



2004

LOTE: Lithuanian GA 3: Examination

Oral component

GENERAL COMMENTS

The performance of students in the oral examination indicated that they were well-prepared and hence were able to demonstrate their ability and proficiency in Lithuanian. It is pleasing to report that, in general, student responses were of an extremely high standard due to careful preparation. Most students handled the conversation section quite competently, demonstrating good linguistic skills and a sound knowledge of the content of the prescribed topics. Overall, students participated naturally and confidently.

Some students thought that the introduction to the discussion section (which was supposed to be no longer than one minute) meant that they could give a monologue of the sub-topic they had studied. It is essential that students understand that the purpose of this time is to inform the assessors of their chosen sub-topic and its thematic content, based on at least three different text types.

Most students handled the discussion section very well; nevertheless, there is still room for improvement in both sections.

To maximise their performance in the general conversation and discussion students should:

- be familiar with the criteria
- realise that a conversation is an exchange and not a question/answer session
- acquire a good knowledge of key vocabulary and structures
- pay greater attention to pronunciation, intonation and stress
- be able to respond to questions in some breadth and depth and build on comments made by assessors
- be able to express and elaborate on ideas and opinions and justify them
- know how to make reference to, and link opinions to, texts studied.

Section 1 – Conversation

This task involves a conversation about the student's personal world; for example, school and home life, family and friends, and interests and aspirations.

All students were competent and showed the capacity to maintain and advance the exchange appropriately and accurately. The most successful students provided extensive answers to questions, and confidently moved the exchange forward using accurate language and an impressive range of vocabulary and complex structures.

During the conversation, strong students were able to switch from one tense to another with ease. These students also demonstrated the capacity to respond to and build on comments made by the assessors. There were no unnatural pauses and a consistent pace was maintained throughout the assessment.

On the whole, students appeared relaxed and often took the initiative to link effectively with assessors.

Students generally used highly accurate vocabulary and grammar. When a few minor slips in pronunciation and syntax occurred, students rephrased and self corrected. There was little evidence of the use of anglicisms, although even the better students often used English sentence structures.

Information in this section was clearly and concisely conveyed by students, and all exhibited a full understanding of the examiners' questions. Some students showed they could easily and confidently lead the conversation.

Section 2 – Discussion

The choice of topic for the detailed study is crucial. Students are at a definite disadvantage if the sub-topic is too complex, broad, narrow or vague. The sub-topic should not only reflect the interests of students, it must also suit their linguistic ability and promote discussion of the issues and resources studied.

Good students demonstrated an excellent knowledge of their topic, citing three or more varied resources from different text types. They were thoroughly conversant with the content of their detailed study, and also highly skilled in

2004 Assessment Report



expressing and elaborating on ideas and opinions, and in substantiating them with pertinent evidence. Students demonstrated the capacity to use an extensive range of vocabulary and a range of complex structures and accurate language.

In contrast, other students (who were also most articulate) did not, or could not, cite the texts studied or the sources of their information. They used general knowledge or cited one source only, usually the Internet. Hence, they were unable to demonstrate an adequate knowledge of texts studied, and were unable to show links between topics and texts. The texts should be used to support, expand on and explore the sub-topic and not merely as a basis for a recount.

It is important that students and teachers select appropriate materials and sub-topics. Students must come to the oral examination prepared with authentic Lithuanian texts. In this way, they will have been exposed to the key vocabulary related to the sub-topic. The texts selected and studied should vary in length and complexity so that students are exposed to a **balanced** study and a variety of views. Text studied should not be in English, nor should the texts be fabricated. This includes personal diaries and journals kept by the student or a family member as the aural text.

The recommendation in the Lithuanian Victorian Certificate of Education Study Design is that students study a range of at least **three** different kinds of text. Furthermore, at least one or two texts should be substantial, and the texts should include a mix of aural and written resources; for example, a novel, a documentary and a report. When providing evidence to justify an opinion, students should refer to the texts studied.

The choice and number of texts used to research the sub-topic of the detailed study is extremely important. Students who studied a variety of texts, such as films, articles and novels, were generally better equipped to present, support and elaborate on a range of information, ideas and opinions.

Given the amount of time devoted to the detailed study, some sophisticated ideas, opinions and information should be presented. These should be appropriately elaborate and supported by the texts.

Much more use could be made of support objects. For instance, a student discussing Lithuanian festivals could have a photograph, a *verba*, a decorated Easter egg, or *juosta* as an example of a scene or activity that could take place. This may assist the student by providing a focus to lead into further discussion of the detailed study.