



2003

LOTE: Korean Second Language GA 3: Examination

Oral component

The oral examination is designed primarily to assess the students' knowledge and skill in using spoken Korean (*Study Design VCE Assessment Guide 2002 p. 31*).

In general, students were able to understand the questions relatively well and their repair strategies were reasonable. Overall, students performed well but some were extremely nervous which made them perform below their capabilities.

In both the conversation and discussion sections the students were well prepared, but not confident in expressing and extending their opinions, ideas and knowledge. Students should develop their knowledge of Korean so that they can illustrate and express what they have learnt. Their nervousness during the examination made it hard for them to recall a wide variety of vocabulary. Some responses were characterised by a dependence on memory, which is risky when students meet unexpected questions during the examination.

Because members of the same class often chose the same topic, it was at times difficult for assessors to discriminate between performances.

Section 1 – Conversation

Overall the standard was reasonable, but some students found it difficult to make appropriate use of particles (especially subjective and objective), tenses and structures which affected the criterion for maintaining the conversation. Mostly the clarity of expression was handled well. Pronunciation of students was fine and clear. A few students had difficulties in understanding questions, particularly when it was long or unexpected. This resulted in students providing irrelevant answers. Some had little more than a limited vocabulary range and just used simple expressions. Such students however were able to sustain the discussion with their information and knowledge (relying on memory only) and therefore the depth of discussion was limited because of the lack of vocabulary.

Most students found it easy to understand 'yes/no' questions, but a few attempted to answer the questions although they did not understand them. They made inappropriate responses to open-ended questions and unexpected questions. Better responses would have been 'I don't know about this area.' or 'Could you please repeat the question?' Then they could have earned a better mark for being able to use repair strategies.

For some students, the conversation was maintained if confined to prepared questions. Students need to be capable of maintaining the conversation by elaborating on their opinions and preparing more grammar and vocabulary, and constant practice in conversation would help.

Section 2 – Discussion

Students were able to cope with the discussion better than the conversation, clearly proving they had practised the discussion section. Some students chose very simple topics and had memorised their material, so the depth of content was difficult to assess. However, when asked to elaborate or clarify, their lack of depth of knowledge was revealed. A few other students found it difficult to meet the criteria 'capacity to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and effectively' and 'relevance, breadth and depth of information, opinions and ideas'; as they had memorised it was difficult to elicit their understanding and to maintain and advance the exchange.

Most students did not manage 'to explore and compare aspects of the language and the culture of the Korean-speaking community through a range of oral and written texts related to the selected sub-topic'. It is suggested that a range of at least three different kinds of texts be selected. They might be aural and visual, as well as written texts.' (*Study Design VCE Assessment Guide 2002 pp. 24–25*).

Students referred to text types such as books, movies, and cartoons. Other students were well prepared and well informed on the chosen topic. However, no students brought resources to support their information with them, which may have helped their ability to illustrate prepared topics, keep information relevant and increase their capacity to elaborate ideas.

Regarding linguistic/grammatical matters, common errors were made on the subjective and objective particle and tenses; however, the range and appropriateness of vocabulary and sentence structure some students produced was impressive.

Written component

There was a broad range of achievement in writing standard amongst students. Listening and Responding was also a weak area. The standard of writing was generally improved compared to the previous year, but students still need to have a variety of text types (the *Study Design VCE Assessment Guide 2002* p. 13) so that they can prepare for the written examination.

In the writing section, the more familiar question topics for example ‘school life’ and ‘advertising about Melbourne’ were very popular and the other two questions were only chosen by a few students. Students need to broaden their vocabularies by familiarising themselves with the main characteristics of different kinds of writing (*Study Design VCE Assessment Guide 2002* p. 52).

Students need to put greater effort into grammar, especially particles and tenses, in writing so that they meet the criteria: ‘accuracy and appropriateness of grammar’ (*Study Design VCE Assessment Guide 2002* pp 14–15).

The examination questions overall covered a good variety of familiar topics; however, some questions, especially in ‘Reading and Responding’, were not done well so it was hard to assess the students’ capacity according to the criteria.

Sections 1 and 2 was composed of short-answer questions (mostly Section 1 – Listening and Responding) and extended responses which required a short description (phrase) or sentences. Those requiring short answers were generally of a reasonable standard.

Section 1 – Listening and responding

Part A of this section needed to be answered in English and Part B in Korean. Students were supposed to be very spontaneous because they needed to answer immediately after listening. Generally the answers were in order of the listening script, but some questions were not, for example, Question 20 in Part B was at the end of a listening script but the answer to the question was both in the beginning and in the middle of the script. Many students did not get the answer. Generally the students met the criterion ‘the capacity to understand and convey general and specific aspects of texts’ but they needed to reinforce their strength in listening comprehension by practising listening to Korean texts.

Section 2 – Reading and responding

Part A

Students were required to answer questions in English on two Korean passages to test their capacity to understand and convey general and specific aspects of texts. Questions written in English and on familiar topics gave some students a better chance of answering correctly.

Part B

The question was composed of content very familiar to the students, so that they easily met the criterion ‘the capacity to understand general and specific aspects of texts’.

Section 3 – Writing in Korean

In this section there were huge differences in performances in terms of relevance, breadth, depth of content, range of vocabulary and grammar.

Most students chose Questions 30 or 32, fewer chose Question 31 and Question 33. Students are required to experience various text types for the examination. Highly capable students should be aware of the word limit and not exceed it. The writing of high scoring students was excellent and met the criterion of relevance, variety of words and punctuation.

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