

SWAHILI

Paper 3162/01

Paper 1

Key message

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

- ensure that all the words and phrases in a sentence have been translated and carefully proofread the translations in Section A
- read the text carefully and write concise responses to the questions in their own words in Section B
- choose a topic on which they have something to say and for which they have command of appropriate structures and vocabulary in Section C.

General comments

It is important not to miss out small but crucial linguistic elements in the translation exercises. A number of candidates lost marks for omitting simple words such as 'but', 'now', 'new', 'even' and 'these'. More specific examples can be found in the section below.

It was apparent that some candidates struggled to apply the rules correctly in certain areas of Swahili grammar, including the following:

- comparative constructions
- relative markers. Many candidates seemed unaware of how to use both relative infixes and the *amba*-structure, and either ignored the relative aspect, or incorrectly used *-enye* instead
- adjective agreements.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

Generally, candidates answered this question well but there were a number of persistent errors, examples of which include:

- the mistranslation of *vijana* as 'teenagers', 'boys' or 'children'
- omitting or mistranslating *kati ya*, resulting in sentences such as 'I know many youths that are 18 and 25 years old'
- mistranslating *wengi* as 'some'
- mistranslating *gharama za maisha* as, for example, 'bills', 'duties' or simply 'costs'
- missing out the translation of one or more out of *umeme*, *maji* or *kodi*
- mistranslating *raha* as "peace"
- neglecting to translate *zaidi kuliko*
- neglecting to translate *nyumbani*
- neglecting to translate *kuwa*

- neglecting to translate *sana* (a particularly common mistake)
- mistranslating *majumbani mwao* as ‘their rooms’
- neglecting to translate *zaidi*
- neglecting to translate one or both of *mpya* and *hata*. *Hata* was also sometimes mistranslated as ‘also’.
- neglecting to translate *wameamua*. More candidates actually omitted than mistranslated it.
- mistranslating or omitting *kujiunga*
- mistranslating *inaonekana* as ‘it is clear’.

Question 2

Although it was found to be a little more challenging than **Question 1**, as is usually the case, most candidates did quite well. Some translations appeared to have been rushed and could have done with another check, which in most cases would have eliminated some of the mistakes and increased the score. Common mistakes were:

- incorrect or inconsistent use of agreements. As in previous years this was perhaps the most frequent cause of marks being lost
- missing key conjunctions/adjectives/time phrases. A number of candidates unnecessarily lost marks through omitting simple words such as *sasa*, *ndiyo/kweli/hasa* and *sana*
- Using English spelling for loan words. The most common examples were writing ‘Africa’ instead of *Afrika* and *millions*
- incorrect use of locative agreements. Often candidates either forgot to modify the agreement (e.g. *majikoni yetu*) or modified the agreement while using *katika* or *kwenye* (e.g. *katika majiko mwetu*)
- neglecting to translate comparative elements. There were three comparative sentences in the text and it was rare for candidates to translate all three of these correctly
- a number of candidates had trouble translating all three of ‘odourless’, ‘colourless’ and ‘tasteless’ correctly
- almost no candidates were able to translate all the elements of ‘only cheap options’ correctly
- a number of candidates struggled with translating ‘dry cow dung’. Attempts at paraphrase were often hindered by incorrect agreements.
- many candidates mistranslated ‘crops’ as *mimea* and a good number were not able to translate ‘maize’.

Question 3

As in previous years, many candidates did well in this exercise, although some struggled to use their own words to answer the questions and resorted to lifting from the text.

Below is a list of comments and common mistakes:

- (a) Few lost marks here. Some candidates used good synonyms for words such as *vigelegele*, *shamra shamra* and *shangwe*.
- (b) A number of candidates lifted their answers from the text. Some candidates did not receive the mark because they supplied insufficient information.
- (c) This was generally answered correctly.

- (d) Very few candidates did not get any marks for this question. A number received one mark by answering along the lines of *Ni kama anauzwa* and some went on to receive two more marks by comparing the process to a transaction (in the market for example).
- (e) This question was usually answered correctly.
- (f) This question was also well answered.
- (g) This was answered correctly by most candidates.
- (h) This question was also tackled without too many problems.
- (i) This question was well answered by most.
- (j) This question was good test of the candidates' level of Swahili and most handled it well.
- (k) Some candidates did not fully understand the question and lost marks through not providing both pieces of information.
- (l) The most common error made here was that both parents cried, rather than just the mother.
- (m) Candidates generally scored two or more marks for this question. There were some very impressive and well-argued answers.

Question 4

There were a number of excellent essays this year. Choice between the three topics was fairly evenly spread. As in previous years, a large majority of the candidates were able to score good marks in this part of the examination.

Common problems were generally similar to those made in previous years; namely:

- word separation errors, especially with verbs
- repetition
- poor punctuation
- frequent errors with adjective agreements
- a lack of grammatical variation, e.g. no relative markers.