students presented an excellent range of information. They were able to elaborate on and defend opinions and used very satisfactory resources.

Effective communication requires clarity, well-selected vocabulary and nuances of expression.

Some students used some quaint expressions, for example, '*királyos*' instead of '*királyi*' or '*gazdag*' where a plain '*sok*' would have been better. Some modifying suffixes were not known; for example,

verbs from nouns. Instead of '*csinállok népi táncot*' the simple '*néptáncolok*' would do, keeping in mind that many such transformations exist in the language.

- Correct expressions were sometimes elaborated on when it was not needed. For example, *egyórás időként* should be *óránként* – the 'egy' is implied.
- *Mind* was often confused with *minden*, which is 'everything' or 'anything'. *Minden* governs the singular (for example, *minden diák átment a vizsgán, minden üzlet be volt zárva*). *Mind* governs the plural (for example, *a diákok mind jól vizsgáztak*). *Az üzletek – kivétel nélkül – mind be voltak csukva*.
- Comparisons caused some problems, but they are simple when using *olyan mint*. *A helyzet olyan rossz mint egy harmadik világban*.

Some students did not realise that following numerical adjectives, definite or indefinite, the noun is always in the singular; for example, *egy filmet, két filmet, több filmet, egy regény, négy regény, számtalan regény*. Word order is flexible in Hungarian; a lot of subject/predicate beginnings of sentences tend to be monotonous. The advantage of preparing the chosen topic well is the subsequent growth of vocabulary.

Improvements are still required in areas such as the absence of the 't' of the objective case, numerals that did not have plurals ('*két nap*' not '*két napok*') and verb errors (for example, which suffix governs which verb: *beszélék valakivel várok a barátomra* or *várom a barátomat*).

2015 VCE Indonesian Second Language oral examination report

Section 1 – Conversation

This section was assessed according to the following criteria.

Criterion 1 – Capacity to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively

The majority of students were well prepared and were able to hold a conversation with the assessors. High-scoring students were able to provide sustained responses to all questions and to speak spontaneously. However, many students did not listen carefully to all parts of questions asked; for example, some students gave a prepared answer to the question, '*Selain bahasa Indonesia, apa saja yang anda pelajari?*' when the question was, '*Apa saja yang anda pelajari di kelas bahasa Indonesia?*'

Criterion 2 – Relevance, breadth and depth of information, opinions and ideas

High-scoring students were able to express opinions and ideas, and had no difficulty in elaborating on their ideas. Their responses were relevant and comprehensive. Students with limited preparation struggled to answer questions.

Criterion 3 – Accuracy of vocabulary and grammar

High-scoring students showed a strong command of a range of sentence structures and vocabulary. Many low-scoring students did not use the correct vocabulary or correct grammar. Common errors included *jumlah* and *nomor*, and *untuk/selama*, or the omission of *akan* in responses relating to the future. Many students also made mistakes through inaccurate use of the verb form when using the first-person passive structure.

Criterion 4 – Range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar

Students who scored very highly used a wide range of sentence patterns in their responses. However, some students were unaware of the correct use of the informal and the formal in their responses, often using *punya* when *mempunyai* was the appropriate form. Low-scoring students were unable to use more than the simple sentence structures expected at junior levels, with *suka* used frequently instead of the more specific meaning in *gemar/senang/menikmati*.

Criterion 5 – Clarity of expression

Well-prepared students were able to maintain a conversational tone in their responses. They were also able to differentiate between words that sound similar; for example *muda/mudah*, *bahwa/bawah* and *suka/sukai*. Many students had difficulty pronouncing the Indonesian 'ng' sound correctly.

Section 2 – Discussion

This section was assessed according to the following criteria.

Criterion 6 – Capacity to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively

High-scoring students showed full understanding of all questions. Students are encouraged to practise answering questions that are phrased slightly differently in order to ensure that they can answer all questions as effectively as possible. Many students had limited knowledge of their topic, despite the 15 hours of class time that is required for the Detailed Study. Preparation is vital, as is practice for the oral examination.

Criterion 7 – Capacity to present information, ideas and opinions on a chosen topic

High-scoring students were able to provide a range of ideas that were well supported by the texts studied. Some topics selected did not enable the students to engage in a discussion as there was little scope for opinions or ideas to be presented. Students are encouraged to approach the selected topic in an evaluative manner that can stimulate discussion on aspects of the Indonesian-speaking communities.

Criterion 8 – Accuracy of vocabulary and grammar

Errors with using accurate verb forms were common, as were the accurate position of the auxiliary when using the passive voice. Students who were exceptionally well prepared were able to manipulate the vocabulary and grammar with well-controlled precision.

Criterion 9 – Range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar

High-scoring students were able to convey their ideas with a high degree of sophistication.

Criterion 10 – Clarity of expression

The tempo of many students' responses was too slow and indicated a lack of preparation.

2015 VCE Italian oral examination report

General comments

There was a varied display of competence in the level of language used in the 2015 Italian oral examination. While many students were in control of simple vocabulary and structures, high-scoring students demonstrated a sophisticated use of vocabulary, grammar and expressions. They manipulated grammatical structures effectively and were at ease in their use of tenses. In contrast, some students' performance was adversely affected by a lack of conjugation of verbs, use of the incorrect auxiliary verb, lack of agreement (article and noun, noun and adjective, auxiliary verb with past participle, knowing the difference in usage of the imperfect and present perfect tenses) and an inability to make the transition between the different tenses. Pronunciation, intonation and stress were generally well handled by all students.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

Many students were well prepared for the oral examination and were willing to engage in a conversation about their personal worlds. These students linked well with the assessors, provided extended responses and elaborated on the various topics discussed. Students had good control of the necessary language structures and therefore the conversation flowed naturally. Students who were less adequately prepared struggled to expand on their ideas and consequently were less able to demonstrate control of the necessary features of the task. It is important to note that in order to obtain a high score for this examination, students are required to elaborate on their responses by including ideas, reasons and examples. It is also imperative that they listen attentively to the question being asked in order to provide a highly relevant response.

Section 2 – Discussion

Many students linked well with the assessors and were prepared to carry the discussion forward. These students were usually able to use their text references to support their study. They were also able to justify their responses with reasons, examples and opinions. They used a wide variety of accurate language and vocabulary that enhanced their performance. Some Discussions lacked depth of research and elaboration, and the student struggled to maintain the Discussion. These students found it difficult to link with the assessors and provide the required reasons, opinions and examples in support of their topic. It was generally noted that well-prepared students were able to demonstrate their skill level and score highly for this section of the examination. Topics with a limited scope for elaboration and exploration created problems for some students as they were unable to sustain and advance the seven-minute Discussion. This prevented students from providing depth and breadth of ideas, and consequently they could not adequately explore their topic.

2015 VCE Japanese Second Language oral examination report

Section 1 – Conversation

Students were generally well prepared and demonstrated their ability to communicate in Japanese. They had a good understanding of the prescribed topics and were able to present relevant responses.

High-scoring students interacted well with assessors, listening closely to each question and giving relevant responses. They carried the conversation forward spontaneously and confidently. They were able to elaborate on their ideas and opinions by providing reasons and examples to support them. They included sophisticated vocabulary and various sentence patterns in their answers.

Mid-range students exhibited their ability to carry the conversation forward by presenting relevant information. They were able to elaborate on ideas and generally provided examples. Most students had a good control of simple sentence patterns. However, they needed to include more complex grammatical patterns in their responses and to use them accurately.

Many low-scoring students were only able to give short answers. They had difficulty expanding the conversation with ideas or examples. They often made assumptions about questions and their answers were irrelevant at times. Some students delivered a prepared speech about the topic but this was not appropriate. Students are reminded that they need to answer assessors' questions.

Most students spoke with good pronunciation, intonation and tempo. A considerable number of students, however, had difficulty pronouncing katakana words correctly.

Many students said もういちど下さい or just もういちど instead of もういちど言ってください when they wanted to hear the assessor's question again.

The most notable errors were with particles and tenses. Furthermore, a large number of students needed to pay closer attention to the use of adjectives; for example, they said 小さいの時、めずらしいの食べ物、きれいと思う、安いでおいしい and べんりとはやい instead of 小さい時、めずらしい食べ物、きれいだと思う、安くておいしい and べんりではやい.

Many students had problems with common interrogatives such as だれ、どれ、なぜ、どうして、どのぐらい、どうやって、and いつから. There were many mistakes in the use of time words and counters for people and pets. Students should learn the appropriate use of どこか、だれか、何か、どこにも、だれでも、何でも and いつでも. These are not only useful words but they also add sophistication to sentences.

Section 2 – Discussion

High-scoring students exhibited a thorough preparation of the topic. They were able to demonstrate good understanding and knowledge of the chosen topic. Their information, opinions and ideas were supported with examples and evidence from the resources studied. They used a variety of grammatical patterns and vocabulary accurately and appropriately. They were natural in their presentation and talked at the appropriate speed.

However, some of these students spoke too quickly, beyond a normal conversation pace, especially when they were introducing their topic. Students should be natural in their presentation and should speak at an appropriate speed. It is very important that students present their introduction clearly so that the assessors are able to ask questions appropriate to the chosen topic.

Mid-range students were generally able to communicate with assessors, presenting a range of information about their topic. However, they lacked the ability to explore it in depth by providing their ideas and opinions.

It was evident that some low-scoring students had resorted to rote-learning. Consequently, they recited a learnt response, regardless of the questions posed to them. This demonstrated a lack of deep thought about the topic. These students had very little information in order to maintain seven minutes of discussion with the assessors. Some students who chose sophisticated topics found it difficult to explain them.

Some students were asked questions about their chosen topics and replied with しつもんは分かりませんが日本語でせつめいできません。 However, these are not answers to the questions. Students who repeatedly used these expressions were demonstrating a lack of preparation for their chosen topics.

Some students commented on the assessors' questions by saying それはいいしつもんですね。 This is most inappropriate.

Some students had difficulty responding to the questions such as:

どんなしりょうを使いましたか。その本を読んで何が分かりましたか。そのりゆうは何ですか。それをかいけつするためにどうしたらいいと思いますか。かいけつほうは何ですか。 についてどう思いますか。ちがいは？ いいところ（いいてん）、わるいところ（わるいてん） and どうしてですか。

Subtopics students studied this year included: 自動はんばいき、ばんこんか、ユニクロ、お見合い、けっこん、クラブ活動、ぼうさいくんれん、食生活のへんか、コンビニ、ちょう高れいか社会、こんかつ、ボッチ社会 and おんせん（こうか、マナー、外国人への^{たいおう}対応）。

2015 VCE Khmer oral examination report

Section 1 – Conversation

In general, students demonstrated an excellent ability to carry the Conversation forward, and presented relevant information and an excellent range of opinions and ideas with reasons and examples. They used a variety of words, grammatical structures and expressions accurately. However, a few students had difficulties in applying proper grammar and vocabulary, as well as using unnatural forms of speech. Some students needed to expand on their opinions and ideas and avoid repetition of words or sentences.

Section 2 – Discussion

Most students were well prepared and had studied a variety of sources before the examination. They were competent and able to give specific examples with reasons to support their topic of discussion. A few students who seemed to have memorised the subtopic for discussion struggled and needed prompts to continue. These students ended their Discussion topic without conclusion. Students are advised to thoroughly prepare for the examination and to avoid rote-learned material as these students were unable to advance the exchange when required to do so.

Students who performed well:

- were prepared to interact with the assessors; for example, by using phrases such as 'According to my research ...' and 'According to my idea ...'
- responded to questions thoroughly and were able to elaborate on and support their opinions and ideas
- asked politely for meanings to be clarified and for unfamiliar words to be repeated
- were able to apply repair strategies successfully; for example, 'I'm sorry, what I meant to say is ...', 'I did not mean to say ...' or 'I'd like to clarify what I said ...'
- completed relevant research and fully understood the topic so they could speak on many aspects and give their opinion when required.

The key issue for the selection of a subtopic is in the ability of the students to support a stance with reference to the texts that were studied. The emphasis is not on assessing how much detail the student can recall about the texts, but on how well they can use this information to support the stance in the Discussion. Students who performed well were those who gave original thoughts and were able to elaborate on and support their opinions and ideas.

Some students tended to concentrate on relating facts or information and had difficulty sustaining the Discussion. These students presented a limited range of information and had difficulty clarifying or elaborating on opinions and ideas. This indicated a lack of preparation. It is essential that students prepare adequately for the Discussion. Students are required to demonstrate their understanding of their chosen topic by using appropriate vocabulary and topic-specific terminology. Students should not use rote-learned material out of context; students who did so were often unable to advance the exchange and needed prompts to continue. It was very important for students to anticipate and prepare for potential questions; students need to remember that the oral examination involves a Conversation and a Discussion, not the presentation of a monologue.

2015 VCE Korean Second Language oral examination report

Section 1 – Conversation

Many students performed at an excellent level for each assessment criterion during the conversation.

Communication

High-scoring students were able to carry the conversation forward with spontaneity. They displayed confidence by using appropriate facial expressions, eye contact and body language. These students demonstrated good understanding by responding correctly and confidently. Their pronunciation was very clear and their intonation and stress were good. Many students demonstrated their ability to ask the assessors for clarification when needed.

In contrast, low-scoring students tended to give minimal answers and waited for the assessors' next questions, which led to many pauses.

Content

High-scoring students were able to develop the conversation into a very interesting and meaningful exchange. Their responses commonly included their personal reasons, ideas and examples. Consequently, these students provided highly relevant responses to a variety of questions on different topics.

Some low-scoring students presented only limited information by giving significantly shorter answers. In some cases, the assessors needed to change topics as the students were unable to continue the conversation despite being asked simple questions.

Language

Overall, the students demonstrated very good Korean language skills in terms of vocabulary, structures and expressions. High-scoring students were able to use a wide range of vocabulary and a more developed sentence structure in their responses.

A significant number of students frequently mixed English words with Korean words. Some students often made mistakes in the correct use of honorific vocabulary; for example, 연세를 들으셔서 (honorific form of 'get old') and 식사를 먹으셔서 (honorific form of 'have a meal'). These students were unable to self-correct mistakes.

Section 2 – Discussion

Most students introduced their chosen subtopic and studied texts within the required time. They also maintained a discussion with the assessors by satisfying each assessment criterion.

Communication

High-scoring students demonstrated excellent communication skills by responding readily and confidently. They were able to carry the discussion forward with original input. These students were also able to ask the assessors to clarify or repeat questions when needed. They used excellent pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo throughout the discussion.

In contrast, low-scoring students displayed common errors in their communication. They hesitated before responding or responded too quickly. Both cases could have been avoided by thorough preparation and sufficient practice.

Content

High-scoring students demonstrated a thorough preparation of their Detailed Study. They displayed an excellent understanding of their subtopic and the texts they had studied. They were able to advance the discussion by providing extensive information about their chosen subtopic and use their texts to support their responses. It was evident that some low-scoring students did not comprehend some of their texts. A number of students either provided inappropriate responses or repeated basic information from their studied texts. They commonly depended on the summary of their chosen texts instead of comparing and contrasting them. Consequently, these students were unable to analyse the texts in depth and their ideas were inadequately supported during the discussion.

2015 VCE Macedonian oral examination report

Section 1 – Conversation

Students generally performed well in the Conversation section. Most Conversations flowed naturally and were interesting and engaging. However, many students needed to be prompted and showed a lack of preparedness. Often this was due to a lack of vocabulary; further strategies for vocabulary building may assist. Some students were able to use good repair strategies; however, others needed to improve their use of grammatical structures.

Most students communicated well when answering open questions and were able to give detailed descriptions and/or opinions.

Most students showed a very good level of understanding and carried the Conversation forward. They were fluent and able to link with the assessors to advance the conversation.

The most common errors were in verb tenses and agreement, as well as prepositions, articles and the incorrect use of word forms. Students need to revise the conjugation of most common verbs (key verbs) and the prefixes and suffixes of key words in order to eliminate the use of fragmented sentences. Examples noted were: *да си ја купам* ('ja' omitted), *што работа* (literal translation from English) and *научам да* (reverse word order of infinitive). Examples in vocabulary included: *одберано* was used instead of *одбрано*; error in gender, which should be *одбрав*. *Студнетс алсо транслатед литераллс фром Енглисх, фор еџампле, Стоев* ('stay', which is a literal translation from English).

Some students were very well prepared and used grammar and vocabulary correctly, depending on the context. Limited vocabulary appropriate to the topic prevented some students from expressing themselves clearly. Some students also struggled to present information and opinions.

The Conversation should be spontaneous and should not sound rehearsed. Students should practice intonation, pronunciation and appropriate pauses so that the conversation flows naturally. Students also need to learn subject names in Macedonian and should not use English to name other studies they are undertaking at school. For example, pronunciation of subject names (for example, *психологија*) and the pronunciation of *ј* and *ќ*.

Section 2 – Discussion

Some topics were appropriate and proved to be very good for discussion; however, it was clear that some students needed further guidance as to what was an appropriate topic. Some students' Detailed Study lacked content, breadth and depth. Students are advised to use at least three texts when preparing their Detailed Study to ensure that they have enough material to discuss.

Topics chosen should be at an appropriate level for VCE students with enough detail and content to advance the discussion and to allow for analysis and opinions.

Students should be aware of the expectations of the Detailed Study. Topics should allow for breadth, depth, analysis and opinions. Students should understand their chosen topic well. Some

students had prepared thoroughly and other students repeated information. A number of students brought visuals (including maps) to support the Discussion and this worked well.

Anglicisms should be avoided. For example, *темата што ја изучував* ('ja' omitted), *одбирал* instead of *ја одбрав*.

2015 VCE Persian oral examination report

General comments

Most students performed well on the 2015 Persian oral examination. They were able to maintain an effective conversation. It is important that students prepare sufficient content in order to discuss their Detailed Study topic for eight minutes.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

Most students performed well in this section of the examination and demonstrated a high level of competence and preparation. All students began the conversation using culturally appropriate greetings. The majority of students were able to express their ideas and opinions in depth.

Some students found it difficult to extend beyond 'yes' or 'no' answers and required support to carry the Conversation forward. Sometimes English words were used when students struggled to find the equivalent Persian words. Students should learn the names of their school subjects in Persian and avoid using their English equivalent. Many students used a good range of relevant vocabulary and very good sentence structures in this section of the oral examination. The most common errors involved the use of English vocabulary.

Section 2 – Discussion

Many students performed well in this section of the examination. High-scoring students were able to elaborate and provide opinions on their subtopics, using sophisticated vocabulary and grammar. Students should thoroughly research their topic and be prepared to discuss different aspects of their subtopic, especially when the topic is complex. Lack of preparation was evident for some students, who were unable to elaborate on their responses.

It is important that the topic chosen for discussion meets the requirements of the *VCE Persian Study Design*. Students who chose topics that had no identified links with Persian-speaking communities missed out on scoring high marks.

There was a wide variety of topics chosen for discussion. Students mainly used the internet as a source of information. Although the internet is a good source, students should use at least two more sources to ensure they have enough varied information. Teachers and students should refer to the *VCE Exams Navigator* for information regarding what can and cannot be brought into the oral examination.

2015 VCE Polish oral examination report

General comments

Students generally performed very well in the 2015 Polish oral examination. The majority of students showed that they had thoroughly researched their topic for the Discussion.

In most cases students used vocabulary and grammatical structures that were appropriate to the setting and register. Some errors occurred, but these errors did not interfere with the student's intended meaning. In general, students were able to correct their own mistakes, using effective repair strategies confidently.

The most common grammar mistakes were the declination of nouns and adjectives (for example, *spacerowac po pięknych ogrod*), verb conjugation and the use of inappropriate informal language when addressing assessors (*ty* instead of *pani*).

All students pronounced key vocabulary and utterances with sufficient sound, clarity and stress, and responded appropriately to requests for clarification. Some students made mistakes with *sz/cz* sounds and soft consonants *s/c*. Many students adopted good communicative strategies, such as eye contact, use of body language and expressive presentation.

Most students used visual aids to support their presentation.

Specific information

The manner of delivery in both sections was generally very good. Overall, the accuracy and level of appropriateness in relation to the use of vocabulary, grammar structure and pronunciation were very good.

Section 1 – Conversation

All students participated effectively and confidently in conversations with changing topics and managed topic changes well.

The majority of students demonstrated a very good or an excellent level of understanding of assessors' questions and responded with a relevant and wide range of personal information or opinions. They opened the Conversation appropriately using expressions for greetings or questions.

The majority of students sustained the dialogue by using appropriate interaction strategies as required; for example, taking turns, giving feedback, seeking clarification or asking follow-up questions. They used some common idiomatic expressions accurately.

The level of language used was good, and students demonstrated very good skills in self-correction. Although the majority of students were very confident in this section, not all students were able to advance the Conversation adequately, which restricted their ability to deal with the content and interact with the assessors. They used limited vocabulary and inappropriate grammatical structures.

Section 2 – Discussion

The majority of students delivered a well-structured and coherent presentation on their Detailed Study. The most popular topics were Polish places and the Polish Calendar.

Students used a variety of sources when researching their Detailed Study (the internet, books, essays, magazines, family members and personal diaries from visits to Poland). Students who used appropriate and detailed resources, such as essays and articles, performed at a high level. Most of the topics were introduced well and many were very well developed. Many students were well prepared for the Discussion on their chosen topic, and were open and eager to express their own knowledge and opinions.

A small number of students, after naming their resources, did not have adequate information to add, which suggested that they had not prepared in sufficient depth for the Discussion. This statement relates mostly to students who researched a specific event or celebration.

Some students expressed their viewpoints with supporting evidence.

Most students had a good range of vocabulary, structures and expressions, but some could have produced a greater variety of vocabulary (for example, *możesz zobaczyć ...*, *sa stare budynki*) and better grammatical structures (for example, *turysty mogą iść do zamku*). This would have assisted them to produce a more sustained and more coherent argument.

In most cases, the students presented a clear sequence of introduction, content and conclusion. They delivered clear facts, statements or viewpoints with substantiation if required.

Most students linked their main ideas logically and cohesively and responded to questions appropriately.

2015 VCE Portuguese oral examination report

Section 1 – Conversation

Most students were well prepared and generally performed to a high standard in this section. Most answered questions confidently. However, some students gave very brief answers and lacked the appropriate strategies to deal with unexpected questions.

Communication

Most students had good communication skills and were able to talk about a wide range of topics, including school, interests, home life and future aspirations. They were able to express opinions and ideas. However, some students struggled to give detailed responses.

Most students were able to self-correct errors and asked for repetition or rephrasing when they did not understand a question or when they were asked an unexpected question. Students must anticipate the possibility of more challenging questions and develop strategies to cope with such situations.

Content

Most students were able to talk about familiar topics; however, they are expected to elaborate on their answers and express their opinions rather than just provide brief answers.

Some students were not able to advance the conversation and lacked the appropriate strategies to deal with moments of silence. Sometimes a question might only require a simple answer but this can be an opportunity for a student to show their linguistic ability. Students must remember to support their answers with details and reasons.

Language

High-scoring students used an extensive range of vocabulary and appropriate structures. Most students struggled with a clear translation from English into Portuguese. Some made mistakes with grammar, for example:

- anglicisms: *Na minha família tem 4 pessoas*
- errors with prepositions: *No Guimarães' Na Coímbra*
- false friends: *sensível/sensato* (sensitive), *suportar/apoiar* (support), *pavimento/calçada* (pavement), *lanche/almoço* (lunch), *eventualmente/algum dia* (eventually), *assistir/ajudar* (assist), *compromisso/apontamento* (appointment), *na verdade/atualmente* (actually).

Low-scoring students used very informal expressions, particularly in greetings, and some used slang during the conversation, which was not appropriate.

Section 2 – Discussion

Most students supported the Discussion with objects such as photographs and maps, using them to illustrate their chosen topic. Although visuals can assist their presentation, some students relied too heavily on their support resources.

Communication

Most students introduced the topic appropriately and made reference to the resources they used.

In the discussion that followed, most students were able to discuss their topic, yet lacked the capacity to reflect on it and express their own opinions. Some were not prepared to discuss and justify information. Some lacked the linguistic ability to discuss the topic in more depth.

Content

Some students were enthusiastic about their topic and this was reflected in their performance. Their interest allowed them to discuss their topic confidently.

Only a small number of students were able to link their texts to their subtopic and connect all the information gathered in order to generate a stimulating discussion. Subtopics should reflect the interests and abilities of the students, as this will allow the students to express their opinions, be more analytical and support their ideas with examples and evidence.

It is important that students are aware that they are expected to be able to explore the topic and not simply give a short summary of information. Students should feel confident in their knowledge of the subtopic and rely less on visuals brought to support the Discussion.

Language

Most students had a good knowledge of the appropriate vocabulary and used correct grammar structures; however, some used anglicisms.

Most students could self-correct errors and ask for a question to be repeated when they did not understand. Some students were not able to use the necessary sophisticated language.

2015 VCE Punjabi oral examination report

General comments

Students generally performed well in the 2015 Punjabi oral examination. Some students performed exceptionally well; they were fluent in spoken Punjabi, confident and focused during both sections of the examination, and they engaged with the assessors very well. Some students had difficulty expressing themselves.

Students should be assisted in selecting their Detailed Study topics and ensuring that they have sufficient content. In preparation for the oral examination, students are advised to practise their speaking skills regularly to develop confidence and use a wide range of vocabulary to show their competence.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

Students began with appropriate greetings and language to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. During the Conversation, students were expected to communicate with assessors in Punjabi about their personal world on topics such as school, friends, family, home life, holidays, leisure activities, personal interests, studies, future aspirations and employment. Well-prepared students used effective communication strategies and gave some strong opinions about their aspirations and future plans. Many students engaged with assessors for the required amount of time and had enough information for a longer discussion. Some poorly prepared students were not able to elaborate on or defend their ideas; these students relied on rote-learned or scripted speeches. Students should note that questions are not asked in a prearranged order. Students are required to answer unexpected questions related to their chosen topic and carry on a conversation.

Some students used English or Hindi words, and others made errors such as ਵਿਤਕਰਾ ਹੁੰਦੀ ਹੈ, ਕੁੜੀਆਂ ਕੁਆਰਾ ਹੀ ਰਹੇ, when the correct pronunciation was ਵਿਤਕਰਾ ਹੁੰਦਾ ਹੈ, ਕੁੜੀਆਂ ਕੁਆਰੀਆਂ ਹੀ ਰਹਿਣ.

During the examination students should be able to seek clarification if necessary. Students should be aware that they may be asked a range of questions and anything mentioned in the introduction may be discussed in the ensuing conversation.

Section 2 – Discussion

Students were expected to present the topic and subtopic they selected for Detailed Study. Students are reminded that they will not be penalised if they do not mention in their introduction the texts they have studied, but they should be prepared to identify and discuss them during the Discussion. There was a wide variety of chosen topics, ranging from Freedom fighters of Punjab, Punjabi religion and culture, famous historical people, social issues such as gender differences, arts and entertainment, to historical landmarks. Well-prepared students were able to discuss their Detailed Study topic with reference to the texts used. Some students brought photographs to support their discussion and a few students relied heavily on these materials. It is important for students and teachers to be aware that this section of the oral examination is a discussion, not a presentation, and that students should not rely heavily on visual aids brought to support the Discussion. The discussion should continue smoothly without constant reference to the visuals.

A few students struggled to advance the Discussion. When selecting a Discussion topic, students are advised to ensure that they can access enough resources and information on the topic in order to maintain the Discussion for seven minutes.

2015 VCE Romanian oral examination report

Section 1 – Conversation

The majority of students presented a very good range of information, opinions and ideas, covering a variety of topics relevant to their personal life. These topics included family life, hobbies, travelling, sport, music and further aspirations. Students were able to maintain the conversation and needed minimal support.

Most students demonstrated a very good level of understanding of the topics covered in the Conversation and were able to link with the assessors effectively, carrying the conversation forward. Low-scoring students were able to provide sufficient information that was generally relevant, but sometimes used English words or words derived from English when they could not find the Romanian equivalent; for example, *printele* (correct form *paginile listate*), *developat* (correct form *dezvoltat*), *topicul* (correct form *subiectul*) or *gameuri* (correct form *jocuri*).

Most students used complex sentence structures, including the appropriate grammatical structures. A small number of students demonstrated limited understanding of basic grammatical structures. The most frequent grammatical errors were disagreement between the subject and the predicate (*îmi place subiectele, el nu au lăsat, îmi place construcțiile*), incorrect topic sentences (*ce vreau să mă refer la el*) and the incorrect use of definite articles in the dative case (*să arate la părinții lui*).

Very few students demonstrated an excellent range of vocabulary, structures and sophisticated expressions. The majority of students had very good control of the vocabulary and were generally able to self-correct errors.

Most students had very good pronunciation, intonation and tempo. The clarity of expression, speed of delivery, voice projection and modulation were generally very good.

Section 2 – Discussion

In general, students displayed their knowledge of and interest in the topics chosen.

Most students were thoroughly prepared and gave confident responses. They readily provided answers to the questions asked, thus demonstrating a very good capacity to formulate ideas and opinions related to the topics. Most students were also able to clarify information and defended their opinions with arguments from the selected resources, therefore demonstrating very good preparation of the topic.

Some students presented a good range of information, demonstrating a good level of understanding, but they needed some support to carry the discussion forward. These students lacked the ability to elaborate on their ideas as some relied solely on rote-learned material.

Some students were very accurate in their use of vocabulary and grammar, which was impressive. These students used an excellent range of vocabulary that was relevant to their chosen topic.

Other students displayed only a limited understanding of basic grammatical structures. These students sometimes struggled to find the right word or the appropriate grammatical structure; consequently, they often used simplified language. Some common errors used in their structures were the incorrect use of the relative pronouns (*studiul care l-am ales*) and the subjunctive (*să înțelege*).

2015 VCE Russian oral examination report

General comments

In general, students performed well in the 2015 Russian oral examination. Most students were confident during the Conversation and the Discussion.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

Students were well prepared for the Conversation and were able to link appropriately with assessors. Most students were able to express their ideas on family and family traditions, school, friends and friendship, interests, hobbies and career aspirations.

High-scoring students demonstrated thorough preparation and ability to advance the Conversation effectively. Mid-range students at times lacked the ability to effectively elaborate on their ideas and opinions. Low-scoring students presented a limited range of information and had difficulty clarifying or elaborating on opinions and ideas.

The main improvements that could be made are in the areas of word formation, usage of prepositions with the appropriate case, conjugations, agreements and the incorrect use of tenses; for example, «...дружелюбивые, ...миллионы поклонники, ...их 18 лет, ...когда они вижут жениха, ...я шла в школу для девочек, ...мало друзья, ...разговаривать, что случилось, ...учусь как танцевать, ...наблюдал над редкой птицей, ...пригласили все гости, ...обучался борьбой».

Some students used words that were not appropriate in the given context; for example, «...когда 18 лет они идут из дома, ...родители придерживаются продуктов, ...разговаривают в семье ровно, они все ровные, ...иммигранты вкляли, ...давали внимание, ...пойти в страну, ...в раннем времени уехал из России, ...друзья, которые поближе стоят».

Common mistakes included the incorrect use of noun endings and anglicisms; for example, «...много время, ...сестра зовут, ...давали внимание, ...делать балет, ...учить балет».

Common mistakes included inappropriate use of vocabulary; for example, «...удостоить квалификацию (вместо получить), ...понимание к ученику, ...красить картины, ...я изучаю в школе деньги, and incorrect use of grammar; for example, «...в одном из моего источников, ...он встречается разные звери».

Some mistakes included incorrect pronunciation and incorrect stress; for example, «...готовится к роли (ударение на втором слоге), ...звонят» (ударение на первом слоге).

Section 2 – Discussion

The choice of subtopics and resources is very important and should cater for the students' language ability as well as their interests.

Most students presented the material skilfully and engaged well with assessors. They used a very good range of vocabulary, sentence structures and expressions with both simple and complex grammatical structures. Most students were well prepared and had practised the correct pronunciation and stress.

Some of the topics and subtopics chosen by students this year included the following:

Influential people in Russia

- Tchaikovsky's reformatory role in the Russian ballet
- Alexander II – political persona
- Ivan the Terrible – his influence on Russian history

Russian traditions

- Influence of Russian traditions and festivals on Australian culture and society
- Russian traditional dishes
- Russian Easter
- Russian Maslenitsa
- Traditions of Russian weddings

Art

- Russian circus
- Russian culture and its influence on world culture
- Russian folktales

2015 VCE Serbian oral examination report

General comments

Students who presented for the 2015 Serbian oral examination performed well. They displayed a high level of preparation and demonstrated an in-depth approach to the material they had studied.

Most students were familiar with the expectations of the oral examination. They were confident and used effective communicative strategies when responding to questions in both sections of the examination. They presented complex and detailed information on their subtopic, and their responses were relevant and very interesting. The majority of students were able to use a wide range of vocabulary and grammatical structures; however, there were some who struggled with grammar, and used the regional dialect and showed little awareness that the words, phrases and expressions they used were not standard Serbian language expressions.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

Students demonstrated good knowledge of the general topics of the Conversation. They provided relevant responses to questions about Serbian lifestyle, cuisine, personal interests, friendships, traditions and expectations from the community.

Students performed the weakest in relation to criterion 3, which focuses on accuracy of vocabulary and grammar. Teachers and students are strongly encouraged to focus on this area. Low-scoring students struggled to construct sentences in Serbian. Typical errors involved the use of the dialect; for example, *ћуко* (instead of *пас, куче, кер*), *ћео* (instead of *хтео, хтио*), *знадеш* (instead of *знаш*), *дошо* (instead of *дошао*). Another common error was the incorrect use of prepositions due to English language influence. For example, *Рођена сам на 12.5.1999* instead of *Рођена сам 12.5.1999.године*.

Section 2 – Discussion

Teachers and students should refer to the *VCE Exams Navigator* for information regarding materials that can be brought to the oral examination.

Students performed least well in relation to criteria 8 and 9, which focus on vocabulary and grammar. Most students chose relevant topics, but the highest-scoring responses were from students who were well prepared. These students extended their research beyond the most obvious choices.

The highest-scoring students were fluent and engaging, and their responses clearly demonstrated interest in researching the topic. These students demonstrated a high level of preparation and practice. Low-scoring responses were characterised by grammatical errors, a lack of fluency and a narrow scope of discussion. These students struggled with both syntax and vocabulary, and sometimes appeared to be transferring English sentence constructions to Serbian, rather than demonstrating a capacity to 'think in the Serbian language'.

The following types of grammatical and syntactical errors should be addressed.

- lack of agreement between pronouns, adjectives and nouns (for example, *Овај манастир је лепа и занимљива* instead of *Овај манастир је леп и занимљив*)
- verb conjugation and agreements (such as *Он је било* instead of *Он је био*)
- noun declination (such as *Био сам у Србију* instead of *Био сам у Србији*).

2015 VCE Sinhala oral examination report

Section 1 – Conversation

Criterion 1 – Capacity to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively

Most students were well prepared and were able to carry on the Conversation confidently, responding readily to assessors' questions. Many students had very good repair strategies. However, some students hesitated and gave very short responses.

Criterion 2 – Relevance, depth and breadth of information, opinions and ideas

Most students presented relevant information, revealing their ideas and opinions and justifying them with evidence. There were a few instances where students did not elaborate on the information given and needed to be prompted by assessors.

Criterion 3 – Accuracy of vocabulary and grammar

There were a few instances where rote-learning was evident at the beginning of the Conversation but became less evident as the student continued. In most instances appropriate vocabulary and sentence structure was used in presenting the information.

Criterion 4 – Range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar

The majority of students used a very good range of vocabulary correctly and demonstrated a very good awareness of the culturally appropriate style and register. A variety of vocabulary will add more originality to the Conversation.

Criterion 5 – Clarity of expression

Most students had very good pronunciation. Students could have improved in areas such as stressing the important points and changing the tempo.

Section 2 – Discussion

Students selected a variety of good topics for the Discussion.

Criterion 6 – Capacity to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively

Most students demonstrated a thorough preparation of the topic they had chosen for the Discussion, which was evident by the confidence with which they presented the information and exchanged their ideas and opinions. Most students carried the Discussion forward without requiring assistance. There were only a few instances where students lacked repair strategies when English terms were used, and were hesitant and needed support to complete the Discussion.

Criterion 7 – Capacity to present information, ideas and opinions on a chosen topic

The majority of students demonstrated a very good ability to clarify information and to support their ideas and opinions. Some students provided very good information, but did not present their ideas and opinions until they were specifically asked.

Criterion 8 – Accuracy of vocabulary and grammar

The majority of students had a very good control of the vocabulary and used appropriate expressions.

Criterion 9 – Range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar

The majority of students used a wide range of correct and appropriate vocabulary relevant to the topics chosen. They consistently used the appropriate style and register.

Criterion 10 – Clarity of expression

High-performing students were able to express the information, stressing important points and changing the tempo with rise and fall of the voice where appropriate. This was not commonly evident among the lower-performing students. The pronunciation of words was accurate in most instances.

2015 VCE Spanish oral examination report

General comments

The overall quality of students' communicative skills was impressive. It was evident that they had prepared thoroughly. All students observed the appropriate greeting conventions when interacting with assessors, which is an important aspect of the Hispanic cultures.

Specific information Section 1 – Conversation

In this section students covered a range of topics: their families, friends, school, pets, music, travel, sport, hobbies and future aspirations, including Spanish studies.

Students needed to maintain an appropriate exchange of ideas in order to demonstrate their capacity to connect with the assessors. Students needed to answer the assessors' questions. There were a few instances where students provided a response that did not answer the question they were asked. Students must listen carefully and respond appropriately, avoid rote-learned responses and ask for clarification if they are not sure they have understood. Marks were not deducted for the use of repair strategies or for clarification of questions.

Many students carried the conversation forward and elaborated on their ideas and opinions. A few students had little to say and gave single-word answers, despite being prompted to elaborate on their response. This gave the impression that they had not adequately prepared for the oral examination.

Many students used accurate vocabulary and grammatical structures and there was very little English interference. Students generally displayed a high level of grammatical accuracy. Grammatical errors did not affect the student's meaning and were mostly in the use of prepositions and verb conjugation. Most students conjugated verbs accurately; however, when the subjunctive mood was required, many students used it incorrectly. Students should revise verb conjugation, moods and tenses when preparing for the oral examination.

Most students had an excellent range of vocabulary, structures and expressions. Some students demonstrated a limited range of vocabulary. Errors that require further attention include:

- *soporta* was incorrectly translated as *support*. Support in Spanish is *apoyo*, from the verb *apoyar*. *Soporta* is from the verb *soportar*, *sinónimo de aguantar*.
- *Ridiculoso* is not correct Spanish, it should be *ridículo*.
- *Yo me gusta* is incorrect. It should be *a mí me gusta*, or simply, *me gusta*.
- *Un perra*, instead of *Una perra*. (gender agreement between article and noun)
- *Los personas* instead of *las personas*.
- Use of *ser* and *estar*. *al final todo será bien* should be *al final todo estará bien*.
- *No me gusta nada* (I don't like anything) or *no vi ninguna educación* (I did not see any education).

Students are advised to speak Spanish outside school when possible, listen to Spanish radio programs and watch television shows, movies or internet clips in Spanish.

Section 2 – Discussion

Topics students studied included:

- Latin America and Spanish food and their sociocultural impact.
- Art and creativity: Spanish fashion designer Oscar de la Renta.
- Hispanic culture through the eyes of painters; for example, Pablo Picasso.
- The impact of the changes of the 1960s, focusing on new ideas, fashion and women's liberation.
- The future of marriage.
- The immigration of Hispanic people to the USA.
- Cuban history from colonisation to the Cuban Revolution.

Most students presented interesting topics and a good variety of resources. Many students communicated effectively by responding readily and advancing the exchange by providing original comments and ideas, carrying the Discussion forward. They were able to elaborate on their points of view by using evidence gained from their resources. However, some students presented information about their topic but lacked the ability to explore it in depth. It is important to emphasise that the Discussion involves reference to the texts studied for the Detailed Study.

Some students were very accurate in their use of vocabulary and proper grammatical structures. However, some students displayed a limited understanding of grammatical structures.

In general, students were well prepared and demonstrated a good level of intonation, stress and tempo, and a very good level of pronunciation.

2015 VCE Swedish oral examination report

Section 1 – Conversation

Students were generally well prepared to converse about the topics of family, school, interests, hobbies, and future plans and ambitions. High-scoring students capably maintained and advanced the exchange with spontaneity and little prompting. They were also able to use sophisticated vocabulary and structures during the conversation.

Low-scoring students needed some assistance and encouragement in order to carry the exchange forward. In a few cases, lack of fluency in the language and understanding led to the presented information being somewhat disjointed, lacking in clarity and occasionally containing grammatical errors.

Section 2 – Discussion

Most students had prepared thoroughly and were able to respond effectively to anticipated questions related to their chosen topics. Some of the highest-scoring students had clearly studied their topics in depth using a good range of source materials. These students were able to present and defend highly developed ideas and opinions using sophisticated language accurately and with conviction. Overall, most students performed impressively, displaying a high level of communicative skills.

The sub-topics were chosen well and highly relevant to Swedish culture and history. Students often spoke with a high degree of enthusiasm and engagement.

Some students spoke a little too quickly and therefore did not score well in the criteria related to clarity, pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo. Students are advised to concentrate on clarity of expression in preference to quantity of information.

A grammatical error made by some students was not observing that in Swedish the word order in some contexts is different from in English, that is, the verb precedes the noun; for example, '*I går gick jag på bio*' not '*I går jag gick på bio*'.

Low-scoring students needed support when faced with questions they had not anticipated.

2015 VCE Tamil oral examination report

General comments

Most students were well prepared for and performed well in the Discussion section of the examination. However, they did not demonstrate the same degree of breadth and depth of information, ideas and opinions in the Conversation section.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

Most students presented their information and opinions well, and were able to maintain and advance the conversation. However, most of the information presented did not contain enough detail. Some students struggled to respond to questions about their future aspirations, education or employment. Many students gave one-word answers to some questions; for example, வினா: நீங்கள் உங்கள் குடும்பத்துடன் சுற்றுலா சென்றிருக்கிறீர்களா? விடை: ஆம். (Question: Have you ever been on a holiday tour with your family? Answer: Yes.)

Low-scoring students were unable to understand some words such as, வானிலை/காலநிலை, கலவன் பாடசாலை (weather/climate, coeducation).

Some students who used difficult pure Tamil words for generally accepted English words in Tamil such as 'car', 'bus' and 'Facebook', etc., then inconsistently used English words such as 'okay', 'teacher', 'yes', 'but', 'easy', 'university', 'late', 'meeting', 'sorry' and 'so', when simple Tamil words would have sufficed.

Section 2 – Discussion

Many students prepared well for this section and used proverbs and metaphors appropriately for the contexts.

Most students demonstrated a good knowledge of the subtopics they had chosen for their Detailed Study and presented a logical and coherent discussion of their subtopic. Most subtopics were well-researched and related to Tamil culture. Some students used photographs, extracts from magazine articles and newspapers, and presented some very good posters. Some students quoted from 'Thirukkural' and proverbs to substantiate their arguments.

Most students displayed a high degree of accuracy of vocabulary and grammar. They used a good range of appropriate vocabulary. Most students showed consistent use of style and register. High-scoring students used a broad range of appropriate vocabulary and grammatically correct sentence structures, and demonstrated good control of language. However, some students often could not think of the correct Tamil words and used irrelevant words instead. Examples of errors are given below. The correct words/phrases are given in brackets.

- இலை உயிர் காலம் (இலையுதிர் காலம்)
- ஆழ்ந்தமாக (ஆழமாக)
- நான் பிறப்பதிலிருந்து (நான் பிறந்ததிலிருந்து)
- சொந்த நாடு காரைக்கால் (சொந்த இடம் அல்லது ஊர் காரைக்கால்)
- வினையாண்டுகொண்டிருப்பேன் (வினையாடிக்கொண்டிருப்பேன்)

2015 VCE Turkish oral examination report

Section 1 – Conversation

The majority of students were able to communicate their ideas and information, extend their responses and use good repair strategies in the Conversation section. Students engaged well with the assessors on topics such as family and hobbies, using a range of vocabulary and cultural content. Students were also able to converse on topics such as school life and future aspirations, but some lacked confidence and relied on rote-learned language. Overall, they were able to carry on the Conversation well, despite some pauses and errors.

Common errors included the use of *Güle Güle* instead of the appropriate phrase *Hoşçakalın* as they departed. Due to the influence of anglicisms, students are increasingly making errors in the use of cultural expressions and the word endings in Turkish. These include omission errors as in *İngilizce Öğretmen* and *kitap okumak* instead of *İngilizce Öğretmeni*, and *kitap okumayı* when using compounds and noun phrases. These need to be practised in class for students to develop the relevant grammatical skills and knowledge.

Most students used appropriate repair strategies and corrected pronunciation errors, and the clarity of expressions was mostly very good. Some students did not use fixed expressions and idioms such as *yolculuğa çıkmak* appropriately. Other grammatical errors included the inaccurate use of causatives such as *yaptırmak* and *gezdirmek* in Turkish; for example, '*İş yaptırmayı sever*' and '*Köpeğimi gezerim*'.

Another area in which some students struggled and needed improvement was pronunciation and intonation. This was also mostly due to the influence of English sounds and intonation patterns interfering when pronouncing Turkish words within a sentence. Listening and speaking tasks in class and immersion activities can offer more opportunities to practise the sounds and intonation in Turkish. In particular the pronunciation and intonation of idioms, cultural expressions and proverbs such as '*Ağaç yaş iken eğilir*' need to be included within these activities.

Section 2 – Discussion

Most students were able to introduce their subtopics and appropriately state the resources used. Students with high-scoring performances were well prepared and were able to respond readily and confidently by advancing the exchange with original ideas, views and information relevant to their subtopics. Many students completed their Detailed Study on the topic 'Tourism' and more specifically on a city in Turkey. However, most of these students did not prepare adequately to convey information and views or advance the comments made and respond to questions asked by the assessors. Students need to be encouraged to combine their knowledge and skills with extensive research on their subtopics. Students should be aware of the one minute introduction at the start of this section, where they present the resources used. Students are not penalised for not mentioning their resources. In general, students opted to use or mention the internet as a resource rather than a range of spoken, visual and written resources for their Detailed Study. This limited the breadth and depth of their discussion and language use. More extensive reading is needed to better prepare for possible questions during the Discussion.

It is also recommended that students study their topics in a broader context, so they are able to present their ideas, views and information with more confidence and accuracy. Topics should be analysed in greater depth and breadth in order to develop adequate scope beyond a presentation or a retelling of basic concepts that have been memorised. The content of the Discussion should include a wider range of issues, ideas and views within the selected topic. In addition to factual information and understanding of the Detailed Study topic, students should include opinions and ideas.

Students should be encouraged to practise passive voice and pronunciation, and to avoid anglicisms. It is again advised that students should practise spoken language and reading aloud to improve their Turkish language skills.

Students must check their advice slip to ensure that they arrive at least half an hour before their scheduled examination time.

2015 VCE Ukrainian oral examination report

Section 1 – Conversation

The majority of students demonstrated an extensive knowledge regarding various topics of conversation. They were well prepared to converse confidently about personal interests, favourite school subjects, leisure activities, plans for the future, pets, family life, youth issues, friendship and Ukrainian traditions. Their responses were extensive and logical, as well as culturally and linguistically appropriate. All students gave some original input.

Most students successfully maintained the dialogue and used appropriate interaction strategies, such as asking follow-up questions and seeking clarification on questions or comments. Only a small number of students experienced difficulties with carrying the Conversation forward, and needed some support. These students exhibited difficulties when they tried to clarify why they preferred some subjects at school more than other subjects, and why they liked particular extracurricular activities. They lacked appropriate vocabulary to describe their experiences and preferences. This impacted their initiative and confidence in conversation.

In the majority of performances, the range and accuracy of vocabulary and grammatical structures were exceptionally good. High-scoring students used idiomatic expressions and complex sentence structures. They used expressions such as 'білоручка', 'на злодії шапка горить', 'око за око', 'з відкритою душею', 'крутиться на язиці', 'байдики бити', 'жаль бере', 'брати до серця', 'опустити руки' and 'синя панчоха'. They also used purpose-type sentences, in which a subordinate clause was introduced by the conjunction 'щоб'. For example, 'Я вчився багато, щоб добре скласти іспити, хоч було дуже важко.'

Section 2 – Discussion

The majority of students demonstrated a very high capacity to link with assessors and to advance the exchange. There were only minor mistakes in Ukrainian phonetics, stress and intonation.

The topics chosen for Detailed Study provided an excellent opportunity to consider important developments in Ukraine over the past decade. The resources used by students included newspaper articles, documentaries and films, personal journals, songs and literary works. These resources enabled the students to discuss a variety of complex issues connected to the chosen topic. Most students reflected on their personal experiences of the most recent events. Some students presented subtopics that held a high level of personal interest and involvement.

The majority of students made an excellent effort to use appropriate terminology and some complicated vocabulary. They confidently used words such as 'революційна свідомість', 'національна ідентичність', 'гідність', 'зіткнення сил', 'стабілізація' and 'Небесна Сотня'. High-scoring students were well prepared and responded confidently to prompts to consider issues from various perspectives, such as the role of the media and internet in revolutionary events in Ukrainian Maidan, international support for Ukrainian people in Maidan and challenges that Ukrainian people are facing on the road to democratic state. These students also integrated original ideas and views into the discussion, skillfully using complex grammatical structures, and correct styles and pronunciation. Therefore, the depth, fluency and coherency of the discussion

were of a very high quality. A few students experienced difficulty in substantiating their views due to insufficient preparation to discuss concepts from a variety of perspectives. In these few instances students had some dependency on rote-learned materials.

2015 VCE Vietnamese oral examination report

Section 1 – Conversation

In 2015, the majority of students completed the conversation well and demonstrated a very good level of preparation and practice.

Some students made a number of errors with the Vietnamese names of school subjects; for example, they used ‘commerce’ instead of ‘*thương mại*’ and ‘architecture’ instead of ‘*kiến trúc*’. Students should also learn the Vietnamese names for countries; for example, *Tân Tây Lan* (New Zealand) and *Nam Triều Tiên* (South Korea).

Students should avoid responding with short phrases or single words; for example, *có* (yes) and *không* (no). Instead, students should try to demonstrate their competence in using Vietnamese and their ability to maintain and advance the Conversation. Some students had not prepared adequately or practised responses on familiar topics of conversation.

Students should be prepared to answer a range of questions related to their personal world in order to demonstrate their language ability. Students need to listen carefully to the assessors’ questions and comments and respond relevantly and appropriately.

Most students had good pronunciation and intonation.

Section 2 – Discussion

Some students were thoroughly prepared and produced confident responses during the Discussion, drawing on related ideas that moved the Discussion forward. Some students brought objects to support their Discussions. Please refer to the *VCE Exams Navigator* for information on what can and cannot be taken into the oral examination.

Most students were able to provide opinions and elaborate on these opinions. Some students had not prepared adequately for the discussion. Others were very accurate in their use of vocabulary and grammar. Some high-scoring students used an excellent range of vocabulary as well as some sophisticated expressions appropriate to the chosen topic. Other students struggled to find the right words or phrases, or the appropriate grammatical structure.

When they introduced their Detailed Study topic, the majority of students gave a clear indication of which aspects they had covered and would like to discuss. Some students found the questions in the Discussion section challenging. Other students struggled to respond to unexpected questions. Students are expected to express their opinions on the topic and support their views or arguments with relevant information.

Students would benefit from being able to apply a range of grammar patterns in their speech. They should consider using terms such as *mặc dù* (although), *không những chỉ* (not only) and *thay vì* (instead of). It is important that students demonstrate the appropriate use of repair strategies when necessary.

2015 VCE Yiddish oral examination report

General comments

The standard of language used in the 2015 Yiddish oral examination was extremely high. Students were expected to come prepared with a range of ideas for their specific area of study that would illustrate not only a depth but also a breadth of research around the student's specific area of interest. Students were also expected to carry on a short, clear conversation on general topics – for example, hobbies, family, aspirations and the length of time they have been studying Yiddish. Teachers and students are encouraged to check the study design for the range of possible topics about which questions may be asked.

Students were exceptionally well prepared and expressed themselves fluently, without needing to be prompted by assessors. Students were able to provide detailed responses to assessors' questions. They self-corrected readily, demonstrating a good mastery of sentence construction and grammar. Students used a good range of vocabulary in both the Conversation and the Discussion.

Students demonstrated good preparation and an awareness of their strengths and weaknesses in conversation. It was evident from the responses that students were able to think in Yiddish rather than translating from English. Overall, the students were most impressive and demonstrated excellent comprehension.

This year students chose the topic of Immigration and demonstrated that they had researched and carefully considered the aspects on which to concentrate in their specific discussion.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

Students performed least well in relation to Criteria 3 and 4, which focus on the range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar. Teachers and students are strongly encouraged to focus on this area. While students were fluent and confident in conversation, word order (i.e. placement of the verb within a sentence) was a common error. Errors in conjugation – knowing when to use *hob* rather than *bin* – were typical of errors in basic grammatical structure. Dative case was also an area in which students made errors. Errors also occurred in adjectival endings – for example, *ikh hob nit keyn arbet* compared with *ikh hob misht keyn arbet*. Overall, however, students generally displayed a very strong foundation in language structure and the nuances of Yiddish.

Students were well prepared for the Conversation, indicating that they had practised a variety of modes – for example, writing lists of dot points and practising questions and answers with a third party – to develop their fluency and confidence in carrying on a conversation.

Section 2 – Discussion

Students performed least well in relation to Criteria 8 and 9, which focus on vocabulary and grammar. Students chose relevant topics, sometimes with family or personal connections, which they had clearly researched and reflected on in preparation.

The standard of the Discussion was extremely high and most impressive. Content was of a high standard and students carried on a fluent discussion about their topic in response to questions. They were able to extrapolate and expand on information and did not require any clarification. The texts were well chosen.

Student responses were fluent and engaging, clearly demonstrating the student's engagement with the researched topic. Students demonstrated a capacity to answer inferential questions rather than paraphrasing from their chosen texts. They demonstrated higher-order thinking and could communicate complex ideas clearly in Yiddish.

Students demonstrated excellent comprehension skills and a keen ear for the cadence and idioms of Yiddish, in particular through pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo. All students demonstrated an ability to make themselves understood.