

SECOND LANGUAGE URDU

Paper 3248/01
Composition and Translation

KEY MESSAGES

In order to do well in this examination, candidates should:

- make sure they address each bullet point given
- stay within the prescribed word limits for each task
- in the translation task, not miss out words or phrases

GENERAL

As usual, the overall performance of the candidates was good, with the majority producing very good performances. There were of course some for whom the technical demands of the translation were particularly challenging, but most of them coped well with the requirements of the different questions.

The paper consists of three questions. The total for the paper is 55 marks.

PART ONE: DIRECTED COMPOSITION

As usual, this question required candidates to respond to the stimulus to write a short essay of about 150 words on the topic of:

'qaumi lybaas awr fashion' - 'National dress and fashion'

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

There were as usual, three main bullet points given in the stimulus:

- *'qaumi lybaas pahynne ke fa'ede'*
The advantages of wearing national dress
- *'qaumi lybaas par fashion ke asraat'*
The effects of fashion upon national dress
- *'naujavanon men fashion kyon maqbool hai'*
Why fashion is popular amongst the young

2 marks were awarded for each bullet point, depending on whether candidates had given two facts and how much detail was given. Most candidates scored well on the first two points this year, but quite a few did not score on the third bullet point because exceeded the word limit.

The most frequently mentioned points in response to the first bullet were:

'sense of identity', 'makes me feel part of the nation', 'to show that I am a Pakistani,' 'appropriately Islamic', 'suitable for men and women'

The second bullet point was equally well performed. These effects could, of course, be positive or negative. Most points made were considered relevant; these included: *'new and trendy designs', 'has been less popular', 'has become tighter/shorter, etc.', 'worn less as people prefer western clothes.'*

Most candidates managed to score 2 marks.

The third point was less well attempted because, although the question was very straightforward, a surprisingly large number of otherwise well-performing candidates seemed to have misread it. These candidates appeared to have thought the question was 'how popular fashion was' and they did not give any reasons and simply wrote a list of clothes (jeans, T-shirts, skirts). In order to get two marks candidates could have mentioned, for example, 'want to impress their friends', 'watching western films and TV', or 'copying their heroes'. The strongest responses did just that and scored two marks here.

A significant number of candidates lost marks for content because they had written far too much largely irrelevant material at the start of their composition with the consequence that whatever points they had made after the 200-word limit could not be taken into consideration.

Nine marks were available to reward the candidates' linguistic performance. Most candidates scored between 7-9 marks on this task.

PART TWO: DIALOGUE. LETTER, REPORT OR SPEECH

This session provided candidates with a choice of either a:

(a) REPORT

'apne School men khane pine ki sahulaton par ek report likhye awr unhen behter banana ke liye tajawiz pesh kijiye'

'Write a report on the catering facilities at your School and include some recommendations for improving them.'

Or

(b) SPEECH

'ap ko aap ke skul kie salana yna'mi taqrib men taqrir karne ki d'avat di gai hai- Internet ki t'alimi ahmiyat par ek taqrir likhiye'

'You have been invited to make a speech at your school's prize-giving day. Write a speech on the educational importance of the Internet.'

The report-writing task was attempted by approximately three quarters of the candidates, and it was, on the whole, well done. Most reports seemed remarkably candid in their criticisms, and whether true or valid, they were undoubtedly entertaining, citing dirty and unhygienic kitchens, cramped for space, uncomfortable chairs, stale and expensive food, lack of hand-washing facilities, etc. The weakness for some candidates was the need to make suggestions, some making only one, although most did write at least two.

The speech-writing task is felt to be slightly more difficult and probably attracts the more linguistically advanced candidates. Quite a few candidates focused on the Internet, but devoted much of their speech to features that were not educationally relevant. For example, writing about keeping in touch with friends and relatives is undoubtedly one of the Internet's most attractive features but not in an educational context.

That being said, whichever task they chose, most candidates scored 4 or 5 marks out of 5 for content, while most scored between 9-13 out of 15 for language.

For either task, candidates were instructed to write about two hundred words, and they must keep to the recommended length. Once again, the most unnecessary deduction of marks occurred when candidates wrote far in excess of the prescribed word limit. The limit set for this question is 200 words and Examiners are instructed to stop reading anything beyond that. These tasks can be completed satisfactorily within the limit so Centres should ensure that their candidates are advised to stay within the set limit.

PART THREE: TRANSLATION

This question required candidates to translate a given passage into Urdu. The topic of the passage was accidents caused by walking down the street and texting.

It must be stressed that candidates are not penalised for grammatical or spelling errors as long as these do not interfere with communicating the meaning. This means that for the vast majority of candidates,

transferring the gist of the passage was not a difficult task and that they scored between 15 to 20 out of 20 marks, despite at times writing very inaccurate Urdu.

A surprisingly high number of candidates translated 'it has happened to all of us' as '*yeh ham sab ke sath hota hai*' 'this happens to all of us' instead of '*yeh ham sab ke sath ho chuka hai*'.

Another word in the first sentence that caused some problems was 'down'. A high number of candidates wrote '*aap gulli ke niche chal rahe heyn*' which literally means 'under the street' instead of '*aap gulli par chal rahe heyn*.' This illustrates the dangers of a word by word approach to translation.

Many weaker candidates tend to miss out certain phrases or sentences completely. An example of this occurred in the first line of the passage, namely 'incoming', for which the use of '*aane wale*' is the straightforward Urdu equivalent. It is stressed every year that it is always better to have an educated guess that is appropriate to the context of the sentence or the passage than to leave parts out.

Once again there were issues with certain English words in the passage. Some need not be translated because there are no everyday Urdu equivalents, while some have straightforward Urdu equivalents and should be translated. Obviously, 'YouTube' has no equivalent, but lamp post, dustbin and passer-by do.

Parts of the body caused some candidates problems. 'Nose' and 'hand' were no problem, but 'face' and 'wrist' evinced some curious responses. For face, 'munh' or 'chahra' are fine but 'shakal' is not a physical part of the body but more one's 'appearance'. Wrist produced a variety of wrong responses, including transliteration of the word, or the Urdu words for elbow, hand, arm, and palm.

Despite these inaccuracies, the great majority of candidates manage to convey the gist of the passage as a whole, and certainly this year the passage was better attempted than in recent sessions with many candidates using linguistically sophisticated sentence structures.

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SECOND LANGUAGE URDU

Paper 3248/02

Language Usage, Summary and Comprehension

General Comments

Overall performance was good. The strongest candidates used their own words in their answers to the comprehension questions, whereas weaker candidates tended to lift sentences directly from the passages. It is important that candidates' work is legible and answers are clearly indicated on the question paper. It is also important that candidates write in the correct spaces and it is advisable to always attempt an answer rather than leave a blank space.

Comments on Specific Questions

Part 1: Language Usage

Vocabulary

Question 1–5 required candidates to compose five sentences using the five given idioms in order to clarify their meanings. **Question 2** was particularly challenging for lower ability candidates (اینٹ سے اینٹ بچانا). **Question 5** (کانوں کا کچا ہونا) proved challenging for all ability levels and very few candidates could answer it correctly. Mostly it was misunderstood as 'being hard of hearing' or 'being unable to keep a secret'; whereas the correct meaning was 'to believe in everything one hears'. The other idioms were mostly well understood.

While answering this part it must be remembered that the sentence has to show that the meaning has been correctly understood; otherwise, a mark cannot be awarded. Sometimes you have to clarify or support the answer with reasons in order to convey the exact meaning. For instance,

جلداد کے جھگڑے کی وجہ سے دونوں بھائی ایک دوسرے کے خون کے پیاسے ہیں is not acceptable until a suitable reason is given to demonstrate the exact meaning, like ہم نے مخالف ٹیم کو شکست دے کر اینٹ سے اینٹ بچائی۔ Correct sentence structure is also very important and sentences like ہماری افواج نے دشمن کے مقابلے میں اینٹ سے اینٹ بچائی or ہم نے مخالف ٹیم کو شکست دے کر اینٹ سے اینٹ بچائی cannot be awarded marks. Similarly, the literal meaning of an idiom is not accepted either.

Sentence Transformation

Question 6-10 required the candidates to write the antonyms of the underlined words. Both underlined words had to be correctly altered to gain one mark. The majority of candidates scored good marks in this part; however, some candidates struggled with the opposite of پست (بلند). While changing the form of underlined words as required, the candidates have to be careful to choose a word that fits in properly without making any changes to the sentence structure. An answer for which the given sentence structure has to be modified will not be accepted. **Question 10** was particularly well attempted by almost all candidates.

Cloze Passage

Question 11-15

The candidates were required to choose suitable words from the given list to fill in the blanks. Most candidates performed well in this task. Candidates of lower linguistic ability, however, found **Question 13** (کنجوس)challenging.

Part 2: Summary

Question 16

There was plenty of opportunity for the candidates to score maximum marks in this part. Most candidates understood the passage easily. The points given were specific and clear and required exact information. Most candidates performed well, with many succeeding in getting full marks. However, some candidates found the third prompt (آمیزش) difficult to understand. Similarly, the fourth prompt (فیشن) required two specific points: one about the use of colours in garments and the other about the use of colours in soft furnishings and home décor. A generalized statement not specifying any of the required answers could not score marks.

The candidates should make sure that they read the passage very carefully and then choose the information required by each prompt (two pieces of information for each). Giving irrelevant information or too much detail for any point results in exceeding the required word limit (100 words) and, consequently marks deduction, as examiners will not read anything over the word limit. The candidates must also ensure their responses are accurate in order to avoid losing marks.

Part 3: Comprehension

Passage A

Generally this part was well attempted. The candidates understood the passage easily. While almost all tend to answer correctly when the questions require information that is clearly and directly stated in the passage, only the strongest candidates tend to answer inferential questions well. It is also important to remember that the number of marks allocated for each question corresponds to the number of pieces of information required. The questions where some candidates faced difficulty are as follows:

Question 21

The question was worth 3 marks and asked how the doctor was affected by his conversation with the plumber. The answer required three specific points about the doctor's concern or dissatisfaction, as follows:

- his choice of profession
- his income
- his children's future plans

Candidates who lifted sentences directly from the passage for their answers could not provide all the required information, thereby losing marks.

Question 22

There were two parts to this three-mark question. The first part (worth one mark) required the candidates to tell how the doctor's wife reacted (she got angry), and the second part asked about what she said in response (two marks). A good number of candidates could not be awarded full marks since they did not answer the first part and only reproduced her sentences along with the speech marks.

Passage B

This passage was understood and the questions well answered by the majority of candidates and a large number of candidates scored full marks. However, **Question 26** proved difficult for a significant number of candidates. The strongest candidates were able to name the specific features of the valley.

Question 28 (worth one mark) also proved somewhat challenging for some candidates, even though it was clearly stated in the text what those people used to do in order to gain spiritual power (they used to rub their forehead (پیشانی) on a specific stone). In order to be awarded the mark, candidates should have mentioned the forehead, not just 'rubbing the stone' or 'using the stone'.