

2016 VCE Turkish written examination report

General comments

Successful completion of the 2016 Turkish written examination required students to be familiar with the *VCE Turkish Study Design*.

Competency in the grammatical elements of the study, as stipulated in the study design under the Grammar subheading, was essential to successfully completing the examination. To achieve a high score, students needed to demonstrate their understanding of more complex grammatical features rather than just limiting themselves to basic tenses and grammatical structures. Therefore, when preparing for the written examination, students are encouraged to use a wide range of authentic texts in order to improve their knowledge of the written language and the quality of their work.

Turkish is a phonetic language, thus students should understand the important grammatical rule of vowel harmony, and how to apply this rule to prefixes and suffixes, to help them eliminate their spelling errors.

It is essential that students use the 15 minutes of reading time at the start of the examination to familiarise themselves with the requirements of the examination. During the examination, students should make effective use of their bilingual dictionary. Students should read all parts of the questions carefully to ensure that relevant answers are provided. It is recommended that students check their answers in order to ensure that they are comprehensible and logical. They should also take every opportunity to check their spelling and proofread their answers for clarity and appropriateness in both English and Turkish.

Some students did not follow the instructions given on the front cover and in each section of the examination.

Students should familiarise themselves with the assessment criteria listed at the beginning of each part of the examination.

Comments on grammar and common spelling errors

- An apostrophe should be used to separate the proper noun and its affixes. The apostrophe was generally used incorrectly. Students used this more with common nouns and verbs instead of proper nouns; for example, using *Ben'de* instead of *bende*, which signifies possession or *ben de*, which means 'me too'.
- The apathetic consonant 'y' should be used to separate two vowels when they occur together; for example, *çarşı (y) a*.
- Spoken Turkish was written phonetically by some students, which resulted in errors; for example, *gitcez* should be spelt as *gideceğiz*; *orada*, not *orda*; *burada*, not *burda*.
- Students should analyse questions carefully and address each item in the question separately.
- Consonant assimilation was a problem for some students; voiceless consonants require the same properties, for example *göçtü*, not *göçdü*.

- Interrogative words – such as ‘what’, ‘why’, ‘how’ – should have been considered when responding to a question.
- Literal translation of idioms, clichés or fixed expressions should be avoided as every language is unique in this aspect.
- At the end of the line on a page, any necessary separation of a word should be either between two consonants or leaving the syllable open with a vowel at the end; for example, *git-ti* and *gi-diyor*. *Geliyor* can be separated as *ge-li-yor*, not *gel-i-yor*, *gel-iy-or* or *geliy-or*.
- The *VCE Turkish Study Design* states that standard Turkish must be used in writing. Students are encouraged to only use standard Turkish in their responses in the written examination.

Typical errors made in writing some compound nouns included:

- Indefinite: *radio sunucusu*, not *radio sunucu*
- Definite: *radioyun sunucusu*
- *Elektrik parası*, not *elektrik para*
- Syllable reduction: some two-syllable words keep the same number of syllables when an affix is added; for example, *nesil* becomes *nesli*; *resim* becomes *resmi*.

Specific information

This report provides sample answers or an indication of what answers may have included. Unless otherwise stated, these are not intended to be exemplary or complete responses.

Section 1 – Listening and responding

Students who performed well in this section identified and communicated the correct information effectively. They were able to appropriately convey both the general and specific aspects of each text. These students responded in a clear and concise manner, using the language accurately and appropriately. When completing the listening section of the examination, students need to carefully focus on the key words in the questions in order to provide relevant and comprehensive answers in the appropriate language.

The note-taking space given in the examination was not utilised efficiently. Some students made appropriate notes in the note-taking space but did not incorporate the required information into their responses. It should be noted that information written in the note-taking space is not assessed. Students who wish to make elaborate corrections to their initial response should cross out the whole response and rewrite it neatly in the blank pages available in their examination.

Part A – Answer in English

Many students gave inaccurate or incomplete responses to some questions. Some students were careless in their selection of vocabulary.

It appeared that the questions in this section were understood well by the majority of students and responses were adequate. Students responded better to questions that required direct quotes from the listening text rather than those requiring some interpretation and/or cause and effect.

No Turkish words should have been used in this part of the examination, as the responses were required in English.

One-word responses should always be avoided unless the question asks for a list. For example, ‘painter’ was not a comprehensive enough response for Question 3a. The question word was ‘who’, so a complete statement would have been appropriate, e.g. ‘Zeynep Bilir is a famous Turkish artist.’

Text 1

Question 1a.

Grandmother will be going back to the shop in order to change the stained pullover she bought/to return the pullover she bought.

A more detailed response was needed than just mentioning 'a stain'.

Question 1b.

She thanks her grandson because:

- he saw the stain on the pullover
- she will be able to exchange the pullover (because he will help her)
- (he will go with her to the shop) she will need assistance with English/interpreting.

Text 2

Question 2a.

The speech addresses the transition from primary to secondary school.

Both schools should have been mentioned, as the phase was in between the two schools.

Question 2b.

- They should attend open days/orientation days or excursions to secondary schools.
- They should purchase their textbooks and other subject materials/equipment prior to starting the new school year.

'Buying textbooks' was missed by many students.

Question 2c.

- Some students may like to study while listening to music.
- Some students prefer to study in a totally quiet environment.

The word 'quiet' was misspelt by some students as 'quite'. Some just wrote 'music or not', which was missing some essential information.

Many students responded by simply providing a basic answer or a single response when multiple answers were required.

Text 3

Question 3a.

She is a Turkish painter/artist.

The majority of students answered this question correctly.

Question 3b.

- She painted the landscapes (nature) and culture of Turkey/She was inspired by lights, colours and emotions of the country.
- One speaker says that he already knows her name very well.
- Some of her paintings are displayed in museums in Europe.
- She uses watercolour technique in a masterly way.

Question 3c.

Ilker liked the following paintings:

- a peasant woman holding a plate of olives
- young girls painting blue beads/the girls painting blue beads (evil eye beads)
- the wishing tree at the edge of a cliff.

The word *uçurum* (abyss/cliff edge) was interpreted or heard by some students as *uçurtma* (kite).

Part B – Answer in Turkish

Scores for comprehension in this section indicated that some students needed to listen more attentively and take careful notes. Students who regularly practice this skill throughout Units 3 and 4 are more likely to perform well in the examination. Scores for writing indicated that further preparation and practice were also required in this area. It is important that students make notes while listening to the texts, check their written answers to ensure they relate to the questions and use correct grammatical expressions.

In this section of the examination, students are expected to convey information in correct Turkish. Students need to be aware that in this section their responses are assessed according to the level of language they demonstrate.

Text 4

Question 4a.

- She wants her children to attend a co-educational school (so the schools near the house are not suitable).
- She wants to live in a multicultural environment (rather than just in a Turkish-speaking community).

Karma okul means co-educational school. Some students who understood the meaning used *kız erkek karışık*, which was also considered an acceptable response. Most students did not understand this terminology and used similar-sounding words or made up their own words, such as *kanuni*, *karne eğitim*, *karman*, etc.

The woman in the text prefers to live in a 'multicultural environment' rather than a monocultural one. *Çok kültürlü çevre* is an appropriate translation rather than *sosyal* (social), as some students incorrectly interpreted it.

Question 4b.

- The house is near the school where they offer Turkish classes.
- The price is right.
- The buyer's son and daughter will both be able to attend the same school on weekdays.

The fact that 'the price is right' was not given by some students.

Text 5

Question 5a.

Because the bus drivers will also be joining the tour (of the caves). (That means that they will not be staying in the bus, so it will have to be locked.)

'The drivers will also be participating in the cave tour' was needed as a response, because just 'The drivers are coming' was not an adequate or complete response. Some very basic, commonly known terminology was spelt incorrectly; for example, '*Maralara gidice için*'.

Question 5b.

The guide gives the tourists the following information.

- Wear/put on cardigans or jackets to keep warm inside the caves as they are cold.
- Do not take off safety helmets (as the roofs of the caves are low).
- Do not take off the (studded) shoes provided by the company (as the ground is slippery and steep).
- Follow the signs so that you don't get lost.

- Equip yourself with whistles and torches.
- Take water and food.

Text 6

Question 6a.

- Electricity expenses will be reduced/Money will be saved on electricity costs.
- Excess electricity will be sold back to the company.
- Warming of the atmosphere will be prevented/slowed/and this will help to protect the environment.
- Waste materials will be reduced.

Some students just wrote, 'Less power will be used', but '.....from the general supplier' or 'from the central source' should have been added to the statement.

Question 6b.

The neighbour decided to install solar panels as well.

Some students just wrote, 'because it was a good idea' or 'good for the environment', etc., but this was not sufficient; 'The neighbour decided to install the solar panels ...' was needed.

Section 2 – Reading and responding

Part A – Answer in English

Texts 7 and 8 required responses in English. Students who performed well in this section paid particular attention to the finer details in the texts and this was reflected in their answers. They took notice of the information and the structure of the texts, absorbed the meanings and understood the requirements. Some students had difficulty conveying accurate responses in English.

Once again, it was evident from responses that some students did not make good use, or any use, of a good bilingual dictionary.

In this section, students are expected to understand the text written in Turkish and then convey the meaning in their responses to questions. While some students did this well, others simply attempted to translate chunks of the text into their response. Students should understand that this section of the examination is not assessing their skill in translating. It is assessing their skills in understanding the ideas and information provided, and conveying these in another language using their own words. Some students used incorrect grammar and provided an inadequate explanation, which made the response difficult to understand.

Sentences to the effect that 'new jobs emerge due to the technological progress' would have been preferable as some students did not respond properly.

Text 7

Question 7a.

The title of the text is appropriate because the text is about a wardrobe in which the writer's mother saw a walking stick that was handmade by her father from a special wood. This made the mother and the writer think about the values of the family, how many things were made by hand in that family and that sometimes we have forgotten treasures hidden in cupboards/wardrobes that have sentimental value.

The title means 'Memories hidden in wardrobes'.

Question 7b.

- His concern is that the traditional occupations are disappearing and that they are important to keep.

- He proposes to educate children by offering courses and inviting speakers to schools.
- Children can be given tasks to produce goods using their hands so that they understand the value of handmade goods versus manufactured ones.

Text 8

Question 8a.

As technology evolves, new careers/jobs emerge.

Question 8b.

They will seek experts who can ensure that the systems are used more efficiently (i.e. stronger, trouble-free and reliable).

Question 8c.

Content

- Both texts have a link to information about work/jobs/skills.
- Text 7 emphasises the importance of traditional skills and how they should be taught to new generations.
- Text 8 is about the evolving nature of new jobs and the use of technology.

Style

- Text 7 is presented in the form of an article; it is quite personal in style.
- Text 8 is arranged so that it can be read very quickly – it is more like a table or a report. It uses a less personal/more neutral/more formal style.

Students were required to refer to the content and style of both the texts in making their comparison. Many students did not fully understand the requirements of Question 8c.

Part B – Answer in Turkish

Text 9

Question 9

The task required students to discuss differences between the migration experiences of Hilmi and Sevda. Then the student needed to use words that highlighted the differences and similarities in their experiences. For example:

- One person could ask the other: How did you come to Australia?
- One person could ask the other: What was it like when you first arrived?
- One person could ask the other: Was English the key to finding employment and setting up your life in Australia? How did you feel when you first arrived?

In this section it was important that students accurately based their answers on the text provided. Students should be taught to compare and contrast texts in relation to their text type, style and content.

Some students copied exact sentences from the texts. The information should have been rephrased in the student's own words.

A radio play involves a structure that is more than just dialogue; an introduction, plot and conclusion were also needed. Some students achieved this, but most others just transferred the information into question-and-answer format. A number of students wrote interesting dialogues but did not incorporate sufficient ideas from the information given.

The characters in the radio play in Question 9 were the people mentioned (Hilmi and Sevda), not their character descriptions.

Section 3 – Writing in Turkish

Questions 10 and 12 were the most popular choices. Text type, kind of writing, purpose and adherence to the instructions in the texts should have been demonstrated. This showed a good level of understanding of the text type required in this section.

A significant number of students did not write the question number. It is important that students clearly indicate which question they are responding to. Students must not assume that assessors know which questions they have answered.

Spelling mistakes, especially dotted and dotless ‘u’ ‘ü’ and ‘o’, ‘ö’, were made by some students.

Some students wrote texts that used a very limited range of vocabulary. There were many sentence and basic spelling errors.

Generally, the majority of students produced texts appropriate to the text type stipulated in the question. A few students did not address the question asked and instead wrote off-topic.

It is important that students meet the requirements of the chosen question. Only a few of the students appeared to have planned their response prior to writing it. It is imperative that all students are able to draft a basic plan to identify certain points to trigger their thinking and which will help them formulate and sequence their ideas.

Many student responses lacked the required depth and breadth. Students should be familiar with the assessment criteria:

- depth of treatment of information, ideas and/or opinions
- writing text appropriate and relevant to context, purpose and audience
- manipulation of language structures and vocabulary in Turkish.

In order to achieve very high marks for the first criterion, the response needed to cover all aspects of the question effectively. For example, in a response to Question 10, the student needed to explain a boulevard of a city or town, not a geographical area, and give details of multicultural aspects. While students found this topic relatively easy to write about, their responses were based more on their background knowledge of a hometown and they had difficulty including the required depth of description and detail in their responses.

Answers should be of the right length. Some responses were written in columns that were not clearly defined and therefore hard to read. Some students were not familiar with the conventions of the text type they had chosen.

Students should allow themselves enough time to rewrite their response, which often resembled a draft copy.

A few students used anglicised words. Students should make use of bilingual dictionaries to find the correct spelling of unknown words.

Question 10

Students were required to write a newspaper article in which they described a boulevard of a city or town that they recently visited, and introduce its people and their varied cultural riches.

Question 11

Students were required to write an evaluative review for a school writing competition on the topic, ‘The participation of boys and girls in subjects taught in after-school activities’.

Question 12

Students were required to write a persuasive letter to the 'Readers' Corner' of a magazine to defend a view that in order to be knowledgeable, travelling only is not sufficient and reading widely is also important.