

URDU

Paper 9676/02
Reading and Writing

Introduction

This paper is designed to test candidates' understanding of written Urdu, their ability to write accurate responses to text-based questions and their ability to write accurate and concise Urdu in response to given stimuli.

There are two passages of about three hundred and fifty words each on a related theme. The general theme this session was power usage and supply in Pakistan.

This session's paper was in line with previous sessions in terms of demand. The weak performance of a significant number of candidates on certain parts of **Question 3** was counterbalanced by the very good performance of nearly all candidates on **Question 4**.

The paper effectively differentiated between the candidates who misunderstood certain questions and/or sections of the paper and those who by careful reading and concentrating on responding to the set questions, managed to produce appropriate responses.

The overall written performance of candidates was satisfactory to good, with a proportion of excellent scripts. The challenge for most candidates is not writing in Urdu but answering the questions in accordance with the given rubric.

In this report, it is appropriate to go through the questions one by one in order to discuss any important points.

Question 1

This question required candidates to write their own sentences illustrating clearly the meanings of words taken from the first text. This was mostly well done, with most candidates scoring 4 out of 5 marks. Candidates were unable to achieve marks either if they copied a sentence directly from the text, such as:

'mwft byjli ka koi shosha nahyn'

which is almost identical to the sentence in the text,

or wrote a sentence like:

'ham ne samundari jehaz per safar kiya.'

which does not illustrate the meaning of the word 'samundari'.

A sentence like:

'ham ne mauritius ke mukhtalyf jaziron ki seyr samundari jehaz par ki.'

does illustrate the meaning and therefore achieves the mark.

Question 2

This required candidates to find antonyms to the given words. This was generally adequately done. Some candidates wrote synonyms 'mwtaradyf alfaz' rather than antonyms, 'mwtazad alfaz'. The most difficult word was 'akhrjaal', the antonym of which is 'amdani.' Most candidates scored 3 or more marks.

Question 3

The five questions in this section were based on the given text in Passage A. The theme was Pakistan's energy crisis.

The quality of candidates' responses depended on their following the rubric. Candidates are expected to write concise answers as far as possible in their own words. Candidates must avoid lifting whole phrases from the text with minimal alteration and avoid writing more than is necessary. All these questions can be answered simply and relatively concisely.

Taking each question in turn:

Question 3

- (i) *'Why weren't the three friends worried by the power cut in the hospital?'*
'hospital men byjli jane ki vajah se yeh tinon dost fikrmand kyon nahin the?'

Although a few candidates misread the question as a positive one, most candidates scored two out of three marks. They correctly wrote that they used their light on their phones or had the light from fireflies. A few candidates also wrote that they were used to power cuts.

- (ii) *'ek dost ne "khwda ka byjli ghar" ka fyqrah kyon istemal kiya?'*
'Why did one friend use the phrase "God's power station?'

Put simply, in English, the reply should be that fireflies are natural producers of light and that God made them.

This was well answered by most candidates.

- (iii) *'aap ke kheyal men kya mwsanyf ko wazir ke bayan par bharosa hai?'*
'Do you think the author trusts the minister's statement?'

Here candidates needed to have understood that the author did not trust the minister or anything he said. Those who thought that the author trusted the minister could not score any marks. The author wrote that the minister had repeatedly stated that load-shedding would end but had not managed to put a stop to it.

- (iv) *'mwsanyf ne wazir ki khydmat men kya hal pesh kiya hai?'*
'What solution did the author put forward to the minister?'

Most candidates answered this question well and scored three marks. A few, however, wrote about the fact that the author had reasons for doing this but failed to state the actual proposal, which is clearly ironic, that all shops, factories and offices should shut at 6pm to save electricity.

- (v) *'mwsanyf ke andaz-e-bayan kys had tak ws ke kheyalat ki akasi karta hai?'*
'misalen dekar apna jawab wazeh kijiye.'
'To what extent does the author's style reflect his ideas?'
Elaborate your answer with examples.'

There were very many answers which merely summarised what the author had written. Such answers should not be rewarded. Other answers started well, stating that the author's style reflects his opinion, but then went on to merely summarise the passage, and to state that the author had proffered a solution to the minister. These answers scored one mark.

There were some answers which stated that the author's intention was to be ironic and criticise the minister's statements and actions, that he used the story of the fireflies to illustrate his point that people were accustomed to load-shedding, that his proposal was ironic, not practical. They scored four marks.

Five marks were available in **Question 3** for overall linguistic standard. Most candidates scored four, and a few were awarded full marks. Where candidates score zero on a question, the language mark is reduced (see mark scheme). Candidates should be reminded, that in order to score high marks for language, they must not rely heavily on sentences copied from the text, but instead use their own language wherever possible.

Question 4

Here candidates had to write responses to five questions based on Passage B. This passage was particularly focused on coal.

- (i) *'iran awr maghribi mwmalyk ke ta'lwqat koele ki ahmiyat par keyse asar andaz hote heyn?'*
'How do the relations between Iran and the west affect the importance of coal?'

A concise response was: *'When relations are bad and the supply of oil and gas is curtailed, then coal becomes more important and more people want it.'*

Most candidates scored full marks for this question.

- (ii) *'koele ke istemal ke sylsyle men cin awr amrika ka kya kyrdar hai?'*
'What is the role of China and America in coal use?'

This question was also well answered. *'They are the world's two biggest consumers of coal and use it to produce a lot of their power.'*

- (iii) *'tisre paragraph men 'manfi kheyalat' se mwsanyf ki kya murad?'*
'What was intended by 'negative ideas' in the third paragraph?'

The negative ideas were not the fact that coal causes pollution, but the fact that international oil companies were spreading negative propaganda about coal in developing countries. This did not seem to be understood by all candidates.

- (iv) *'Pakistan men koele ki san'at ko kyn mwshkylat ka saman hai?'*
'What problems does Pakistan's coal industry face?'

This was reasonably well answered by most candidates. They needed to mention four points concerning the problems facing Pakistan's coal industry. There were a number to choose from, including *'kam ahmiyat'*, *'meyar accha nahin'*, *'ziyada akhrajat'* and *'geyr mulki sarmaya vapas'*.

- (v) *'Pakistan men koele ke ziyada istemal se kawn se favaid hasyl ho sekte hain?'*
'What benefits can Pakistan using more coal bring?'

The majority of candidates answered correctly.

- (vi) *'Pakistan men tavanai ke hawale se mwstaqbyl men kya tawaqw'at vabasta ki ja sekti hain, awr kyon?'*
'In respect of energy in Pakistan what expectations can be attached in the future?'

Again, the majority of candidates answered correctly. In order to achieve full marks, it was necessary to give a reason.

As in **Question 3**, five marks were available for linguistic standard. Most candidates scored 3 or more.

Question 5

This last question required candidates to write a response to a question referring to both texts and their opinion on a question arising from the texts, but not directly so. While a few responses were excellent and a very few very weak, the majority of candidates performed at least adequately in these tasks.

- (a) The first task was to use information from both texts to comment on the production and use of energy in Pakistan. This is a matter of writing brief sentences on the major points of the passage. Quoting large chunks of text and discussing the author's suggestion for saving energy did not gain any marks.

It was not necessary to go into too much detail, because there were only about 100 words to write. Candidates who went into too specific details were not able to achieve high marks.

- (b) The second task was to give practical suggestions on what they can do to save energy at home.

This was usually better attempted than **Question 5(a)**. Candidates should avoid vague responses, such as 'we must save energy by saving energy' and 'use less energy to save energy', which cannot be awarded marks. Practical suggestions, which were rewarded, included switching off unnecessary items, using energy saver bulbs, using solar or wind power.

The candidates clearly understood the tasks in most cases and most were able to write an appropriate response. Candidates should be reminded to follow the rubric carefully. A number of candidates wrote well over the specified 140 words and were therefore not able to score the highest marks.

Conclusion

The overall performance was good, and in a few cases, excellent, with many candidates displaying good comprehension skills and good writing skills.

As with previous sessions, candidates are advised to follow the rubrics carefully, particularly in relation to using their own language and adhering to prescribed word limits in order to achieve higher marks.

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Paper 9676/03

Essay

GENERAL:

This paper is designed to test candidates' ability to write a composition in Urdu on one of a range of five topics, selected as being relevant to their countries of origin. Overall, the performance of candidates was good, with a high proportion of excellent scripts. The problem for most candidates is not writing accurate Urdu but responding to the stimulus topics in an organised and well-structured way

There were **five** given topics, on which candidates were expected to write between 250 and 400 words.

The topics this year were:

"insani ta'luqat" "Human relations"

1 ***gheyron par apnon ko tarjih dena ansan ki fytrat hai'***

"It's human nature to prefer one's own to strangers."

"shehri awr dehi zindagi" "Urban and rural life"

2 ***"berhte hue shehron ka dehaton par asar"***

"The effect of expanding cities on the countryside"

"sahyt awr tandurusti" "health and fitness"

3 ***"jadeed tarz-e-zindagi tandurwsti ki rah men sab se bari rwkavat"***

'A modern lifestyle is the biggest obstacle to health.'

"musawi muwaq'e" "Equal opportunities"

4 ***"har shakhs ke liye hwsul-e-ta'lim ke yeksan muwaq'e"***

"Equal opportunities for everyone in acquiring education."

"Mahauliat" "Environment"

5 ***'aap khwd apne mwahle ko keyse behter bana sakte hain'***

"What you can do yourself to improve your neighbourhood."

The wide range of topics allowed candidates the opportunity to choose one that that was appropriate for them and demonstrate their linguistic skills in Urdu. Of course, at this advanced level, not only is a high standard of written Urdu expected but it is equally important that candidates also need to be able to organise and structure their work, and present an argument where appropriate.

This component is marked out of 40: 24 are awarded for quality of language and 16 for content, structure and organisation.

The most popular topic was:

“berhte hue shehron ka dehaton par asar”

“The effect of expanding cities on the countryside”

There were some very good essays on this title. Many weaker candidates wrote very general compositions about the positive and negative aspects of rural and urban life. This misunderstanding of the title could not gain more than half marks, at best, for content. Candidates are advised to practise reading the question carefully and then tailoring their essay to the specific title, not the general topic area.

The point to this essay title was that modern cities are expanding rapidly and encroaching on rural areas, tempting villagers to leave their villages and seek better or easier jobs in the cities, leading to rural depopulation, but also bringing urban facilities nearer to the rural areas. There were some essays that contained a balanced discussion of both sides of the argument and concluded with an opinion. These were suitably rewarded.

The second most popular topic was:

‘aap khwd apne mwhale ko keyse behter bana sakte hain’

“What you can do yourself to improve your neighbourhood.”

This title, on controlling pollution, was generally well answered where candidates concentrated on the specific question. Some candidates dedicated over half of their essay to the causes and effects of pollution, which was written about in great detail. Such responses were not relevant to the title and could not be awarded many marks for content because although many candidates were clearly well informed about the subject, their compositions were severely unbalanced. It was only in the closing sections that these candidates addressed the specifics of the question. Stronger candidate responses included suggestions for rubbish collection, planting flowers and trees and other directly practical activities. Some took a less direct view of the topic and discussed facilities for young people, night security patrols, etc.

The third most popular topic was:

“jadeed terz-e-zindagi tandurwsti ki rah men sab se bari rwkavat”

‘A modern lifestyle is the biggest obstacle to health.’

The responses to this topic were, in some cases, very well written. It was reasonably well attempted by most candidates, with discussion of how, and to what extent, lifestyle has effects on health. Most candidates mentioned fast food. Other relevant points included the pace of life, lack of exercise, shortage of time to relax, households where the man and woman are working, etc. At this level Examiners expect a broad discussion, perhaps including social, economic and cultural implications in these compositions if candidates are to achieve the highest grades.

The remaining two topics were less popular:

gheyron par apnon ko tarjih dena ansan ki fytrat hai’

“It’s human nature to prefer one’s own to strangers.”

While this topic was not very popular it was well answered by most of those who attempted it. Most candidates took the approach that, in the words of the English idiom ‘*blood is thicker than water.*’ Naturally this was an appropriate point of view to take but the best essays included some contrary ideas and discussed such points as those from families that do not get on well may be better off being with ‘outsiders’ than fighting with family members.

“har shakhs ke liye hwsul-e-ta'lim ke yeksan muvaq'e”

“Equal opportunities for everyone in acquiring education.”

As might be expected, the most frequently covered points on this topic were related to opportunities, or lack of them for rich and poor and men and women. There were some very heartfelt pleas for fairness and justice for the poor and disadvantaged in the candidate's country. The best essays concluded that the country is doing itself a disservice by not giving opportunities to the brightest and the best, whatever their social or economic background and whatever their gender.

Some of the best essays of this session were on these topics two topics.

CONCLUSION

The strongest essays in any of the topic areas were those which produced a considered and appropriately structured response to the title, with an introduction, followed by several cogent points relating to the title and a concluding paragraph.

Linguistically, they were almost error free, with a wide range of vocabulary and complex sentences, containing dependent clauses, use of the passive voice, appropriate use of idiom, metaphor and, where appropriate, relevant quotations.

Many candidates could much improve their performance through stricter observance of the rubrics relating to the prescribed word limits.

It is the second part of the assessment criteria, on content, planning and organisation, where candidates tend to lose marks. Failure to contain the essay within the prescribed word-limit means that candidates cannot score very highly for content. Examiners cannot take into account any parts of an essay that are a long way over the limit. This means that candidates who write too much cannot be awarded high scores for content and planning because they are unlikely to have reached a concluding paragraph. That being said, very many candidates wrote well-planned and interesting essays in excellent Urdu.

URDU

Paper 9676/04

Texts

Overall, candidates performed similarly to last year. The standard was excellent at the top end of the scale with an overall increase in the proportion of good scripts. A wide range of language was used. At the other end of the scale, weaker candidates demonstrated limited vocabulary and quality of language.

In some cases, there was evidence of candidates spending too much time and effort in prolonging their writing task unnecessarily. Candidates need to be reminded that longer answers do not necessarily mean higher marks. On the contrary, irrelevant material results a lower number of marks being awarded. A notable number of candidates still seem to be relying heavily on what seem to be memorised and pre-learned answers. Such answers are written without taking the focus of the question into consideration and cannot therefore score the highest marks.

Question 1

- (a) Some good answers had evaluated the poet in praising God. Other candidates praised their beloved and still managed to write satisfactory answers. Some answers were too short for the first section and therefore gained very few marks.
- (ii) This part was generally well answered.
- (b) Candidates who compared the work of Hasrat with other poets gained the highest marks for this question. Some candidates evaluated Hasrat's poetry without referring to other poets, limiting the number of marks available to them.

Question 2

- (a) A number of candidates provided answers to this question and showed themselves to be very familiar with the works of Sahir. While the question demanded focus on particular aspects of the poem, some candidates explained the entire poem at length. Such candidates left little time to comprehensively answer part **ii**.
- (b) As in **Question 2a**, some candidates did not fully appreciate the demands of the question. Their answers amounted to a general essay on Iqbal's work, which demonstrated good knowledge but did not fully answer the question. Candidates should be reminded to ensure every part of their response focuses on the given question.

Question 3

- (a) Some candidates answered part **(i)** with a repetition of almost the whole of the short story. Other candidates understood the question and related it to the feelings of normal people, hence evaluating it and achieving higher marks.
- (ii) Those candidates who expressed their personal response on the partition in light of the short story received excellent marks. Some simply repeated the story, which could not be rewarded.
- (b) Some candidates wrote the complete story of 'Garam coat' for this question but did not quite understand the emphasis of 'class differences'. Those candidates who grasped the focus of the question answered well.

Question 4

- (a) Candidates attempted this question very well. Some understood it completely and tried the evaluation considering Umrao's situation and how well she could preserve her dignity in circumstances. Other candidates wrote the whole story, again missing out the demand of the question.
- (b) Those candidates who specifically focused on the position of Faiz Ali within the novel scored highly. Some mentioned the lively character of Faiz Ali but wrote everything about him; while others compared him to Gohar Mirza and Nawab Sultan, thus writing about all three.

Question 5

- (a) Very few candidates attempted either part of this question. Those who wrote answers to this part tried to do some justice to the relationship between Aliya and her uncle. Many answers contained repetition of the storyline.
- (b) Most candidates answered well, providing an excellent analysis of the dynamics of Chacha's family.

Question 6

- (a) Some candidates wrote in favour of Saleem and tried to do justice to his weak position given the circumstances he was in. Others blamed him for the whole situation and for his trusting Dil Araam. Some good arguments were presented but, again, a seemingly pre-learnt answer did not address the demands of the question.
- (b) Candidates who answered in support of Dil Araam gave some very original responses. The majority of candidates answered against Dil Araam, giving excellent justification for their views. A small number of candidates simply described Dil Araam's character, limiting the marks available to them. Overall this question was very well answered.

URDU

Paper 9676/05

Prose

General comments

This examination paper consisted of a short passage in English to be translated into Urdu. The overall standard and quality of the passage was similar to previous years. The subject of the passage concerned the War of Independence in the United States of America.

The effort made by the majority of candidates to create a good piece of Urdu translation was commendable. The average marks achieved from candidates were around 25 out of 40. The overall standard of the written Urdu translation indicated that the majority of candidates understood the passage well, but certain key words caused them to struggle to produce an accurate and coherent Urdu translation. The majority of translations contained some spelling and grammatical errors, which meant that full marks could not be awarded. In particular, the correct understanding of directions, grasp of tenses and use of singular and plural forms were all necessary for conveying correct meanings and avoiding erroneous translations. It was felt that many translations would have scored higher marks if at first whole sentences were read and understood before being translated. A few candidates used many superfluous words and phrases that were actually not needed in the translation.

It is suggested that practice in grasping and acquiring essential skills for translation would be fruitful for candidates. A few of the candidates used the same style in writing as they would speaking to each other in their usual dialect, with a number of colloquialisms. Work on written style would help such candidates. There was evidence that the majority of the candidates would have benefited from work on improving their Urdu literacy skills. This would include work on spellings, writing accurate Urdu sentences, correct use of singular and plural forms, and use of appropriate tenses and would make a positive impact on the quality of translation from English to Urdu, helping candidates to secure high marks.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

This paper contains one passage for English to Urdu translation. The quality and level of difficulty of the paper was similar to previous years and well within the required level. There were a number of key words and phrases in the passage that required careful translation of whole sentences within the context of the passage. It was suitable for producing a good piece of coherent and correct translation, which was demonstrated by a few candidates.

Challenges in translating were spotted around various key words and phrases. For example, 'East coast'; 'North America'; 'established settlements' (which was translated in many ways, often missing out the actual meaning); 'persecution'; 'fishing'; 'timber'; 'crafts'; 'Native Americans'; 'animal furs'; 'tobacco'; 'sugar plantations'; 'exported produce to Europe'.

The main challenge arose around the translation of 'Around the 1600s people from different parts of Europe'; this was misunderstood by some candidates as 1600 people rather than 16th century. Similarly, some other phrases were misunderstood and lead to incorrect translations, e.g. 'establishing communities built around shared values'; 'in one well known incident, tea shipments belonging to the East India Company were blocked at the harbour in Boston and the tea crates were thrown overboard'; and 'Eventually this lead to the War of Independence'. Candidates should be reminded to ensure they fully understand the complete sentence in the context of the text before attempting to translate. Candidates should also bear in mind that Examiners look for a correct and coherent piece of Urdu translation of complete sentences within the context of the given passage rather than literal translation of individual words.