

2024 VCE Tamil oral external assessment report

Refer to the relevant [study design](#) and [examination criteria and specifications](#) for full details on this study and how it is assessed.

Section 1: Conversation

What students did well

In 2024, students:

- engaged in a general conversation about their personal world: for example, school and home life, family and friends, interests and aspirations
- provided a range of relevant information, ideas and opinions with an appropriate depth. Many students were able to respond readily and confidently with relevant ideas and opinions on the various topics of conversation. For example, when asked about the changes they would make to their current residence if they were given an opportunity, some of the responses included installing solar panels, painting the walls a different colour, replacing the tiles in the bathroom, extending a room, planting new trees in the garden, and updating the lighting in the house to save electricity
- clarified, elaborated on and defended ideas and opinions on topics. For example, when asked about what their life after high school would be like, high-scoring students required no support to speak about their future aspirations, finances, friends, personal qualities and life skills. Additionally, when speaking about cooking at home, some students were able to incorporate ideas about sourcing produce from the home garden, eating-out habits and the immense gratitude they felt for their parent(s) preparing food. Most students responded well to follow-up questions and were able to support the opinions they offered
- responded confidently and were able to advance the conversation, including the effective use of appropriate repair strategies as needed, and carried the conversation forward with spontaneity
- used appropriate vocabulary, grammar and sentence structures. Students who scored highly were able to use sophisticated vocabulary and grammatical structures accurately and appropriately. They had an excellent range of vocabulary, grammar and expressions, and consistently used appropriate style and register. Terms/phrases that were used by some students in relevant contexts include:
 - சமையல் அறைக்கழிவு (waste from the kitchen)
 - சூரிய ஒளித்தடங்கள் (solar panels)
 - இயற்கை உரம் (natural fertiliser)
 - உப்பிலாப் பண்டம் குப்பையிலே (food without salt is in the trash – a Tamil proverb)
- used appropriate expression, including pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo. Students who scored highly changed their tone appropriately, conveyed suitable emotions and used facial expressions corresponding to the context to engage the assessors.

Areas for improvement

In preparation for the examination, students could:

- prepare adequately for the conversation to ensure their responses are relevant and convey depth and a range of information, ideas and opinions. Some students' responses were quite brief, containing only a few words or one sentence. For example, when asked about what changes they would make to their current residence if they had the opportunity, they answered by saying that nothing needs to be changed and that they like it the way it is. Students are expected to offer ideas and opinions rather than recite facts. Students should avoid trying to fit memorised proverbs or Thirukkural into the conversation where it is not appropriate
- practise answering a range of questions to be able to advance the conversation. Advancing and carrying forward the conversation was difficult for some students, who relied heavily on the assessors to ask questions or change the topic. The objective in this section is for students to explore in detail something they were asked about, and then to move the conversation on by addressing a related topic. For example, responding to a question about the benefits of learning with students of multicultural backgrounds at school may lead the student to ponder the various aspects of a culture (attire, food, traditions and so on), multicultural events that the school holds, or what the student has shared with their close friends or peers about their culture and vice versa. The student can then explore the importance of preserving one's heritage. Students must remember that, as this section is a conversation, assessors will interrupt any rote-learned monologues
- build confidence through practising interactions in Tamil. Some students spoke haltingly and lacked confidence. It is vital to have regular practice in the lead up to the examination
- practise using more complex sentence structures and syntax. For example, rather than frequently using அதுமட்டுமல்லாமல் (not only that), students could use other phrases such as:
 - அதைத் தவிர (apart from that)
 - அதேவேளை (at the same time)
 - இன்னும் பார்க்கப்போனால் (if we were to look further)
 - மற்றும் (besides)
 - அடுத்து (next)
 - மேலும் (moreover)
- practise using repair strategies to advance the conversation when needed. Students can ask assessors to rephrase the question if they do not understand the question
- avoid anglicisms. Some students did not notice that they used English words such as 'like', 'okay' and 'so'. Other English words used by students included 'quality', 'pants', 'subjects', 'support', 'feedback', 'enjoy', 'technology', 'perform', 'physically', 'gym', 'hobbies', 'tennis', 'painting', 'tutorial' and 'inspiration'
- revise grammar, especially the use of appropriate tense
- build vocabulary specific to the student's personal world and their interactions with the language and culture as learners
- practise pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo.

Section 2: Discussion

What students did well

In the 2024 examination, students:

- clearly introduced, in less than one minute, the focus of the subtopic chosen for their detailed study, alerting assessors to any objects brought to support the discussion of the subtopic. Almost all students supported their discussion with objects such as photographs, diagrams, graphs and collages. Students who scored highly used them appropriately when discussing a relevant idea or piece of information. It was great to see that a range of subtopics were chosen for the discussion this year. Some of the subtopics included:
 - ஜல்லிக்கட்டு (Jallikattu)
 - தமிழ் மாணவர்களிடையே பொதுநல மனப்பாங்கு குறைகிறதா (whether social awareness is decreasing among Tamil students)
 - ஒஸ்ரேலியப் பல்கலைக்கழகம் ஒன்றில் தமிழ் இருக்கை ஒன்றை அமைத்தல் (the formation of a Tamil Chair at an Australian university)
 - ஆண் பெண் சமத்துவம் (male and female equality)
 - புலம் பெயர் பெற்றோரின் எதிர்பார்ப்புக்களும் பிள்ளைகள் எதிர்கொள்ளும் சவால்களும் (the expectations of diaspora parents, and issues faced by their children)
 - சிலம்பம் (Silambam)
 - திரையுலகில் பெண்கள் (women in cinema)
 - சிலப்பதிகாரம் (Silappathikaram)
- demonstrated in-depth knowledge of their subtopic. Most students performed well and had prepared thoroughly for their subtopic. Students who scored highly demonstrated a sound knowledge of their chosen subtopic and responded readily and confidently to questions. They were able to present an excellent range of information, ideas and opinions on their subtopic, using appropriate sentence structures with a wide range of vocabulary, correct grammar and appropriate expression
- engaged in a discussion using relevant information, ideas and opinions, and clarified, elaborated on and defended opinions and ideas. A number of students who scored highly were able to link their subtopic to their personal world or experience, and frequently related elements of their discussion to their own opinions and ideas. The most impressive performances came from students who demonstrated a passionate engagement with their subtopic and thus engaged the assessors in a meaningful discussion for the full duration of this section
- communicated effectively with assessors throughout the discussion, including through the use of repair strategies
- used appropriate vocabulary, grammar and sentence structures
- used appropriate expression, including pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo.

Areas for improvement

In preparation for the examination, students could:

- choose an appropriate subtopic to suit their ability and interests
- convey information learnt from sources but also express an opinion with an original perspective on the subtopic. A number of students approached this section as a presentation of facts. While facts are central to a student's preparation, they should serve as a foundation for fostering a discussion, which requires a personal approach to the subtopic, including the student's own opinion
- prepare with an appropriate number of quality sources – including a combination of aural, visual and written texts – to explore the subtopic in sufficient depth. Information should come from more than just people known to the student or a handful of websites
- make references to the sources or texts studied for the detailed study
- avoid listing facts without expressing a point of view, or presenting general knowledge as research
- use the image to support the discussion on the subtopic. Only photographs, maps and diagrams are permitted to be referred to during the examination. Avoid prebound books with any writing in them. Do not bring any material that displays the student's name
- avoid relying on pre-learnt responses that do not address an assessor's question. It was very clear that some students memorised their prepared subtopics as set speeches and had difficulty responding to questions and resuming the speech when interrupted. A few students were unable to speak about their subtopic for the full duration of this section. It is important to remember that this section is a discussion and not a presentation; assessors will interrupt any pre-learnt monologues. While some elements of this section will, of course, have been prepared and practised by students, they are also expected to give spontaneous responses, particularly by comparing aspects of the subtopic to Australian matters, modern times and the student's personal world
- practise using repair strategies. Students are welcome to ask for clarification when needed
- revise grammar, and practise pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo
- build vocabulary specific to the subtopic selected for the detailed study. Students are expected to use more complex language and more specialised vocabulary than they would in the conversation section of the examination.