



Oral component

GENERAL COMMENTS

On the whole, students were well prepared for the Croatian oral examination and demonstrated a high level of competency in the language.

Areas of strength included:

- very good preparation
- the capacity to research various resources for additional information
- an ability to discuss a wide range of issues
- comprehensive vocabulary
- good knowledge of grammar
- skilful choice of supporting visual material
- generally very good pronunciation, intonation and tempo.

Areas of weakness included:

- insufficient preparation by some students
- occasional inadequate levels of involvement in the examination due to a lack of information about the topic
- incidental use of anglicisms (in particular for school subjects)
- occasional English influence on sentence structure
- incorrect case endings
- inaccurate tenses.

SEPCIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Conversation

Most students responded promptly and accurately to a variety of questions in the Conversation section of the examination. This section focused on students' personal world, such as their family and home life, friends, school, career aspirations, interests, leisure activities and Croatian culture.

A large majority of students presented an excellent range of information. Familiarity with common vocabulary and expressions, as well as with grammatical rules, enabled students to elaborate on their responses with confidence and linguistic accuracy.

Students maintained with ease the verbal exchange with assessors and were able to carry the conversation forward with minimal support. On the whole, students demonstrated good repair strategies and were able to quickly correct their mistakes. However, some students with limited vocabulary were unable to deliver satisfactory and relevant responses.

While English interference could sometimes be detected in sentence structuring, students generally formed their sentences correctly. Some used complex sentence structures with ease and confidence. Students who experienced difficulties with grammatical concepts generally expressed themselves in simple syntactic forms.

The most common mistakes included case and tense endings. Occasionally students' vocabulary was influenced by dialect and/or anglicisms; for example, *sikologija* instead of *psihologija* and *pravda* instead of *pravo*.

Section 2 – Discussion

The majority of students were well prepared for the Discussion part of the examination and engaged fully in a discussion about their chosen topic. In 2007 there was a diverse range of topics chosen for the Detailed Study, including 'Dubrovnik', 'Karlovac', 'Zagreb, the Croatian Capital City', 'Migration' and 'National Parks'.

A variety of resources were used when preparing the Detailed Study, including handouts, books, interviews with guests, items from the Internet, songs, brochures and DVDs/CDs. The availability of ample information about the chosen Detailed Study, combined with students' desire to perform well, produced a considerable number of excellent performances. Easy access to information inspired some students to choose and present quite original sub-topics (for

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example, 'Cemetery Mirogoj in Zagreb' and 'Seljan Brothers'). However, some students had prepared a presentation by heart and had to re-start after they lost track when they were interrupted with questions. Students must be prepared to engage in a **discussion** with assessors, not simply to recite pre-learned information.

Students who were well prepared used effective communication strategies. They interacted well with assessors, moved the discussion forward with their original input and were able to correct their mistakes. A very small number of students were not prepared for the discussion of the Detailed Study. Such students were lacking basic information about the chosen topic and were not able to engage in a meaningful exchange of opinions with the assessors. Students must understand that in order to optimise the examination outcome, they need to be well prepared for the discussion and study their selected topic in great detail.

Most students brought in self-made posters containing illustrations of the main points for discussion. Posters were generally made with a great deal of resourcefulness and artistic sense. Such supporting material generally proved to be of great assistance to students, as it provided direction when presenting their responses.

While students generally used an excellent range of vocabulary and sentence structures, it would be helpful if some students are reminded that building vocabulary related to the Detailed Study should be part of their preparation for the examination. Common mistakes included occasional inaccurate words, errors with cases and tenses and sporadic English interference with sentence structuring.