

Oral component

GENERAL COMMENTS

The oral component of the examination is designed primarily to assess the student's knowledge and skill in using spoken Vietnamese, and most students performed well.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION

Section 1: General conversation

Topics covered in Section 1 (approximately 7 minutes), included family, school, leisure, work and future aspirations. This section was generally well prepared by students. Students who did best were able to successfully maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively with both assessors. Less successful performances were characterised by a lack of clarity of expression, accuracy of vocabulary and grammar as well as relevance of information/ideas. Some students did not perform well in this section because they could only make minimal responses to questions.

Attention should be given to traditional and cultural manners such as:

- *Da*
- *Vang*
- *Thua thay, thua co*
- *Em xin trinh bay*
- *Chao thay, chao co*
- *Em da xong*

Section 2: Discussion

For Section 2 (approximately 8 minutes), students explored aspects of the language and culture of Vietnamese communities by discussing their chosen sub-topic for detailed study. The discussion may be supported with objects such as photographs, diagrams, and maps.

Students were required to introduce the focus of the sub-topic in no more than a minute. Since it is their chosen sub-topic for detailed study, it is assumed that students have completed 15 hours of study on the sub-topic and that it is based on at least three texts. This allows students to discuss more than the one aspect of the sub-topic that is the focus of the presentation.

Most of the discussions were well prepared with a good introduction, development and conclusion. Some successful sub-topics were:

- *Di dan va ti nan* (Migrants and Refugees)
- *Kho khan cua phu nu* (Difficulties Vietnamese women encounter)
- *Kho khan vuot bien* (Risks of escaping from Vietnam by boat)
- *Bon phan lam con* (Filial duties)
- *Kho khan cua hoc sinh moi den Uc* (Difficulties Vietnamese students cope with)
- *Ca si Tu Uyen* (Singer Tu Uyen)

The crucial issue for sub-topic selection is the student's ability to explore their sub-topic in sufficient depth using the selected texts. The emphasis is not on assessing how much detail the students can recall about the text learnt, but on how well they can engage in a discussion about the sub-topic. For example, in discussing the sub-topic 'Traditions of a wedding', students were not required to recall all the dates of the occasion, but needed to focus on the meaning of these traditions which will 'tie' the future couple together in the hope that the marriage will last (*tram nam hanh phuc*: a hundred year's happiness). Students should be prepared to elaborate and support aspects of their discussion and discuss other related issues.

Most students who clearly expressed their ideas had used materials and examples effectively to enhance the discussion. Some difficult sentence structures were incorporated and dealt with very successfully. For example, *Neu vuot bien nguy hiem, tai sao nguoi ta van di?* (If escaping by boat was so risky, why would people still attempt to?) This is a question in the conditional mood, and can be quite difficult for a student to discuss or answer. Also students need to give careful attention to their pronunciation, phrasing and the relevance of the information they include.

In several cases it seemed that students left sub-topic choices to the last minute, resulting in poor preparation. Topics that can be controversial or that do not relate to one or more of the prescribed topics listed in the Vietnamese Study Design should be avoided. There is no need for a complex sub-topic. A topic appropriate to students' level of interest and competency of the language should be chosen.

Students who excelled were those who demonstrated originality of thought and breadth and depth of responses in the discussion. Less successful responses tended to concentrate on relating facts or information and had difficulties sustaining the discussion.

LOTE: Vietnamese GA 3: Examination

Written component

GENERAL COMMENTS

The written component of this LOTE examination is designed to assess students' knowledge and skills in dealing with spoken and written texts, and in expressing ideas through the creation of original text in Vietnamese.

All the themes and topics of Units 3 and 4 were included in the three sections of the examination paper. Section 1 covered topics such as success stories, the role of Vietnamese women, choosing a career, friendship, education systems and environmental issues. There were fourteen questions in this section of the paper that appeared in the form of texts such as an announcement, a conversation, a speech and a talk.

Students are expected to respond to questions in English in Part A and in Vietnamese in Part B, to demonstrate an understanding of general and specific information from the spoken texts. Some students inappropriately answered both parts A and B in Vietnamese which affected their overall assessment.

Section 2 covered topics such as a festival (*Tet Nguyen Dan*), an old story (*Luu Binh va Duong Le*) and the school system. There were nine questions on an article, a story and a letter.

There were problems in Part B, Question 23, with some misunderstanding evident. Students were expected to demonstrate their understanding of the letter by responding in Vietnamese to information provided in the letter. However, some students included little information in their response and did not respond directly to the questions asked in the letter.

Section 3 involved the expression of ideas through the creation of an original text in Vietnamese in a suggested time of 50 minutes. There was a choice of one of three tasks:

- writing a journal entry about a birthday party
- writing a script of speech on the advantage of learning a LOTE
- an evaluative review of a film or a book.

The length and the kind of writing for this task were taken into account. Teachers should instruct students to be familiar with the five kinds of writing (informative, imaginative, personal, persuasive and evaluative) and prepare them to produce their written text within 200 to 250 words in Vietnamese.

Most students understood the different sections of the paper and performed well. However, some did not use the information provided in the texts exclusively to complete the tasks. They incorporated information which was not conveyed in the texts provided. Others gave responses in note form to questions that required full sentences. Conveying accurate information was another area of concern.

Students who achieved good results responded to all parts of the paper in the appropriate language and in logical sequence. Their responses contained coherent sentence structures with accuracy in grammar and appropriate use of syntax.

In several cases, word lengths were excessive and this affected performance measured by the criteria. Common problems included:

- repetition of ideas and information
- incorrect use of text-type or lack of features of the required text-type
- no linking of ideas or use of connective words
- no transition between paragraphs
- lack of interest to sustain the reader
- failure to provide a title for the text of the speech
- misspelling (a major weakness in most tasks).

Students are reminded that responses in examinations are not to be written in pencil. Also, students need to be clear on the criteria for assessment, as this will give them a good understanding of what is expected.