



2011

Languages: Turkish GA 3: Examination

Oral component

GENERAL COMMENTS

The 2011 Turkish oral examination comprised two sections: Section 1 – Conversation and Section 2 – Discussion. The format of the oral examination is explained in the *VCE Turkish Study Design*. The requirements of the Detailed Study can be found on page 22 of this document.

As in the previous years, most students performed very well in Section 1 – Conversation, conversing on very familiar topics, such as school and home life, family and friends, interests and aspirations (*VCE Turkish Study Design*, page 29).

Students with strong language skills demonstrated an excellent range of accurate and appropriate vocabulary and sentence structures, discussing familiar topics such as family and hobbies. They were not only able to discuss these topics accurately but also expand and elaborate on the topics when they needed to carry the conversation forward.

Students who did not perform well in this section failed to provide Turkish equivalents of some words and phrases, especially when discussing school subjects. They literally translated the specific academic names of the subjects studied and/or sometimes were not able to justify or explain their reasons for selecting particular subjects. This can sometimes be a cue to encourage students to discuss their future aspirations. Therefore, students need to be given many opportunities to practise discussing school subjects and future aspirations in class through different types of speaking and listening activities.

Some students gave pre-prepared responses to questions on the topics. Students must be prepared to participate in a conversation with the assessors on familiar topics. Students should try to use culturally appropriate expressions throughout the exam. Use of these expressions demonstrates students' awareness of Turkish culture and its influence on language use. When addressing assessors, students should use *siz* as this is formal and culturally appropriate.

In Section 2 – Discussion students who were well prepared and very familiar with their Detailed Study topic and sub-topic were able to discuss and respond readily to assessors' comments. These students were also able to introduce the relevant sub-topic of their Detailed Study and refer to the resources they used in the preparation of their Detailed Study.

Students who limited themselves to memorising responses on a very narrow aspect of their Detailed Study topic could not respond to the spontaneous and broader comments within their sub-topic or issues within their topics. Activities in class should aim at developing further discussion skills. Mock conversations and discussions followed by a mock oral examination that includes a conversation and a discussion may assist students in their preparation for the oral examination.

Students are reminded that they cannot take electronic devices or notes into the exam room to support their discussions. However, students may support the Discussion with objects such as photographs, diagrams and maps. The photographs, diagrams and maps can only have 'minimal language' on them (*VCE Exams Navigator 2012*). Notes and cue cards are not permitted. It is also important for students to check the information on the advice slip very carefully to avoid arriving late at the venue and causing themselves unnecessary distress prior to the exam. It is important that the information on the advice slip is read and understood by all students prior to the examination and that students bring these slips with them on the day. As the assessment venues change from year to year, times and examination venues must be checked with great care.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1 – Conversation

Communication

When the student enters the examination room they are asked to read their student number in English. Students are reminded that this is the only time during the examination that students should use English.



During Section 1, students engage in a seven-minute conversation with the assessors on a range of topics, including the student's personal world, school and home life, family and friends, hobbies and interests, and future aspirations. The conversation on these topics does not follow any particular sequence and students are advised against preparing formulaic responses.

The main skills assessed in communication include the students' capacity to maintain and advance the conversation appropriately and effectively and the clarity of their expression. Students were expected to demonstrate excellent understanding by responding readily, using effective repair strategies and carrying the conversation forward with spontaneity. Pronunciation and intonation were also assessed as part of the criteria.

In Section 1 the majority of students communicated fluently in Turkish and conversed with confidence and spontaneity.

Most students were able to use culturally appropriate expressions and strategies during the conversation. They were also able to maintain eye contact throughout the conversation and apply effective repair strategies when needed. In general, students showed the most confidence in this section of the exam and some were able to introduce new information and advance the conversation appropriately and effectively.

Very few students made grammatical errors and/or used inaccurate pronunciation, intonation or tempo. Weaker students who only prepared formulaic responses paused for a long period of time and made grammatical and pronunciation errors when responding to unexpected comments from the assessors. Students are strongly encouraged not to use short responses and to expand and build on their responses using culturally appropriate and accurate expressions.

Many students demonstrated an outstanding level of pronunciation and intonation during the conversation. Most students were able to open and close the conversation and address the assessors' comments within the culturally accepted register, showing fluency in the Turkish language.

Content

This area of assessment relates to the content of the exchange between students and assessors. Relevance, breadth and depth of information, opinions and ideas provided by the student during their conversation ensured higher results for this area of assessment.

Students were expected to present a wide range of relevant information, ideas and opinions clearly and logically during the seven-minute conversation. Students are reminded not to mention their own name, the names of their family members, teachers or schools.

Some students were not prepared and had difficulty discussing school life and future aspirations. These students were not able to elaborate on their subject selections or link these with their future aspirations and further study.

Language

The criteria for Language use are accuracy and the range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar.

The most successful students in terms of language use were able to use a wide range of vocabulary, sentence structures and expressions. These students used appropriate style and register consistently and used appropriate repair strategies when necessary.

Students should be encouraged to practise and use a wide range of structures and expressions during their conversations in class, which may include a range of speaking and listening activities for which students converse in Turkish.

Errors in vocabulary included the inappropriate use of prepositional adverbs in Turkish idiomatic expressions. Other language errors included the use of some English words such as 'like', 'shops', 'show', 'criminal justice', 'basics', 'stress' and lastly incorrect case endings for nouns and verbs/-i/and/-e/and other suffixes. Some examples of inaccurate use of idiomatic expression in Turkish related to the literal translation of the words from English into Turkish.

Section 2 – Discussion

This section consisted of an eight-minute discussion on a Detailed Study topic that students had prepared and studied.

In this section, students' are assessed using the three areas of criteria as in Section 1: communication, content and language. In this section, preparation is also very important due to the nature of the second criterion, 'the capacity to



present information, ideas and opinions on a chosen topic'. Students need to prepare their topic very well in order to carry the discussion forward with confidence, clarify their ideas and opinions and present information.

The discussion between the assessors and the student is informed by the ideas, opinions and information from the chosen Detailed Study topic. The Detailed Study should be based on a sub-topic related to one or more of the prescribed topics listed on page 13 of the *VCE Turkish Study Design*.

Students are reminded that they are not permitted to bring cue cards or materials containing large amounts of written information to the examination. The rules of the examination clearly state that 'objects with minimal language such as photographs, diagrams and maps may be brought to support Section 2. Notes and cue cards are NOT PERMITTED' (*VCE Exams Navigator 2012*, page 15).

Communication

This part of the assessment requires students to maintain and advance the discussion appropriately and effectively, and to clarify ideas, information and opinions when necessary.

Successful students were able to respond readily and confidently by advancing the exchange with original ideas, opinions and information. Students who were well prepared were able to present a range of views and detailed information. However, this was not the case for some students, whose responses indicated that they did not use resources or plan efficiently before the exam, and were unprepared for this part of the oral examination.

Students who often required assessors' support to continue the discussion had not prepared well or did not have the language and vocabulary skills to discuss the selected topic. These students found it challenging to express their opinions on issues related to their chosen topic.

Content

Students were assessed on their capacity to present information, ideas and opinions on their chosen Detailed Study topic. They needed to support the discussion with reasons, examples, evidence and/or new ideas.

High-scoring students displayed depth and breadth of knowledge and were able to clarify ideas with confidence. They could discuss issues by giving examples and personal views. It was evident that these students had spent time preparing for the examination and this led to them achieve excellent results.

On the other hand, there were some students who hesitated and used purely formulaic expressions. These students were not able to extend the discussion or present in-depth information. It was clear that they had not prepared thoroughly and required constant support from the assessors to continue the discussion. Students are reminded that this part of the examination is a discussion and students should prepare accordingly.

Some students thought they needed to mention all the information they had studied and when they realised that this was not possible they were very disappointed. Students should practise discussing, rather than presenting, to ensure they have the opportunity to discuss aspects of their chosen sub-topic.

Language

The accuracy and the range and appropriateness of vocabulary and grammar displayed during the discussion was also assessed. Students who were able to use complex sentence structures and a wide range of vocabulary relevant to their chosen topic scored very highly in this area.