



## GENERAL COMMENTS

It was pleasing to see that the number of students presenting for the Turkish oral examination has increased compared to last year. Most students generally performed well in the oral examination and the majority prepared well, particularly for Section 1.

Most students were able to listen carefully, understand the questions and ask for clarification when unsure. They expanded on answers instead of responding with single word utterances or short sentences. Well-prepared students were able to communicate confidently and advance the exchange both in the Conversation and Discussion parts effectively. Conversely, those who were less well prepared found the task more difficult and responded with simple answers, only after repeated prompting by the assessor. In preparing for this examination, it is important that students have a clear knowledge of the examination procedures and the assessment criteria. It should be noted that students are required to give extended, well thought-out answers rather than short and simple responses.

Students must become familiar with the examination criteria used for the oral assessment. They should also become familiar with the correct forms of speech and culturally appropriate gestures and expressions to be used when entering and leaving the assessment venue as well as when speaking to the assessors.

Reading the annual assessment reports should assist teachers in structuring their teaching program so that errors identified therein are not repeated.

## SPECIFIC INFORMATION

### Section 1 – Conversation

This section consists of a general conversation of approximately seven minutes about the student's personal world; for example, school and home life, family and friends, interests and aspirations. It was pleasing to see that, in comparison to previous years, fewer students gave a monologue instead of fully engaging in a conversation with the assessors. Some students, though, still appeared unfamiliar with the polite forms of greeting and leaving.

With few exceptions, this year's students were able to converse competently on the Conversation topics. Most students had prepared quite adequately and gave appropriate responses to questions asked or to comments made by the assessors. Some students took the initiative and elaborated on their responses by way of giving details and introducing new ideas. Students who relied solely on memorised material found it difficult to continue the conversation when assessors changed the topic.

The majority of students recognised and attempted to use stress and intonation correctly. Most demonstrated some advanced communicative skills when discussing familiar content such as family background, future aspirations and special interests. These students were generally more confident of their ability to communicate in a familiar context and therefore were better able to concentrate on fluency.

Some students were still unfamiliar with their VCE subject titles in Turkish and used English equivalents or tried to explain the subject content instead. English fillers such as 'you know', 'well', 'sorry', etc. must not be used during the conversation.

Some words were incorrectly pronounced, showing the influence of English. Words such as 'üniversite' and 'psikoloji' were pronounced almost as if they were English words.

A few students were unfamiliar with kinship words, occupations or hobbies. Occasionally literal translations of idiomatic expressions were still used showing the influence of English. Some students used phrases such as '*üç kardeşlerim...*' (instead of '*üç kardeşim*'), '*spor oynuyorum*' (instead of '*spor yapıyorum*') and '*bilgisayar oynarım*' (instead of '*bilgisayar kullanırım*').

### Section 2 – Discussion

This part of the oral assessment explores aspects of language and culture, with reference to texts studied for the Detailed Study. Students are expected to discuss and explore ideas and opinions by using and referring to the texts studied and making links between the resources that they have used.

# 2007 Assessment Report



The choice of topic for the Detailed Study is extremely important. Topics need to lend themselves to discussion and generate various opinions and ideas. Although there has been a significant shift in the selection of the Detailed Study topics, it was still evident that some students had prepared themselves for the task in a relatively short time. Some narrow topics were still presented, and students who chose these topics were not able to discuss issues on certain aspects raised by the assessors during the discussion. Some students were unfortunately distracted by trying to remember factual information rather than discussing the issues raised. Students should collect adequate resources from their teachers to individually pursue aspects of their selected topic. In most cases the student preparation and performance did not reflect the expectation of 15 hours of study as prescribed in the *Turkish VCE Study Design*.

Students choosing narrow topics found it difficult to present new opinions or provide additional information following their initial one-minute introduction. Inadequate preparation was once again noticed in relation to the second part of the oral assessment. Students should learn how to select information from the studied texts and how to present the content in a summary form. The Detailed Study topic should lend itself to discussions of different aspects or issues associated with it. A well thought out Detailed Study topic is one which would enable individual students to concentrate on an aspect and encourage them to explore it further.

The *Turkish VCE Study Design* recommends that students study a range of at least three different kinds of texts. These texts need to have substance and should differ substantially from each other. Choosing texts that provide different but relevant perspectives on their topic further assists students to engage in a more detailed discussion.

On many occasions students referring to their resources said they used information collected from the Internet, and some gathered their knowledge from resources written in English rather than Turkish. The texts chosen for the Detailed Study should be in Turkish and should allow the student to explore and compare aspects of the language and culture of the Turkish-speaking community. These resources need to be understood and used in support of their arguments, opinions and ideas. Students who devoted adequate time to their preparation were able to effectively support and elaborate on their ideas, information and opinions while referring to the texts studied. Those who merely memorised slabs of information were not able to answer the questions asked and constantly attempted to return to their memorised material instead of discussing the topic at hand with the assessors. These were mainly those students who derived their information and knowledge from inadequate resources or who changed their topic for the sake of the examination. Teachers should ensure that the Detailed Study topic is covered during class time and at the appropriate time of the year.