



Pearson
Edexcel

Examiner's Report

Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2018

**Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
In Swahili (4SW0) Paper 01**

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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. It also tested the noun classes. First was the M/Wa class – Msichana mrefu and the other being the N-Class – suruali nyeusi’.

Interestingly, it is not the grammar that challenged a number of students but the vocabulary. First was the spelling of the word girl with many rendering it as ‘mschana’. Second was the word ‘trousers’ which is ‘suruali’ but was rendered as ‘longi’ or ‘rinda’ etc. And lastly was the colour black.

Question 1b:

This question was testing the use of ‘po’ and also the prepositional verb structure. The use of ‘po’ (when) was quite difficult for many. Also the prepositional challenged many. They rendered it as ‘tulinunua kwa wewe’. To get the full mark students had to use the correct structure ‘tulikununulia’. Examiners accepted ‘kwa ajili yako’.

Question 1c:

The structure ‘the old tree on our road’ was very challenging. The sentence only used one noun class and should have been accessible. The words ‘old’ and ‘our’ were particularly challenging with candidates writing ‘mti nzee, mti kongwe’ and ‘kwa njiani yetu’. It is important that candidates are more consistent with their use of the noun classes.

Question 1d:

This sentence was very accessible. Examiners accepted both ‘sare zako’ as well as ‘nguo zako za shule’.

Question 1e:

This question was accessible to many. The word ‘leaders’ was challenging with some writing ‘waongozi’ which was not accepted. Examiners accepted translations that brought the meaning across example ‘watu wanaoongoza nchi’, ‘watu wenye vyeo vya juu’.

It is highly recommended to centres to teach and help candidates with vocabulary. It seems this year in particular simple vocabulary was very challenging. Students should also master the Swahili noun classes and to pay particular attention to Swahili object marking, prefixes and various tenses. Candidates must remember to be consistent in their application.

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 did not perform as well as in previous years. Once again, it seems vocabulary was very challenging. There was a clear distinction between the performances of less and more able candidates with the less able struggling with the following:

- Nouns - Simple words such as 'pet', 'rabbits', 'garden', 'pigeons', 'nest', 'pillow', 'humour', 'carrots' and 'vegetables' were difficult.
- Adjectives such as curious, naughty
- Some of the complex words that were difficult for many include 'environment, discovered and achievement.
- Using the wrong subject and object markers – for example placing rabbits in the 'n' class e.g 'mimi huzibeba' instead of 'mimi huwabeba' or 'tunataka kuzipa majina' instead of 'tunataka kuwapa majina'. Animals are conjugated as belonging to class M/Wa.
- Separating the verb after a relative e.g mazingira yalipo—dhibitiwa
- Separating verb structures e.g amewa—jengea
- This year in particular there has been the wrong use of POKOMO, instead of 'yuko' candidates use 'ako'
- Wrong translations e.g 'a lot of humour' understood as 'human' – so translated as 'utu. On average, the level of performance was good although simple vocabulary was challenging.

Question 3

As in 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. It is highly recommended that basic grammatical structures are revised before forthcoming examinations.

Candidates seem to do better when translating into English rather than into Swahili. There were however some difficulties. This includes:

Binamu (cousin) – translated as 'sister in law, nephew, aunty'

mlimani (up on the hills / mountain) – simply rendered as an area named Mlimani.

kijiji (village) – candidates are confusing kijiji (village), mji (town) and jiji (city)

There was also an issue with spelling where a number rendered translations that gave different meanings. Some examples are words such as 'wedding' which was rendered as 'weeding', to 'packing' rendered as 'park', 'a hat' as 'a hut', 'the bride' being rendered as 'the pride', and 'the hall' being 'the hole'. This changed the meaning of the passages.

Sections that were challenging include:

'Wageni waliweza kuonana, kuzungumza bila kupiga kelele na kucheza muziki' - (The guests could see each other, talk without shouting and dance to music). This was simply be translated as 'the visitors had no music, or the guests shouted or they were musicians. Some added the fact that 'the visitors were religious and did not like the music'. It seems the word 'bila' – 'without', was challenging.

Similarly the phrase 'mhusika wa vitabu fulani vya kizamani' – (a character from certain ancient /old books) was rendered as 'a writer', 'an old man' etc.

Apart from the above, this question was better performed than Question 2.

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:

It was interesting that most candidates who chose to write about a favourite place chose Mombasa. When this was written as a favourite place it worked well although some candidates wrote about their holidays in Mombasa, hence misunderstanding the question.

Question (4B), which required more creativity by asking the candidates to imagine their lives on mars, was only tackled by a handful of candidates.

Candidates had good health advice to offer examiners, linking these with their composition on sports. Some imagined themselves as great sportsman in their essays. This was good.

Many students showed their creativity and there was an overall good 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 thence impairing what they produce. 'sehemu ninayo -- ipenda' instead of 'ninayoipenda'.

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. This would help them avoid phrases such as 'yeye ako na watoto'.
3. Using appropriate idiomatic expressions in their work and using it moderately.
4. This year there was proof of planning where candidates showed their draft plan. A structured essay is always a joy to mark. It is important for essay structures to be re-visited prior to exams.
5. 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.
6. Once again, this year students were much more aware of the word count.
6. Can we also please recommend that students be proud of their handwriting and produce clear and concise pieces of writing? Ineligible writing may lead to loss of mark when an examiner cannot make out what has been written.

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