



## Oral component

### GENERAL COMMENTS

Most students performed well in the 2005 Turkish oral examination. It was clearly evident that students who had adequately prepared themselves for the examination were readily able to draw upon their learning experiences and knowledge appropriately and effectively. In contrast, those students who were insufficiently prepared lacked confidence and seemed particularly nervous at the start of the examination.

In preparing for this examination, it is important that students have a clear knowledge of the examination procedure and the assessment criteria. It should be noted that students are required to give extended, well thought-out answers rather than responses that consist of just one or two words.

Many students gave the impression that they were prepared to present the first part of the examination as a monologue rather than as a conversation with the examiners. Some appeared unfamiliar with the polite forms of greeting and leave taking.

It must be kept in mind that the focus of the discussion is 'to discuss and explore the sub-topic and aspects covered in the texts studied'. Students should come to the examination prepared to discuss and explore ideas and opinions by using and referring to the texts studied and making links between the resources used.

Some students thought that the one-minute introduction to the Discussion could be used to give a monologue based on the sub-topic of the Detailed Study. Rather, students need to understand that the purpose of this time is to inform the assessors of their chosen sub-topic and the titles of at least three different types of texts used in their study. Some students seemed to have prepared for this part of the examination in a way that resembled the 'Report' that was part of the original VCE. Other students seemed to have prepared their topic only hours before the examination.

### SPECIFIC INFORMATION

#### Section 1 – Conversation

Some students prepared for this part of the examination quite adequately and were able to give elaborate responses to the questions asked. As there are no set questions for the oral examination, and given that the Conversation relates to the student's personal world (for example, school and home life, family and friends, and hobbies and aspirations), it is assumed that students will have explored these topic areas thoroughly and will be able to maintain a meaningful conversation with the assessors. Students who were willing to take the initiative and elaborate on their answers by giving explanations, or providing reasons or evidence naturally received higher marks.

The majority of students recognised and used familiar formulaic expressions to greet and respond to greetings and farewells. They endeavoured to use stress and intonation appropriately. Most demonstrated some advanced communicative skills when discussing familiar content such as family background, future ambitions and special interests. These students were generally more confident in their ability to communicate on familiar topics and were therefore more able to concentrate on fluency.

A small number of students were not able to advance the conversation and relied on the assessors to prompt them, while some others had memorised chunks of information that they tried to present as a monologue. When interrupted, these students usually found it difficult to continue with the conversation, or simply returned to their previously memorised speech.

Some issues noticed by assessors included:

- some students did not know the Turkish equivalent of subjects, occupations or hobbies
- occasionally, literal translations of idiomatic expressions were used (for example, *bilgisayara bindim*)
- on leaving, some students just repeated what the assessor has said to them (for example, *güle güle*), which is appropriate in English but not in Turkish
- students should be prepared for an exchange with the assessors rather than present memorised information on the conversation topics.



## Section 2 – Discussion

The choice of topic for the Detailed Study is extremely important. Topics need to lend themselves to discussion and generation of opinions and ideas. In 2005 it was found that some topics such as; *'sigaranın zararları'*, 'a pop singer', *'kız kulesi'* and *'Galatasaray takımı'* did not allow the students much scope to go beyond the learnt information.

Students who chose restrictive topics found it difficult to present new opinions or move beyond a superficial and factual retelling of their ideas and acquired knowledge. On the other hand, more substantial topics such as *'Çanakkale'*, *'Trabzon şehri ve turizm'* and 'traditions and superstitions' offered students more scope to discuss and express their ideas and opinions.

The *Turkish VCE Study Design* recommends that students study a range of at least three different kinds of texts. These texts need to have substance and should differ substantially from each other. Choosing texts that provide different but relevant perspectives on their topic further assists students to engage in a more detailed discussion. Some students had used information collected from the Internet, and some gathered their knowledge from resources written in English rather than Turkish. Students should study Turkish texts, as the appropriate vocabulary may not be learnt if their texts are in English.

To adequately prepare for the Discussion part of the oral examination, students must go beyond covering just the basic concepts so that they have enough scope and depth for the duration of the discussion. When selecting texts, the ability of the student must also be taken into consideration and the onus of collecting the information must not be solely left to the student. The texts chosen for the Detailed Study should be in Turkish and should allow the student to explore and compare aspects of the language and culture of the Turkish-speaking community. Some students cited English resources and, when questioned about these, could not relate the information/ideas to the topic studied in the Detailed Study.

It should always be kept in mind that students are required to spend 15 hours of study on their Detailed Study and it is not unreasonable for assessors to expect comprehensive information, ideas and opinions that are appropriately elaborated on and supported by evidence from the resources used. These resources need to be understood and used in support of the arguments, opinions and ideas.

Well-prepared students were able to maintain and advance the discussion; however, many students were unable to go beyond their introduction, which was often based on memorising chunks of information on the narrow topic prepared. Restrictive topics not only limit the student's ability to develop and express their opinion but also limit the assessor's input or attempts at prompting the student.

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.