

ASSESSMENT REPORT 2020

CHN315114 – CHINESE

ORAL EXAMINATION

There is no doubt that 2020 was a very different and somewhat challenging year for all language students including those learning Chinese. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, during the second and third term, Tasmanian colleges had at least six weeks of online teaching and learning. The reduced face-to-face teaching and learning time had a big impact on Chinese language learning. Notwithstanding the challenges that online learning presented, the examiners were very impressed by the confidence and standard that the students demonstrated in their oral examination. The results attest to the huge combined efforts of teachers and students to ensure that students were well prepared.

Most of the students were able to sustain the conversation relating to topics of personal identity, family and pets, house and home, hobbies and interests, schooling, daily life, food and drink, holidays and travels, weather and celebrations of festivals. The students who received high grades demonstrated an ability to respond accurately and fluently to spontaneous questions. These students also spoke with very few hesitations, demonstrating good pronunciation, clear tones and intonation; with very few errors and appropriate self-correction. They provided detailed information in response to each question, using a broad range of vocabulary and very well-structured sentences.

Some students achieved lower ratings due to their repetition of simple sentence structures, and errors in pronunciation and tones. There were frequent pauses in the conversation; needing some prompting from the examiners to ensure the student understood the questions.

There were a small number of students who were very nervous during the oral exam. The examiners displayed patience and understanding by providing these students with some time to calm their nerves. Examiners repeated questions and provided some prompts to help these students understand the questions.

The questions below appeared more challenging for some of the students in the oral exam this year:

- 请你说说你的学校生活。
- 你想去哪儿旅行？为什么？
- 请你说说霍巴特/朗塞斯顿的一个季节
- 你知道中国人怎样过春节吗？
- 澳大利亚人怎样过圣诞节？

WRITTEN EXAMINATION

The alteration in the listening and reading section of the written exam paper was widely appreciated and welcomed by teachers and students. It did provide students with more time to think about and answer the questions. The good results from the reading section and writing section reflected the advantage of the extra exam time. The listening section was shorter this year; comprising four spoken texts (rather than five); and the number of questions reduced by one. Nevertheless, the listening section still appeared to be the hardest section for most of the students. Very few students achieved an A rating in this section.

Part I – Listening and Responding

There were four spoken texts with two conversations (one male and one female) and two mono-dialogues in this year's exam paper. A wide range of topics were covered in this section such as food, ordering food from a restaurant, shopping, transportation, directions, hobbies, studies and exams, weather, daily and leisure activities. The exam markers felt the speed of the conversations was a little faster than last year. The intonation of the speaking could also have been improved to enhance the students' comprehension of the spoken texts.

Question 1

Spoken text 1 was a conversation between Mr Li and his wife about shopping. Questions (a), (b), (c) and (d) were answered very well by most of the students. Students lost marks heavily for questions (e) and (f) because the items the couple talked about appeared to be quite confusing.

Question 2

This spoken text was the most challenging one for some students. It was a mono-dialogue, but the content of the dialogue was for two persons. Some students were very confused as to why the conversation was delivered by only one person. They didn't understand it was a retell of the conversation between Lily and Bella. The confusion over the text, resulted in misunderstanding of the content and very heavy loss of marks. The average mark for this question seemed to be very low.

Questions (a) and (b) were answered quite well with the correct time for the phone call, when and where to meet. Very few people could specify the name of the library “国家”. Question (c) was answered well as the key word “打的” was listed in the new word list. Some people missed a mark for question (d) due to the understanding of the words “快” and “方便”. Question (e) and (f) had the heaviest loss of marks in this section. Some people didn't understand the content of the spoken text and put the wrong transportation mode in for question (e), or didn't have the correct reason for the chosen transportation mode. No students received full marks for question (f) due to incorrect or incomplete explanations about how to get to the destination. Very few students received full marks for question (g).

Question 3

The performance of this question was slightly better than for question 2. Most students answered questions (a), (b) and (c) very well. Several students got the numbers wrong for the cost, so lost a mark for question (d). Question (e) had the heaviest loss of marks, with no student receiving full marks. This reflected that the students were very unfamiliar with how apartment/unit addresses are expressed in Chinese. Marks were lost for question (f) due to students selecting the wrong Chinese dish.

Question 4

Spoken text 4 was a mono-dialogue with a male voice. There were quite a number of new words for the students and it was very helpful to have them listed in the word list. Many students lost the mark for question (a) due to choosing the incorrect time that the email was written. Question (b) was relatively easy for most of the students; but many students missed the full mark for question (c) due to not understanding “4 days of exams”. Some students answered with “4 exams”, instead. Question (d) seemed to be easy for many students although some responses did not describe the weather sufficient to receive 3 marks. Many students missed the mark for question (e) because they didn't understand the event. Question (f) and (g) appeared to be fairly easy for the students.

PART 2 – READING AND RESPONDING

The reduction of Part B in the reading and responding section greatly assisted the students to respond to the questions adequately and carefully. Thus, better results were received for most students. The topics covered in this section were family, study, professions and future aspirations, describing clothes, shopping and money facilities. The students appeared to be competent in these topics; and so, results for Part 2 of the written examination were better than results for Parts 1 & 3.

Question 5

Overall, students demonstrated a clear understanding of the text. There were only a few students who missed some marks on questions (e), (f), and (g) due to their not understanding the words, “语言” (language) and “文学” (literature).

Question 6

Most of the students were very confident and knew the topics of clothes and shopping very well. As a result, the questions for this text were answered well in general, especially for questions (a), (b), (c) and (d). Some students missed some marks on questions (e) and (d) due to the discount word, “折”. Questions (g), (h), (i) and (j) were answered quite well apart from a few students who didn't check the reading text carefully and picked the wrong items in the multi-choice questions. It is worth noting that a few students answered questions (d) and (j) in Chinese instead of English; and although the correct answers reflected the student's understanding of the questions, this resulted in loss of marks because the questions were not answered according to the requirements specified; that is, to answer the questions in English.

PART 3 – WRITING IN CHINESE

This section had five questions for the students to choose from. Question 8 was the most popular one with about half of the students choosing this question. Question 9 was the next favourite with about one third of the students addressing this topic. Question 7, 10 and 11 were the least favourite topics, attracting only one or two students for each of the three questions. The standard of writing in Chinese was higher than for last year due to students have adequate time to write their response (on account of reduced tasks for Parts 1 and 2).

Student responses were marked based on the student addressing the content/topics required to be covered; the range of vocabulary; complexity of sentence structures; accuracy of characters and grammar; text format; and, word count. The markers of the exam paper were very happy to read some very high-level writing that included a broad range of vocabulary and complex sentence structures; accurate characters and grammar; with all the relevant topics covered; and presented in the correct format. Some common mistakes in the writing were grammatical errors in the sentence structures. These included time-describing words incorrectly positioned at the end of the sentence; the incorrect inclusion of “是” in a description statement with adjectives such as 大, 小, 漂亮. There were errors in *tense* when expressing past experiences: i.e. a diary entry and the story should both have been written in the past tense, by using the particles “了” and “过”, appropriately.

Another common mistake for some writing was the format of texts according to Chinese convention. Apart from the specific requirements of the text type – that is: a letter, diary/journal entry, conversation/interview, narrative and profile – the general convention for Chinese writing requires a good structure with clearly-defined paragraphs, and two-spaces indented to indicate each new paragraph (a conversation/interview text is the exception to this convention). Several written responses had only one huge paragraph. Some left a whole row in between each paragraph rather than two spaces indented at the beginning of a new paragraph. A few written responses had a whole row space in between each row throughout the text. One piece of writing had several blank rows after each row of writing and as a result, the student had to use two writing booklets to complete their answer.

The text format for question 8 was a speech which is not required by the syllabus. However, most of the students who answered this question performed very well; with a greeting at the beginning and thank you at the end. The external assessment specifications do not include “speech” as a text type on which students should be examined. Therefore, students who wrote a speech were not penalised if their written response did not follow a format consistent with a speech “text type”. The text format for question 9 was a postcard, which should be similar to a letter. Most of the students who answered this question followed the format of a letter which was very good.

A small percentage of writing received a “t” rating due to inadequate and irrelevant responses to the questions addressed.

MARKING GUIDELINES FOR LISTENING AND READING SECTIONS

Listening and Responding

Spoken Text	Question Number	Indicative Answers	Mark Allocation Notes
1	(a)	Go shopping	
	(b)	Supermarket	
	(c)	Coke	
	(d)	Yesterday	
	(e)	a and b	1 mark each
	(f)	a, c and d	1 mark each
2	(a)	Last night	
	(b)	2pm National Library Entrance	1 mark each key word
	(c)	Take a taxi	
	(d)	Fast and convenient	1 mark each key word
	(e)	Quite far Cheaper more convenient	1 mark each key word
	(f)	Subway redline get off at the National Library Exit 7	1 mark each key word
	(g)	Not allowed to take your own books in	
3	(a)	Ordering takeaway	
	(b)	Old Beijing	
	(c)	Takeout	
	(d)	68.50 Yuan	
	(e)	No. 58 Zhongshan Rd, Building No.3, Room 301	1 mark each key word
	(f)	c and d	1 mark each
4	(a)	a	
	(b)	Had an exam	
	(c)	Exams lasted for 4 days	1 mark each key word (exam; 4 days)
	(d)	Nice weather not cold not hot quite comfortable	1 mark each key word
	(e)	Singing Chinese songs Karaoke competition	
	(f)	b and c	1 mark each
	(g)	a and d	1 mark each

Reading and Responding – Section A

Question	Indicative Answers	Mark allocation Notes
6 (a)	David's Chinese family	1 mark each key word: (David, Chinese family)
6 (b)	Four: Dad Mum Two Kids	1 mark each key word
6 (c)	a and c	1 mark each
6 (d)	Beijing Language University	1 mark each key word: (Beijing, language)
6 (e)	2 nd year	
6 (f)	English literature	1 mark each key word
6 (g)	Two: English and Japanese	1 mark each key word
6 (h)	c	
7 (a)	Last Saturday	1 mark each key word
7 (b)	Go shopping	
7 (c)	b	
7 (d)	set 套 pair (for shoes) 双 pair (for trousers) 条	1 mark each key word
7 (e)	Got a 20% off discount	1 mark each key word
7 (f)	a	
7 (g)	a and d	1 mark each
7 (h)	a, b and c	1 mark each
7 (i)	card and cash	1 mark each key word
7 (j)	cheap and dear big and small old and new	1 mark each key word