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# **Examiners' Report**

## Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2017

Pearson Edexcel International GCSE  
In Swahili (4SW0) Paper 1

edexcel 

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## Question 1

This part of the examination is designed to test grammatical elements of the language.

### Question 1a:

This sentence was testing the present tense. Most students found this easy. However words such as 'mbaya' for strict were not accepted.

### Question 1b:

This question was testing the past tense. It was interesting to note that the word uncle which can be 'mjomba' or 'baba mkubwa / mdogo', seemed difficult and candidates translated this as 'shangazi', 'binamu' and even 'bibi'. There seems to be a problem with object marking where many candidates simply said 'nilitembelea' which was not accepted by examiners. To get the full mark students had to write 'nilimtembelea'.

### Question 1c:

This question was tested the use of 'po' as 'when'. Once again there was a problem with object marking. Examiners needed to see the structure 'nilipomwona' so as to give the full mark. Structures such as 'vile tulimwona', 'tulipo\_mwona' were not accepted.

### Question 1d:

Here the word 'unreliable' caused some problems. Examiners accepted all words that gave the meaning of unreliability including 'hazitegemewi'.

### Question 1e:

This question tested the conditional. Most students could easily access this question. Examiners accepted 'tutampigia mama' even when the word 'simu' was not included. Candidates should be careful about wrong structures such as 'ukikuja'.

It is highly recommended to centres to teach and help candidates master the Swahili noun classes and to pay particular attention to Swahili object marking, prefixes and various tenses.

## Question 2

This question tests transmission and Quality of Language. The process of translating into a target language encompasses all aspects of the language including grammar and general vocabulary.

Candidates performed well on this question although there was a clear distinction between the performances of less and more able candidates with the less able struggling with the following forms:

- Using non Swahili words such as 'wavyele'
- Not separating prepositions in verb structures e.g kwasababu, ilituwe
- Using the wrong subject and object markers also possessives e.g mahali inayoitwa, dada wangu,
- Separating the verb after a relative e.g tulipo\_enda
- Separating verb structures e.g siku\_jali,
- Wrong verb usage e.g akuwe and not 'awe', siwezi ngojea,
- Wrong translations e.g lazy was translated as 'kavu, mrufu,'

However the level of performance was good.

## Question 3

As in question 2 it tests transmission and Quality of Language. The process of translating into a target language encompasses all aspects of the language including grammar and general vocabulary. It is highly recommended that basic grammatical structures are stressed and revised before future examinations.

Candidates seem to do better when translating into English rather than into Swahili. There were however some terminologies that seemed to be difficult. This includes:

Nyuki (Bee) – translated as 'snake, female mosquito, fly, rat'

Majivu (ash) – translated as 'herbs, dust' although examiners accepted 'coal waste'.

Bibi (grandmother) – Students must read the passages and translate in context. Although 'bibi' is also the word for 'wife' in some areas, the character in the passage was a school student so would not have a wife; however both grandmother and wife were accepted. Other translations of bibi were 'sister, aunty, mum, cousin' – these were rejected.

There was a lot of problems in translating the last paragraph 'Na siku hizi, kutokana na idadi ya watu kukua mijini na kuwepo kwa magonjwa, nyuki wa asali wanakumbana na vitisho kila siku na idadi yao inapungua.'. The main problem was the word 'kukua' – to grow, which they confuse with 'kuwa' - to be, also the word 'mijini' which many confused as 'kijiji' – village.

This question performed well.

## Question 4

This question required candidates to express themselves in Swahili as it tested Communication and Content and also the Quality of Language. Candidates were to write an essay of 200-250 words on four topics:

The main advice that examiners would like to offer candidates is that they should choose a topic on which they have something to say. It was noticed that many who chose what looked like an easy question 4(c) Who is your favourite musician? Explain why. (Nani mwanamuziki wako unayempenda zaidi? Elezea kwa nini); was actually tricky. Once candidates had named the musician, they were not sure what else to say.

The best performance was found among those who chose (b) where they discussed the consequences of moving to the cities, and had a lot of information on this. Also those who chose (d) where they could discuss technology. These two were challenging and had very good responses.

Many students showed great language flair and awareness.

There are however some points to consider for future improvements:

1. Swahili is an agglutinating language – candidates tend to separate grammatical structures therefore impairing what they produce. 'tulipo\_ona' instead of 'tulipoona',
2. It must be stressed that candidates need to read good Swahili works by authors and use Standard Swahili dictionaries so they may differentiate slang from standard.
3. Candidates should use appropriate idiomatic expressions in their work and use them moderately.
4. Essay structures need to be re-visited prior to exams. Some candidates do not have an introduction, a body and a conclusion in their essays, nor do they use paragraphs to separate ideas. These are extremely important in essays.
5. This year students were much more aware of the word count.
6. Illegible writing may lead to loss of mark when an examiner cannot make out what has been written. Therefore students are encouraged to take time and care when writing their responses.

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