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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.**

SECOND LANGUAGE URDU

GCE Ordinary Level

Paper 3248/01
Composition and Translation

General comments

This examination was taken by approximately 1200 candidates, mainly from Pakistan with a small number of entries from the Gulf States and other Centres. The majority of the candidates produced very good performances with only a small number being less than adequate. 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 their linguistic ability, and their ability to understand and respond appropriately to the questions.

The paper comprised three questions. It is best 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 “*Madri zaban ki ahmiyat*” (“*The importance of the mother tongue*”).

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

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

- the effects of English on our mother tongue
- the necessity of protecting and developing the mother tongue
- ways of promoting and developing our mother tongue.

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

Most candidates scored well on the first two points, mentioning the increasing use of English in the media, in schools and the corresponding reduction in use of Urdu and the need to protect and promote Urdu because of its status as a national language and as an essential part of their identity, “*hamari pehchan hai*”.

The third point was less well covered because many did not write anything much about ways of promoting the language. Those who did wrote about the role of the media, schools, etc. in promoting Urdu. This third point was sometimes missed out or was not marked because the candidate had overrun the prescribed limit of 150 words. Once again candidates are losing marks unnecessarily because they write too much. 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.

As for language, 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 great majority of candidates produced excellent and accurately written compositions.

Question 2

This question provided candidates with a choice of either:

- (a) **Write a report for your headteacher about an accident you have witnessed.** (*Skul ate raste meN aap ne ek hadsa hote dekha. Headteacher ke kahne par as hadse ki report lykhiye*).

or

- (b) **Write a dialogue with an aunt persuading her to let you go away with your cousin on holiday.** (*Aap apni khala jan ko is bat par amadah kerna chahti haiN kyh vvh aap ke kazaN kw aap ke sath chutiyan manane ke liye kahiN jane deN. Khala jan awr aap ke darmiyaN pesh aane wala mukalamah lkhye*).

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

As was noted during the last examination session, there was a markedly unequal number of responses for each choice here; the vast majority, over 70%, opting to write the dialogue.

The report was, by and large, very well attempted but the main shortcoming was excessive length. Many candidates seemed to have very vivid imaginations and created rather dramatic and gory scenarios, which made for exciting reading. The better candidates used the journalistic phraseology familiar to readers of the Daily Jang, etc.

The dialogue task has proved to be a very popular innovation in this examination and was satisfactorily attempted by most candidates and some were very amusing! The reasons produced by some candidates for their holiday visits were also highly imaginative.

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 the extinction of the dodo. It 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.

While most candidates clearly understood the passage there were several words and phrases that did cause problems. The first sentence of the passage produced one, namely 'island'. Many candidates just transliterated the English word, the Examiners were rather concerned to find how many scripts did not have the standard Urdu word '*jazira*'.

Another error in the first paragraph was in rendering 'up to 14kg'. Many wrote '*caudah kay ji se ziyadah*' whereas the correct one was '*caudah kayji tak*'.

The most difficult sentence in the passage was thought to be: '*They introduced domestic animals as well as rats and monkeys to the island, and these started killing the bird and taking its place.*' In fact many candidates produced very good translations of this sentence, such as: '*unhoN ne paltu janwaroN ke sath sath chuhe awr Bandar jazire par mutarif karaye jinhoN ne as parinde ko marna shuru*' kiya awr us ki jagah lene lage.'

Certain words caused some difficulties, including habitat '*mahawl*' and population '*abadi*'.

In the third paragraph, a surprising number of candidates did not translate every sentence, usually missing out either the third or the fourth sentence. They were slightly similar so it was understandable, but it demonstrates a common failing amongst examination candidates. This omission would have been spotted straightaway had the candidates taken the trouble to read through their work. Another point in this section was the differentiation between words of a similar meaning. In one sentence the word used 'make aware' should be '*aagah karna*' while in the next sentence the word is warn, which should be '*khabardar karna*'. In fact many candidates used the same verb in both places. It is natural to assume that if the word is different in English, then it should be different in Urdu!

It was curious to note in the last sentence how many candidates used the word 'itihās' for 'historical'. This may only be the influence of Hindi films!

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 get marks!

It is very pleasing to report that in this session of 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

The performance of candidates varied from Centre to Centre. Most tasks were done well and evidence of good practice was evident in the majority of the Centres. The number of candidates not being able to complete tasks due to attempting rough drafts declined considerably compared to last year. A number of summaries and comprehension responses were far longer than required. On the contrary, some candidates produced short answers with only one piece of information instead of the two or three required for the tasks.

Comments on specific questions

Parts 1 and 2

Language Usage

These were generally done well. Occasionally candidates misunderstood *aankh lagna* and interpreted it as *aankh larana*. Similarly *aankh deekhna* was interpreted as *aankh dowkhna*.

For example:

Ziada T.V. daikhnay se aankhain dowkhnay lagee hain etc.

Sentence Transformation

This part of the paper was generally well done but some candidates did not understand the rubric and just changed the order of the sentences rather than changing them into the past tense as required.

Cloze Passage

Most candidates did well and secured full marks but isolated errors were made by some candidates e.g. the word *taallukaat* was used for *intekhaab* in **Task 8**.

Summary

At least 50% of candidates produced summaries which were too long. There was a tendency to copy complete responses from the given text, rather than use their own words. Candidates with good skills communicated points concisely in their own words.

Comprehension: Passage A

This was generally well done. Some candidates had difficulty producing relevant answers to all the tasks. They were quite repetitive in answering **Questions 14 and 15**. In response to **Question 17** a number of candidates wrote about 'What a good human being is' instead of 'How these good qualities are envisaged by God Almighty'.

Comprehension: Passage B

This part was the most popular and the majority of the candidates secured maximum marks.