

SECOND LANGUAGE URDU

Paper 3248/01
Composition and Translation

KEY MESSAGES

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

- write a well-structured composition covering each bullet point
- stay within the prescribed word limits for each task
- for translation, not miss out words or phrases

GENERAL

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

As usual, the overall performance of the candidates was good, with the majority of them producing very good work. The stronger candidates found the technical demands of the translation fairly straightforward.

PART ONE: DIRECTED COMPOSITION

Question 1 required candidates to write a short essay of about 150 words on the topic of: *saikal sawari* – (cycling)

6 marks were 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:

- *saikal celane ke faede*
The benefits of riding a bicycle
- *saikal celane men darpesh masail*
Problems faced by cyclists
- *aap ke 'elaqe men saikal celane ki kawnsi sahulten honi cahiyen*
What facilities should be there for cyclists in your area

2 marks were awarded for each bullet point, depending on whether they 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.

The first point this year was one where most candidates could easily score 2 marks. The most frequently mentioned points were:

- it makes it possible to get out and about cheaply
- it helps you keep fit and active
- it helps you lose weight
- it helps you meet people and make friends
- doesn't cause pollution

The second bullet point was equally well answered. Good and valid points made included:

- it is hard to learn
- too much traffic

- car drivers can be selfish/dangerous
- there is a lack of cycle shops

Most candidates managed to score 2 marks for this bullet point.

The best candidates were able to address all three bullet points within the word limit. Unfortunately, as is the case every session, the third point was frequently missed out or was not marked because the candidate had overrun the prescribed word limit. 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.

It is very important to follow the rubrics for each question if high marks are to be achieved.

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

PART TWO: DIALOGUE. LETTER, REPORT OR SPEECH

This session provided candidates with a choice of either:

(a) DIALOGUE

aap apne valyden ko mobile fon kharidne par razi karna chahte hen, vwh is ke haq men nahin hain - pesh ane wala mwkalama likhye

You want to persuade your parents to get you a mobile phone but they are against it. Write the ensuing dialogue.

Or

(b) LETTER

aap apne qalami dost ko khat lykhiye jys men aap apni aane vali chwtion ke program ke bare men bataye

Write a letter to your pen-friend in which you tell them about your programme for the upcoming holidays.

Once again the dialogue proved to be a very popular choice for many candidates, and they usually do this task very well. This session's performance, was, by and large very satisfactorily attempted. It was no surprise to find that many of them scored very well on this task. They were expected to write two points in favour of and two points against having a phone, with a final point awarded for the decision (either for or against).

The one real weakness was the key point of the task – trying to persuade the parents to let them get their choice. The examining team felt that many parents gave in too easily without having to be persuaded. That being said, most candidates scored 4 marks out of 5 for content, while most scored between 9 and 13 out of 15 for language.

The letter task was attempted by approximately a third of the candidates, and it was, on the whole, well done. Most letters were well written – it has to be borne in mind that letter writing is one of the basic literacy tasks undertaken by the vast majority of candidates who learn Urdu. They were expected to specify the holiday and convey three points of information regarding what they were intending to do. A fifth mark was awarded for the traditional top and tail of a letter, including address, date at the top and signing off with a suitable ending. The weakness for some candidates was the excessive and effusive start to their letters, which in some cases ran to over one hundred words. This made it very difficult for them to complete the task within the word limit.

For either task, candidates were instructed to write about two hundred words, with an exhortation to keep to the recommended length. Once again, the most unnecessary deduction of marks occurred when candidates wrote far in excess of the requisite prescribed word limit. The limit set for this question is 200 words and the best candidates were able to complete the task to a very high standard within that limit.

PART THREE: TRANSLATION

This question required candidates to translate a given passage into Urdu. The topic of the passage was the problems of going to live in a new country. The examining team felt that this session's passage was very straightforward and posed no particular problems for the majority of candidates.

It should be noted that candidates are marked for transfer of meaning and they are not penalised for grammatical or spelling errors as long as these do not interfere with communication. This means that, for the vast majority of candidates, transferring the gist of the passage was not difficult and that they scored between 15 and 20 out of 20 marks, despite sometimes writing very inaccurate Urdu.

One of the more interesting points this year was that in the very first sentence, *If you go to live in a new country*. A number of candidates translated this as *agar aap nae mulk men jate hain*, (*If you go to new country*), whereas the correct Urdu is *agar aap nae mulk men jakr rahen*. The second point was the rather large number of candidates who translated *country* as *shehr*, which means *city*.

Another word in the first section that caused some problems was *unexpected*. A good many candidates got this wrong, choosing to write *na-umid* or even *nagavar* (*hopeless* or *unpleasant*). The correct word is of course *gheyr mwtavaq'a*.

Many weaker candidates tend to miss out certain phrases or sentences completely. An example of this occurred in this section, namely *new and sometimes unexpected...*, for which the use of *kabhi* is an everyday Urdu word. It is always better to have an educated guess that is appropriate to the context of the sentence or the passage than to leave bits out.

One of the most common errors was in translating the word *fluent*. Many used appropriate alternatives, such as *zaban par obur karna*, (*to have mastered the language*) but the majority of candidates used, or rather intended to use the word *ravani* (*fluent*); however, at least half of them wrote *ravanagi* which actually means *departure*.

Once again there were issues with certain English words in the passage. Some need not be translated because there are no everyday Urdu equivalents, but words such as *road*, *cross*, *rules*, *subjects*, all do have simple Urdu equivalents, namely: *sarak*, *par karna*, *qava'id*, *mazmoon*.

Apart from that, in the main most candidates did 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 the vast majority of candidates scoring over fifteen out of twenty marks.

It is very pleasing to report that in this component of the examination, the great majority of candidates successfully demonstrated, in spite of errors of spelling or grammar, the communication skills in Urdu to meet the marking criteria for the higher grades.

SECOND LANGUAGE URDU

Paper 3248/02

Language Usage, Summary and Comprehension

Key Messages

In **Part 1: Language Usage**, candidates need to be familiar with the common idioms used in everyday language. This is an exercise that most candidates were able to complete to a satisfactory level. The sentence transformation exercise tested the candidates' knowledge of a range of simple and more complex grammatical structures. The gap filling exercise was designed to gauge candidates' knowledge of a range of lexical areas and their ability to choose the most appropriate word from a number of given words. Candidates are reminded of the need for accuracy.

In **Part 2: Summary**, five prompts are given, and for each only two points should be mentioned from the given passage. The best responses stayed within the 100-word limit and avoided any references to irrelevant material.

Part 3 tests the candidates' ability to understand the given passage and answer the questions appropriately. The best responses were concise, straight to the point and written accurately. The strongest candidates were able to use their own words in their responses and avoided lifting sentences directly from the passage.

It is important that candidates' work is legible and answers are clearly indicated on the question paper. It is also important that candidates write their answers in the correct spaces and is advisable to always attempt an answer rather than leave a blank space.

General Comments

This was a balanced question paper, catering for the needs of all candidates across the ability and language proficiency range. The overall performance of the candidates was good and candidates managed to access the full range of marks.

There is generally an adequate provision of space for each response in the paper. However, if the candidates find an answer exceeding the given space or they change their mind after writing an answer and want to utilize the blank pages or continue the answer on an extra sheet, they should clearly mention this in the answer space in order to avoid any confusion or losing marks.

Comments on Specific Questions

Part 1: Language Usage

Vocabulary

Questions 1–5 required candidates to compose five sentences using the five given idioms in order to demonstrate their meaning. Very few candidates scored full marks in this part.

Question 1

Candidates found this question easy and the majority of candidates answered it perfectly well.

Question 2

This was understood by almost all candidates, but only the very best were able to use accurately in a sentence (e.g. *Apna acha result dekh kir main phoola na samana ow gaya*. (اپنا اچھا رزلٹ دیکھ کر میں پھولانہ سامنا ہو گیا).

Question 3

طاق ہونا (*Taaq hona* – to be an expert) The large majority either did not attempt the question or gave a wrong answer.

Question 4

گنگنا (*Gun Gana*) confused quite a few and they used it in a sentence as (*Ganay Gana* – Singing Songs) گانے گانا.

Question 5

سر آنکھوں پر بٹھانا (*Sir Aankhoon per bithana* - to give respect) was used in a literal sense by many candidates.

While answering this part candidates must remember have to make sentences which are grammatically correct and show that the meaning has been correctly understood; otherwise the marks cannot be awarded. Similarly, literal meaning of the words used in an idiom cannot be accepted.

Sentence Transformation

Questions 6–10

This exercise required the candidates to change the given sentences into the future tense. The question was simple and easy and a large majority of candidates attempted it well and scored full marks. Although, minor spelling mistakes are overlooked in this part, if a candidate makes a careless mistake that changes the tense from future to past (e.g. putting a hamza on the last letter *gay-gaye* گئے) the mark cannot be awarded. Likewise, if future perfect tense is required and an example is also given that demonstrates it perfectly well, a transformation in future continuous tense is not acceptable.

Cloze Passage

Questions 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 with lower ability however, found **Questions 11** and **14** a bit challenging.

Part 2: Summary

Question 16

There was plenty of opportunity for the candidates to access the full range of marks in this part. The points given for discussion were specific and clear and demanded exact information. The very best candidates managed to get full marks by being concise. The candidates should make sure that they read the passage very carefully and then choose the specific information according to each bullet point (two pieces of information for each stimulus).

The candidates must be accurate in their response while reproducing the required information. For instance, responses like, *Europe main lteriyat main gher qudarti ajzaa kay isteemaal per pabundi hay* یورپ میں عطریات میں غیر / *America main lter kay istemaal per pabandi hay*, قدرتی اجزاء کے استعمال پر پابندی ہے

امریکہ میں استعمال پر پابندی ہے / were inaccurate. Candidates should have written instead, Europe main lteryat main gher qudarti ajzaa kay kum isteemaal per ghoor, یورپ میں غیر قدرتی اجزاء کے کم استعمال پر غور and America main hakoomti mehkamoon main/cigarette ki terha iter kay istemaal per pabundi ki tajweez, امریکہ میں حکومتی محکموں میں/سگریٹ کی طرح عطر کے استعمال پر پابندی کی تجویز specifically, in order to avoid losing marks. Some candidates also confused Europe main ibtidaa یورپ میں ابتداء with the first point and thus lost marks.

Part 3: Comprehension

Passage A

Generally this part was well attempted, and many candidates showed a good understanding of the passage and questions and achieved full marks for their responses. Again, the candidates are advised to give as many points in their answer as the marks allocated for that particular question. Candidates who give fewer points than required lose marks. A comprehension exercise is meant to test the candidates' ability to understand and extract information from a text. Therefore, any answers that drawn on information from sources other than the text are not accepted. The questions where some candidates faced difficulty are as follows:

Question 17

The question was worth one mark and asked why these people are never seen in larger numbers than thirty or forty. The reasons mentioned in the text were that they hide themselves from strangers. Many candidates were not able to spot this information from the text and gave their own views and thus lost marks.

Question 18

This question required three responses; two about the similarities and one about the difference mentioned between Sentinel and African people. Some candidates mentioned only the difference or generalized the specific similarities as *Shakl o Surat* شکل و صورت which was not acceptable.

Question 22

The question was worth two marks and required two responses, i.e. the gifts of fish and coconuts sent to them and the consequent loss of lives which caused the authorities to stop these attempts. Many candidates failed to answer either the first or the second part of the question.

Passage B

This passage was understood and the questions well answered by the majority of candidates. **Questions 24, 25 and 29** were attempted particularly well and a large majority of candidates scored full marks.

Question 26 required the unique security measures used in the fort to inform about enemies' arrival. Only the strongest candidates were able to pick the security measures which served this particular purpose. References to other security measures that did not serve this purpose did not gain marks.

Question 27 also proved to be somewhat challenging for some candidates. It was worth three marks and the candidates who failed to give all three points could not be awarded full marks.

Question 28 was very simple. In order to gain full marks candidates had to be specific in their answers.