

2019 VCE Languages oral examination reports – Victorian second languages

The following information applies to the 2019 oral examinations for the 12 Victorian second languages listed below. This was the last year of implementation of this oral examination structure for these second languages. A separate report is provided on the 2019 oral examinations for the 24 second languages examined within the Collaborative Curriculum and Assessment Framework for Languages (CCAFL).

The Chief Assessor for each study has provided comments on the quality of student performance for each language and this information can be accessed directly by clicking on the links below.

- Arabic
- Chinese Second Language
- Chinese Second Language Advanced
- French
- German
- Greek
- Indonesian Second Language
- Italian
- Japanese Second Language
- Korean Second Language
- Spanish
- Vietnamese Second Language

General comments

The Languages oral examinations assessed students' knowledge and skills in using spoken language. Most students in 2019 were familiar with the examination procedure and were well prepared for both sections of the examination.

Section 1 involved a seven-minute Conversation. This section consisted of a general conversation about the student's personal world; for example, school and home life, family and friends, interests and aspirations. High-scoring responses showed spontaneity in the answers given to questions from assessors. Successful students gave expanded responses and offered ideas and opinions. Memorised responses were evident in weaker performances.

Section 2 consisted of an eight-minute Discussion. The focus of the Discussion was to discuss and explore subtopics in the language and culture of communities in which the language is spoken. Students were expected to make reference to aspects covered in the texts studied. Subtopics were engaging, enabling students to showcase the content and language needed to interact with assessors. High-scoring students were able to support and elaborate on information, ideas and opinions with confidence. Students needed to come prepared to discuss and explore ideas and opinions by referring to the texts studied, making links between the texts and using them to support their ideas. Some students were not able to draw effectively on the texts and found it difficult to discuss and explore ideas and opinions related to their subtopic and its connection to the language-speaking community.

2019 VCE Arabic oral examination report

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

In the Conversation, students converse with the assessors about their family life, friends, school life, future aspirations, hobbies and interests.

Students who scored highly showed an excellent level of capacity to pay attention to their pronunciation and were able to regularly self-correct. Students must practise the pronunciations of commonly confused words. Students who scored highly were also able to use complex and compound-complex sentences to describe their school life and future aspirations. They also discussed their interests in sports, travel and employment, and demonstrated their strong opinions about plans and choices for the future. Well-prepared students confidently engaged in the conversation and provided well-thought-out responses to questions. Students who did not score highly presented a limited range of information and often provided brief answers.

While most students were able to converse competently and convey their message and ideas accurately, some would benefit from practising the pronunciation of commonly used and confusing terms and phrases, and expressing their views and opinions.

Section 2 – Discussion

Students who scored highly in this section were able to discuss their Detailed Study subtopics in depth. They provided detailed information, opinions and ideas in a relevant and spontaneous fashion.

Students' choice of topics enabled them to research and study different aspects of the language and culture of the Arabic-speaking community. It is important that students research and study topics that are of interest to them. This will allow them to express an opinion about what they have learnt from the resources, deal with contradictory opinions, suggest solutions and understand the subtopic that they have studied.

Students deeply involved in their topic scored highly on the criteria that require a range of information, ideas and opinions. They were able to clarify, elaborate on and defend opinions and ideas very effectively.

2019 VCE Chinese Second Language oral examination report

General comments

Many students showed a good understanding of the oral examination assessment criteria and were familiar with the content areas prepared for the Detailed Study. They demonstrated their competence in using the language and their understanding of the culture by maintaining the exchange of information fluently and confidently. Those who scored very well not only provided a wide range of information, ideas and opinions but also used a great variety of expressions, vocabulary and sentence structures.

The common areas that need to be improved are the pronunciation of the consonants *z*, *c*, *s*, *zh*, *ch* and *sh* and the vowel *ü*; the correct use of adverbs; and communication strategies to deal with unexpected challenging questions.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

Most students dealt with this section of the examination with ease and could confidently converse about their personal world. Some students were able to use personal examples in a very lively manner to illustrate their point.

However, the following areas require further attention:

- Some students rote-learned their responses to questions related to the five areas of their personal world. Some responses were very long and some of the information provided was not relevant to the questions asked. It was not unusual for assessors to have to interrupt students in order to advance the conversation.
- Lack of understanding of the questions asked. When this happened, irrelevant information was provided.

Typical errors included:

- Inaccurate vocabulary and phrases. For example, 农人 (farmer. The correct version should be 农民); 打足球 (play football. The correct version should be 踢足球); 老虎妈妈 (tiger mum. The correct way to say it is 虎妈).
- Grammar:
 - ‘玩一起’ instead of ‘一起玩’ (play together)
 - ‘或者’ (or) and ‘还是’ (‘or’ used when asking questions)
 - inappropriate use of measure words, such as ‘一个年’, ‘三个天’
 - incorrect use of ‘对...感兴趣’ (to be interested in...)

Section 2 – Discussion

A variety of topics on different aspects of Chinese culture was presented. Some examples included famous Chinese people, such as 李清照 (Li Qingzhao from the Song Dynasty) and 高锟 (Kun Gao, a contemporary scientist); folk art forms such as 剪纸 (Chinese paper cutting); and Chinese literature such as 《西游记》 (*The Journey to the West*) and 《连环画》 (Chinese cartoons).

Those students who performed very well in this section chose their research topics and aspects of the topics according to their language competence, and completed a thorough study. They showed high levels of linguistic and analytical competence and were able to provide relevant in-depth information, use concrete examples to clearly illustrate their points of view and used very well prepared visual stimuli in the Discussion.

Some students did not prepare well and found this section challenging. The presentation and discussion of their research lacked detailed information and had a narrow scope for discussion. Some of the topics chosen were clearly beyond students' linguistic ability, and consequently the accuracy of expression and fluency of delivery suffered.

2019 VCE Chinese Second Language Advanced oral examination report

General comments

In the Chinese Second Language Advanced oral examination, it is essential that students understand and use culturally appropriate conversational manners, that the content they present is logical and flowing, and that they demonstrate a variety of language skills in both the Conversation and the Discussion.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

Many students showed strong verbal skills in terms of clarity of expression. Most students had prepared well and responded confidently.

Students who scored highly were able to respond very well to assessors' challenging questions and could also elaborate on their content with extended responses. Students should pay attention to the following issues:

- Some students could not fully understand the assessors' questions and consequently could not respond accordingly. Students are reminded to listen to questions, focus on interrogative words such as who, what, why and how, and identify the key phrases that will assist them to construct appropriate answers.
- Some students lacked expression, persuasiveness or vividness of description. Students should avoid a passive manner and monotony in their use of language. Teachers may wish to incorporate practice to build greater confidence and expressiveness, to enable students to improve their oral skills.

Section 2 – Discussion

Many students performed to a very high standard with regard to the content of their Detailed Study.

Supporting students while they are choosing their topic is very important. Giving basic information is essential in the Discussion. Narrow topics are not suitable as students are not only expected to give information but also to analyse or evaluate that information.

Certain points need to be addressed:

- Some answers did not contain sufficient information. When selecting resources related to their topic, students may use summaries, short articles and/or books. In addition, analysing and reorganising information about the chosen topic may support more sophisticated language and lead to responses of a higher standard.

- Some topics were inappropriate or unsuitable for the students' language level. The topic chosen should be of interest to the student and should be appropriate for their language skill level.
- Students should give logical and organised answers to questions. As it is a formal examination, students should use polite yet standardised Chinese 规范中文 and avoid language that is too casual or slang 俗/俚语. If necessary, students can explain or elaborate on information.

Students are expected to know their topic well. For example, if a student chooses a historical figure as their topic then they should be able to explain who that person was and in which dynasty they were born.

2019 VCE French oral examination report

General comments

Student performance in the 2019 French oral examinations was of a high standard. Many students showed evidence of solid preparation for each section and were able to showcase their knowledge in meaningful ways, engaging well with the assessors and talking freely.

Areas for improvement included:

- the use of correct grammar; for example, noun genders (*'mon mère et ma père'* should be *'ma mère et mon père'*) and plural agreements (*'mes frères est'* should be *'sont' / 'les changements internationaux'*)
- limited range of grammatical structures; for example, students should use not just the subjunctive in *'il faut que...'*, but longer sentences joined by conjunctions (*'soit... soit...'* or *'avant que'*, which use the subjunctive), varied use of negatives (move from *'pas'* or even *'jamais'* to *'aucun/aucune'*, *'guère'* or even *'pas du tout'*), pronouns (create a context and use *'Je les lui ai donnés'* or use *'qui'* and *'que'* to create interest in sentences, *'mon frère qui aime tant me taquiner'*, *'ce que j'aime faire souvent est...'*); time words with tenses (use *'le weekend dernier'* as an elaborative example to demonstrate past tenses *'j'ai joué au foot'* and value-add; for example, *'j'ai joué au foot avec mon équipe scolaire et nous sommes allés jusqu'au bout pour gagner ce match épuisant'* or *'l'année prochaine, j'irai...'* or *'mes cousins iront...'*)
- the use of verbs in all persons and tenses, as well as developing other grammar elements to make language use as interesting as possible, more precise and perhaps even sophisticated
- the use of correct expressions in French, including using prepositions with more accuracy; for example, using *'dans le train'* (not *'sur'*), as well as object pronouns in their correct positions in sentences
- use of extended vocabulary; for example, if talking about art or images of people, places or things, students are advised to learn vocabulary that allows a full description and interpretation, creating a bank of different adjectives – *captivant, fascinant, bizarre, drôle, pas ennuyeux, étrange, important, juste, meilleur, sympa* – or other nuanced utterance that shows preparation and dedication to learning the language, going beyond *bien*
- clarity of speech; even when nervous, students should look up, project their voice and enunciate clearly so that communication is enhanced.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

Students who scored well showed enthusiastic engagement with all elements of the examination, spoke eagerly with the assessors, knew the parameters of the two different sections and used grammatical expressions in a nuanced way. Students who scored most highly knew their material very well and were able to converse in a variety of ways and linked topics together easily and with conviction.

Students who did not score well usually gave answers that were not developed enough – answers were short and basic, even on familiar content such as family or leisure activities. These students could have offered examples within each conversation topic to extend their responses. They often displayed a limited range of content and little to no context. It was important that students analysed and evaluated their information rather than giving only basic facts. Simple exposition of an idea is not enough for students to do well. Some students attempted to give a presentation rather than engage in a conversation with the assessors. Students should remember that they are being assessed on their ability to converse in French, not give a speech.

Section 2 – Discussion

In general, students were well prepared for the Discussion. Topics that engaged students on a personal level allowed them to explore and reflect on cultural differences between France and Australia and made the discussion a better shared experience. They were able to contrast their texts and resources and reflect on their learning while using those resources. An inability to develop ideas and comment on relationships between ideas let many students down. Some resources used by students were outdated and did not reflect a current view of France, so students are advised to check current sources in order to make their Discussion relevant. Some topics were not linked to French culture but were instead generic topics that did not meet the criteria.

2019 VCE German oral examination report

General comments

In the 2019 VCE German oral examination, students showed that they could converse on a range of topics, and inform and reflect on a particular study of their interest. Students who scored highly demonstrated what they could say in German, utilising a wide range of vocabulary and grammatical structures, with spontaneity and humour making their conversation a natural and authentic experience. Students' pronunciation and fluency was generally good and many students used repair strategies well.

The area in the oral examination that required the most improvement was grammar. Some students used a variety of tenses in their conversation, knew a broad selection of verbs and could use compound verb forms accurately. Prepositions were followed with the correct cases and pronouns of all cases were used well. These students also showed a very good understanding of German word order and used structures that showcased their skills. Students are advised to practise constructions with modal verbs, know the perfect tense well, be competent with the conjunction *weil* and consequent verb word order change, and know the difference between the subject and object pronouns.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

This part of the examination should be a natural, spontaneous conversation, illustrating what the students have learnt during their study and how well they can hold a conversation. While a certain amount of preparation is expected, this should be more along the lines of thorough familiarity with the topics and regular practice conversing rather than an exercise of memorisation. Responses learned by heart were very easily recognisable and often sounded insincere and overdone.

Students who responded with more open structures could expand their conversation and therefore gave themselves more opportunities to showcase their skills. For example, *'Ich habe eine Mutter, die gern Radtouren macht, und wir zwei fahren oft am Wochenende irgendwo hin'* opens up a variety of further possibilities compared with *'Meine Mutter heisst Janine und ist 43'*.

Students who had prepared well were used to speaking with more fluency and paid more attention to the sounds of the German language. They spoke with an authentic accent, using appropriate phrases and German idioms, to make the Conversation as natural as possible.

Section 2 – Discussion

Students should select a topic that is interesting and accessible, but also can showcase their abilities. The topic and the sources studied must be stated clearly so that the assessors have a clear understanding of what the Discussion might include.

Good topics this year were *Schnelle Mode*, *Bauhaus*, *Deutsch Tugenden und Stereotypen*, especially when students made clear links with German culture and/or compared Australian and German cultures. Some topics this year, however, had no link with Germany and these were lost opportunities for the students to show their understanding of an aspect of the German cultural and linguistic perspective.

2019 VCE Greek oral examination report

General comments

Most students were familiar with the requirements of the 2019 VCE Greek oral examination and performed well. They displayed a good level of preparation and responded well to a variety of questions about their personal world and their chosen Detailed Study. These students were able to maintain and advance the exchange with some spontaneity. However, there was a small number of students who had not prepared effectively. Although they spoke fluently and did not make grammatical errors that compromised communication, they were not prepared to develop their responses and support and elaborate on the information they presented with reasons, examples and evidence.

Grammar continues to be the area in which students are challenged most in both sections. Common grammatical errors made included:

- incorrect stress of words *ο πατεράς μου, η γιάγια μου*
- common verbs such as *πρέπει* and *χρειάζομαι*
- the use of incorrect gender of nouns *η αδελφός μου, τους αγώνας*
- incorrect plural form of adjectives *πολλά Έλληνες, πολλοί δυσκολίες*
- incorrect use of articles *στο Ευρώπη, ο μαμάς* or lack of agreement between article and noun *πολλά δουλειές, πολλούς τραγούδια*.

Some students were not able to use a variety of tenses correctly and made mistakes such as *θα προσπαθώ* instead of *θα προσπαθήσω*, *να παντρέψει* instead of *παντρεύτηκε*, *να ζήσουν* instead of *ζουν*, and errors in verb endings *αυτός με βοηθίζει*. Errors were also made with words that sounded similar, for example, *οι φίλιες* instead of *οι φίλες*.

Students need to focus on grammar in addition to content when preparing for the oral examination in order to improve their communication skills. Students are also advised to study a broader range of challenging vocabulary and more complex grammatical structures.

Most students spoke with correct pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo. However, some students need to pay greater attention to intonation when using unfamiliar vocabulary.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

Most students were well prepared for the Conversation and were able to maintain and advance the exchange with assessors effectively, giving clear responses. They were able to answer questions that were asked in depth and give logical and highly relevant responses.

Some students, however, should have had more practice in reflecting on their own experience, avoiding lengthy pauses and developing good repair strategies. These students relied on support from assessors and gave answers using basic vocabulary; they were also not able to respond to unanticipated questions.

Section 2 – Discussion

Topics for the Detailed Study should contain enough information to enable students to have varied opinions that they can elaborate on and defend. It is important that students choose suitable topics and a range of different kinds of texts that showcase their abilities and enable them not only to maintain but also to advance the exchange. Topics such as ‘Preserving the Greek Identity’, ‘The Rebetika Songs’, ‘Migration’, ‘Erotokritos’ and ‘Environmental Issues’ were delivered successfully by many students.

Well-prepared students used a wide range of vocabulary, complex sentence structures and some sophisticated expressions. They were able to make links between the texts and compare and contrast issues raised. They had built an extensive vocabulary bank from which they could draw their answers.

In comparison, students who did not achieve high scores for the Discussion showed little understanding of the topic chosen and simply retold the content of the texts. These students found it difficult to clarify or elaborate on opinions and ideas. They had a limited range of vocabulary and had to search for the right word or the appropriate grammatical structure. These students were not well placed to respond to unexpected questions on areas of their chosen topic.

2019 VCE Indonesian Second Language oral examination report

General comments

In general, the Conversation section was handled well. High-scoring students responded to questions with an impressive range of vocabulary and provided a measure of originality to their responses that reflected a thoughtful approach to their preparation.

On the whole, the Discussion section was also handled well, but some students could have better utilised repair strategies in order for the Discussion to move forward.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

Students who scored well had completed thorough preparation and appeared to have practised a wide range of open-ended questions that could be asked by the assessors. For example, students can expect to be asked not just why they study Indonesian but also to describe in detail an aspect of the culture that resonates with them. Questions that begin with '*Jelaskan*' (Please explain), '*Ceritakanlah*' (Please tell [us]) or '*Bagaimana kalau*' (What if) all require detailed answers. It would also be useful if students were familiar with different ways to formulate responses to the same question; for example, '*Bagaimana pendapat anda*' (What do you think) may have been asked in different ways such as '*Bagaimana tanggapan anda?*' and '*Bagaimana hemat anda?*', alternative questions carrying the same meaning.

Section 2 – Discussion

High-scoring Discussions showed not only awareness of the criteria for each section but also thorough preparation that enabled students to manipulate the language with a high degree of accuracy and variety. Even when responding to challenging questions, these students were able to access an excellent range of repair strategies that included the use of sophisticated vocabulary and grammar such as '*Sulit diterangkan dengan jelas, akan tetapi*' (It's difficult to describe clearly, however), instead of '*Saya tidak belajar itu*' (I did not study that) or '*Walaupun tidak disebut dari bahan yang saya pelajari, ada kemungkinan bahwa*' (Although not mentioned in the materials I studied, there is a possibility that) or '*Kurang tahu bu/pak, akan tetapi berdasarkan apa yang saya ketahui*' (Not sure, but based on what I know). Good repair strategies can open up discussion and provide the possibility of carrying the Discussion further.

Students are encouraged to widen their knowledge of their Detailed Study so that they are able to go beyond basic information that depends on recalling facts and information. The content criterion gives top marks to content that is comprehensive, sophisticated and original. This does require

students to think deeply about their topic and to prepare for the 'what ifs'. Deep knowledge of content should facilitate familiarity and use of a richer vocabulary and structure.

2019 VCE Italian oral examination report

General comments

Students generally prepared adequately for the examination. Those who were aware of the criteria and understood the requirements of the tasks displayed their knowledge in an effective manner. These students spoke confidently and readily engaged with the assessors, demonstrating their ability to converse in the language.

In preparation for this examination it is important that students undertake adequate and regular practice in the language in order to perform in an authentic manner. While many students' pronunciation was adequate, more effort was required in the areas of tempo and stress.

Students should ensure that they have a comprehensive understanding of the requirements of an oral examination at this level and be prepared to devote an appropriate amount of time to advance their mastery of the Italian language and successfully address all aspects of the examination.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

In general, most students were able to maintain the exchange with assessors. Those who scored well were able to converse about a wide range of topics, elaborating and extending their responses in a confident manner. Rather than simply listing information, these students were able to highlight and support their ideas by providing relevant examples and opinions. Furthermore, successful Conversations included an excellent and accurate use of grammar, with more complex sentence structures, a range of tenses and a broad range of relevant vocabulary. These students had control of appropriate auxiliary verbs and accurate agreements. Conversations in these cases flowed naturally and with ease.

In contrast, students who had not prepared adequately experienced difficulty advancing the Conversation. They relied heavily on memorised responses that often did not address the questions asked by the assessors. Inadequate knowledge and mastery of the Italian language hindered their ability to communicate effectively.

Section 2 – Discussion

Students presented a variety of topics for discussion. The students who achieved high results were able to expand and elaborate on their chosen topic, making effective use of a wide range of text resources. They responded readily and accurately to the questions posed by the assessors, demonstrating a thorough knowledge of the topic. These students used their resources as evidence in support of their ideas and opinions. Their performance was further enhanced by an accurate and appropriate use of the language.

Students who lacked adequate preparation found it difficult to explain and discuss their topic. They were unable to use their resources successfully and communicated in a basic and ineffective manner.

2019 VCE Japanese Second Language oral examination report

General comments

Students generally prepared well for both the Conversation and Discussion sections of the 2019 VCE Japanese Second Language oral examination and many students were able to sustain their 15-minute Conversation.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

Students who scored well listened to questions carefully and responded appropriately. They also carried the Conversation forward by providing additional information and including a range of grammatical structures.

Students who did not score well did not always take the opportunity to move the Conversation forward. Students should attempt to respond to each question with more than one sentence, rather than provide a simple response.

Non-Japanese words, for example place names, were often mispronounced. Students should use the correct word in Japanese rather than an English equivalent, for example, はいゆう instead of アクター. A command of basic vocabulary is required for the Conversation. Some students did not understand the following words: 読書、にがて、おこづかい、将来. The following words were confused by some students: やさしい and やすい, 英語 and えいが, りょうり and 旅行.

Understanding key words in the questions is also important and students should pay particular attention to the following words: 週に何回、どう、どうやって、どんな.

Grammatical accuracy is important in both sections of the examination. In particular, students need to revise the following grammatical structures: ～たことがある、～と思う、なぜなら～からです. When structuring a sentence using ‘because’, the reason comes first, followed by the outcome/consequence. It is important not to overuse one particular grammatical structure throughout the Conversation. Accuracy in particle usage is also important, as well as responding in the correct tense.

Section 2 – Discussion

Students were required to prepare a well-constructed one-minute introduction that clearly outlined their topic as this provides guidance to the assessors in determining what questions to ask.

Students who scored well selected a topic that they were able to discuss in detail and they provided a range of information and opinions. They were able to move beyond rote-learned responses and effectively answer a variety of questions posed by the assessors.

Some students chose some serious social issues in Japan to discuss, which limited the flow of the Discussion. It was evident that these students tried to memorise key vocabulary, but they had difficulty pronouncing or explaining these words. These students relied heavily on rote-learned responses.

Topic(s) should be carefully considered. During the Discussion section students are assessed on their ability to engage with assessors in a conversation in Japanese about their chosen subtopic. Therefore, students benefited from choosing a subtopic that suits their language ability and that they can discuss in detail in Japanese. They should be able to explain any complex vocabulary they use. Successful subtopics for 2019 included: ひきこもり、自動販売機、動物カフェ、ゴミ問題、コンビニ、給食、部活.

A requirement of the Detailed Study is for students to have undertaken research using different resources. During their Discussion, students were expected to refer to the resources they used to support the information they provide. Interesting resources used by students this year included the NHK news and the Monbukagakusho websites.

2019 VCE Korean Second Language oral examination report

General comments

Most students showed a good level of preparation in the 2019 VCE Korean Second Language oral examination. Students who scored well presented a wide range of information, ideas and opinions on their Detailed Study topics. They used effective repair strategies to continue the Conversation and to keep the Discussion flowing naturally. These students spoke confidently and fluently with clear diction and moderate tempo. Other students had not prepared well and relied on rote-learned responses most of the time, which meant they were unable to respond to questions spontaneously. Their selection of vocabulary was limited and inappropriate, and poor pronunciation compromised clarity and understanding, and therefore overall communication.

Common grammatical errors were in the use of particles, including subject-verb agreement. To improve grammatical accuracy and vocabulary, students should regularly read authentic texts such as news articles and books as well as practise speaking Korean every day.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

Overall, students performed well and demonstrated a good level of preparation. Most students presented appropriate responses to questions and comments focusing on their personal life. Students who scored highly carried the Conversation forward spontaneously in a confident manner. These students were able to elaborate on information by including relevant reasons or examples in depth. In contrast, students who did not score well tended to present answers without elaboration, and hesitated and paused for long periods of time throughout the Conversation.

Section 2 – Discussion

The topics for the Detailed Study were materialism and humanism, significant people in history and multiculturalism in Korea.

Generally, students analysed each text very well and compared and contrasted different texts. High-scoring students demonstrated the ability to provide a concise and coherent analysis of the two or three texts chosen. Some students were unable to present the content of their chosen texts coherently or cohesively.

Students should ensure that they present sufficient information and knowledge of their chosen texts. Students are advised to broaden their vocabulary, increase grammatical accuracy and improve clarity of expression, including pronunciation and tempo.

2019 VCE Spanish oral examination report

General comments

Students had prepared thoroughly for the 2019 VCE Spanish oral examination and had researched their topics, in most instances, very well. Grammatical structures had generally been well practised but there were some common errors. There is a need for students to read authentic Spanish texts more widely to consolidate comprehension skills and learn a broader range of vocabulary.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

Students were well prepared for this section of the examination. They were able to adequately respond to the assessors' questions. For example, 'What subjects are you doing this year? What is your favourite one and why?', 'How do you think Spanish is going to help you in your future aspirations?', 'Can you describe a typical weekend at home?', 'What are the benefits of practising a sport?' and 'What will you do when you finish Year 12?'. Most students were able to recognise when they had made a mistake and used appropriate repair strategies. Common speaking errors included:

- lack of agreement between article and noun:
 - *la tema* instead of *el tema*, *un clínica* instead of *una clínica*
- verb conjugation and tense:
 - *quiero voy a Chile* instead of *quiero ir a Chile*
 - *cuando yo vivo en USA* instead of *cuando viva en USA* (subjunctive)
- confusion in the use of *Ser* y *Estar*, for example *Estoy divertido* instead of *soy divertido*
- confusion with English words; for example *realizar* means 'to do' in English, 'realise' translates as *darse cuenta* in Spanish.

Section 2 – Discussion

Most students were well prepared for this section. They were able to communicate and exchange ideas and opinions. They seemed to be very interested in the topics they had researched. A wide variety of topics and subtopics was handled well by students.

It is highly recommended that students engage more with authentic texts in Spanish, such as short stories, poems, novels, songs and articles. This can be an effective form of improving language expression, vocabulary and spelling.

Students presented a variety of topics for the Detailed Study Discussion, including:

- Immigration of Hispanic people to Australia
- Women in politics; Evita (Argentina)
- Madrid verde (green)
- The effects of climate change in Argentina
- Mexico and the greening of freeways spaces
- Hispanic women's contribution to US society
- The Spanish Civil War and its influence on the arts
- Love represented in the arts
- Music and social issues
- Christmas in Spain
- 'La Tomatina' community festival in Spain
- The experience of Latin American students in Melbourne
- The Chilean community in Australia, early settlers working in goldmines
- History of forced relocation of native people of Canary Islands to Cuba

2019 VCE Vietnamese Second Language oral examination report

General comments

In 2019, students completed the oral examination successfully and demonstrated an outstanding level of preparation and practice. The majority of students showed their ability to maintain the Conversation and present their opinions effectively. They communicated naturally with the assessors, answered questions readily and expanded on their answers by quoting examples based on their knowledge and involvement. Students are expected to have learnt strategies in order to answer questions and demonstrate their ability in conveying their own ideas and opinions.

Specific information

Section 1 – Conversation

The majority of students were well prepared and performed to a high standard in this section of the examination. Most students communicated well and advanced the Conversation effectively, but some students struggled to continue unless they were prompted by assessors' questions.

Many students engaged with the assessors confidently and their responses were direct, highly relevant and sophisticated. Students are reminded that they must be prepared to use language in unrehearsed situations, using the correct register (*thưa thầy cô, dạ, vâng, ạ ...*) and appropriate language. They need to practise answering a wide range of questions asked in a variety of ways, for example, *Môn học nào khó nhất đối với em? Tại sao?* (What subject is the most difficult one for you? Why?) or *Em học được gì từ những buổi sinh hoạt gia đình?* (What do you learn from your family activities?)

Section 2 – Discussion

The majority of students were able to introduce their subtopics appropriately and refer to the resources they had studied. Most students managed the one-minute introduction well but a few needed prompts from assessors to briefly state their Detailed Study topic and subtopic.

Overall, many students had good knowledge of the appropriate vocabulary and correct grammar structure. However, several students seemed not to know the meaning of some of the vocabulary they used.

Students who scored well demonstrated that they had prepared their Discussion thoroughly. They successfully conveyed information to the assessors and were able to support and explain their answers with evidence and their own opinions.

Students who did not score well were not able to demonstrate knowledge about the topic studied, therefore they were unable to complete the Discussion successfully. The assessors needed to ask

many simple questions so they could advance the Discussion. When preparing for the Discussion section of the examination, it is recommended that students learn and research information about their discussion topic and practise this with Vietnamese speakers.

Most students demonstrated good fluency of expression and had excellent pronunciation, intonation, stress and tempo. Students who did not score well needed support when faced with unexpected questions, for example, *Em có ý kiến gì về ...* (Tell us your ideas about ...) or *Làm thế nào phân biệt giữa X và Y ...* (How can you distinguish between X and Y?). Students should be aware that relying solely on rote-learned answers prevents them from engaging in a meaningful discussion.