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FOREWORD

This booklet contains reports written by Examiners on the work of candidates in certain papers. **Its contents are primarily for the information of the subject teachers concerned.**

URDU: SECOND LANGUAGE

GCE Ordinary Level

Paper 3248/01
Composition and Translation

General comments

This session's examination was taken by approximately 6 000 candidates, mainly from Pakistan with a small number of entries from the Gulf States and other outlying Centres. In general the performance of the candidates was more than satisfactory, with the majority of them producing very good performances. There seemed to be no significant problem for most of them to cope with the different technical demands of the different questions, the only limitations being that of:

- the candidates' linguistic ability
- their ability to understand and respond appropriately to the questions.

The paper consisted of three questions. It is convenient to describe and discuss them separately. The total for the paper is 55 marks.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

This question required candidates to write a short essay of about 150 words on the topic of:

"jadid dawr men TV ka kyrdar"

"The role of television in the modern age"

Marks were awarded on a scale of 6 for content and 9 for language, giving a total mark of 15 marks for the question.

Three main bullet points were given in the stimulus, namely:

- TV is an important invention of the modern age
- its educational and recreational advantages
- some disadvantages of television.

In the allocation of marks, 2 marks were awarded for each bullet point, depending on how much detail was given.

While most candidates scored well on the last two points, very few managed to score full marks on the first point because they did not write anything much about its importance. Many wrote that TV is very important but that did not deserve a mark. Many merely wrote about when it was invented and that it was amazing but did not state why! Some good responses, such as the fact that people could now get news from around the world in sound and vision, received a full 2 marks.

The second two bullet points were much better covered, although the third point was sometimes missed out or was not marked because the candidate had overrun the prescribed word limit of 150 words. In fact Examiners were instructed to read up to about 200 words before ignoring any extra material. This meant that candidates lost marks for content because whatever points they had made after the 200 word limit could not be taken into consideration. The main reason for this seemed to be that candidates tended to write lengthy introductions about why they had decided to enter for the competition, which was unnecessary. It cannot be stressed too much that it is very important to follow the rubrics for each question if high marks are to be achieved.

As for language, while in this Syllabus "B" Examiners are not expecting perfect Urdu, it is expected that candidates should be able to write and spell everyday words correctly, especially if these words are included in the question. This question gave candidates an ideal opportunity to demonstrate their linguistic ability and the better candidates produced excellent and accurately written compositions.

Only a few candidates had written Urdu which was not up to the task, mainly because they were unable to write correctly, not because their grammar was too poor. The vast majority of candidates wrote relevant and linguistically mainly accurate responses to this question.

Question 2

This question provided candidates with a choice of either:

(a) *Write a speech for your school assembly about parental rights.*

apne askul ki assembly ke liye valyden ke huqooq ada karne ke mawzoo par ek taqirir lykhiye-

or

(b) *Write a letter to an uncle thanking him for a watch given as a birthday present.*

aap ke chacha jan ne aap ki salgyra par aap ko ek ghari tohfe meN di hai- khat lykh kar shwkriya ada kyjiye.

They were instructed to write about 200 words, with an exhortation to keep to the recommended length!

As was noted during the last exam session, there was a markedly unequal number of responses for each choice here; the vast majority, over 80%, opting to write the letter. The letter was, by and large, satisfactorily attempted but the main shortcomings were waffle and unnecessary 'small talk'. It is known that all candidates are taught the 'honorific formalities' of Urdu letter-writing, and it was expected that some candidates would write a line or two at each end of the letter, but in far too many candidates' letters the formalities comprised about half the prescribed word-count of about two hundred words. The space allotted to the present must, therefore lack detail and thus fail to score high marks. A few candidates who did not include the normal formalities of Urdu letter-writing or included an address also lost marks.

The speech task was, on the whole, more satisfactorily attempted by most candidates. It is probable that only the more confident candidates would have chosen this technically more demanding topic. They wrote in an appropriate register, and mainly focused on the topic concerned. There were a few who seemed not to have fully understood the task and wrote mostly about what parents should or should not do for their children!

Most candidates scored 3 or 4 marks out of 5 for content, while most scored between 8-12 out of 15 for language.

Question 3

This question required candidates to translate a given passage into Urdu. The topic of the passage was Martin Luther King. This was, on the whole, well attempted this year and it is valid to point out that the level of difficulty of the passage was appropriate for this level of examination. The specification for this task does not require absolute accuracy, the basis of the mark scheme being to reward transfer of meaning. This meant that candidates were not penalised for grammatical or spelling errors as long as they did not interfere with communicating the meaning.

An interesting and unexpected peculiarity arose in the first sentence of the passage; it seems that some candidates did not realise that King was a name and not a title! Consequently many wrote something like '*martin luther baadshah*'.

The most difficult sentence in the passage was thought to be:

'He said that he had a dream that one day people would be judged by how good they were, not by the colour of their skin'. In fact many candidates produced very good translations of this sentence, such as: '*unhoN ne keha ky unheN khwab aaya ky log apne kyrdar se jaanche jaeNge na un ke jild ke rang se*'.

It was curious to note how many candidates used the word '*sapna*' for dream. Perhaps this is the influence of Hindi films!

There were certain words and phrases that did give many candidates cause to think and in some cases come up with inventive solutions. One of the most interesting was the word 'priest'. It was apparent that many candidates were unsure of its meaning, which is best translated as '*paadr*'. There were attempts such as '*imam*' and '*maulvi*' which were acceptable and '*nek adm*' or '*mazhabi adm*' which were not.

Another word which produced some interesting attempts was 'black'. Most used either '*kala*', '*habshi*', '*siyah*' or '*siyah fam*', which are entirely appropriate, but '*negro*' was considered unacceptable nowadays.

Unfortunately, some candidates simply left out certain words and phrases, presumably because they did not understand them fully. Whatever the reason, they lost marks. It is always better to have a try than to leave bits out. A try may get some marks but leaving words out can never gain marks!

Conclusion

It is very pleasing to report that in this session of the examination, the great majority of candidates have demonstrated the communication skills in Urdu to achieve the marking criteria for the higher grades successfully.

Paper 3248/02

Language Usage, Summary and Comprehension

General comments

On the whole most candidates performed well in this component. In large Centres candidates were aware of exam techniques and did comparatively better than in Centres with fewer candidates. Candidates who answered questions concisely and made use of their own language skills, rather than lifting the text from the passages, secured better marks. The number of candidates producing longer summaries decreased this year considerably.

Some candidates had problems managing time and were not able to complete all tasks. They ran out of time due to attempting rough drafts for summary and comprehension questions.

Comments on specific questions

Part 1: Language Usage

Vocabulary

Most candidates were able to make three or more sentences. Most candidates had difficulties using '*Jee Chorna*' and '*Daana Paani Uthna*' in sentences.

Sentence Transformation

There was a wide misunderstanding of the rubric in this part of the question. A number of candidates were not able to change all sentences into past tense. **Task 5** caused most confusion.

Cloze Passage

This part was quite popular. Most candidates secured full marks in it.

Part 2: Summary

This question was attempted well by most candidates but some candidates produced lengthy passages and lacked the skill to reduce its size. Some candidates did not understand the fifth point of the summary '*Gadagari ka insdaad*'. Most secured marks on four points only.

Part 3: Comprehension

Passage A

Questions 14-16

These were quite straightforward.

Question 17

A number of candidates invented some strange answers to this question. Most common misinterpretation was '*Machher meetha khoon passand kerte hayn*' – Mosquitoes like sweet blood.

Question 18

This was quite popular and almost all the candidates secured full marks.

Question 19

This was done well but there were lengthy responses from a number of candidates.

Question 20

This was done well by most candidates.

Passage B

Questions 21-23

These were quite popular and relevant responses were given.

Question 24

A number of candidates provided too much detail in response to this question. Some copied the whole text instead of selecting the relevant parts.

Question 25

Most candidates provided two pieces of information but some managed only one. Most candidates ably responded by presenting positive or negative effects of money upon friendship.