

3.4 GERMAN (502)

German is examined in the following three papers;

Paper 1 (502/1) - This paper tests Listening and Writing Skills (functional and creative)

Paper 2 (502/2) - This paper tests Grammar and Reading Comprehension

Paper 3 (502/3) - This paper tests Reading and Oral skills (communication skills) this includes Intonation and Pronunciation.

3.4.1 CANDIDATES' GENERAL PERFORMANCE

The table below shows the performance of candidates in German in the years 2013 and 2014.

Table 12: Candidates Overall Performance in German for the last two years

Year	Paper	Candidature	Max. Score	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
2013	1	524	35	21.21	5.33
	2		40	18.88	7.04
	3		25	16.85	3.59
	Overall		100	56.86	14.63
2014	1	645	35	19.34	5.16
	2		40	21.73	7.39
	3		25	16.33	4.01
	Overall		100	57.37	15.34

The following observations can be made from the table above:

- (i) The candidature in the German subject increased by 121 students.
- (ii) The performance in paper one dropped while that of paper two improved.
- (iii) Paper three had a 0.52 decline in performance.
- (iv) The overall performance in the subject improved by 0.51 despite the decline in paper one.
- (v) The spread is moving towards the one of a normally distributed curve and the mean is good.

3.4.2 German Paper 1 (502/1)

Paper requirements: This paper tests listening skills, writing skills and vocabulary. These areas are divided into two sections. Section I tests various levels of listening skills. These include: general, selective and detailed listening. In 2014 the candidates were expected to listen to two dialogues, one read aloud text and a conversation.

Section II tests writing skills and vocabulary. In section II, the candidates were expected to write a composition. They had a choice between a friendly letter and a creative essay of **about 250 words**. The paper had a **maximum of 35 marks**.

Weaknesses

In section I, there was clear evidence of lack of practice especially with the longer text. Candidates missed out on information that required keen listening for specific detail.

In section II, the candidates violated the rule of the number of the words expected. Many used more words than prescribed. The errors in the composition were so many that they hampered the understanding of the compositions.

Advice to teachers

Teachers should source for audio materials from the resource centres like Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development, Goethe Institute or the MP3 downloads from the internet. Exposure to more audio exercises is encouraged to develop an ear that recognises the details required in the various levels of testing listening skills.

Teachers should lay more emphasis on the writing skill by training students from form one. Learners should exercise writing within given word limits. Teachers need to train the students on plot development when writing creative essays.

3.4.3 German Paper 2 (502/2)

Knowledge and application of the grammatical rules of the German language are tested in this paper. This forms section I. Section II the ability to comprehend German passages and extract information. Higher levels of cognitive domain are also readily tested in this section. In section I, the candidates are expected to fill in blanks in given sentences, combine or change sentences according to their grammatical structure and/or rewrite sentences in accordance to the instructions. In section II, candidates are expected to read and respond to questions on a fictional and non-fictional text.

Weaknesses

Most candidates were average in section I indicating poor understanding of grammatical rules or poor retention capacities. Some candidates were however excellent.

Performance in this section was fairly good. The weak candidates still copy whole excerpts from the passage without synthesising the information and writing the responses in their own words.

Advice to teachers

Practice makes perfect. Teachers need to offer students as much practice materials in grammar and For a for them to apply the rules. A wider range of grammar exercises ought to be given to the candidates to give them practice and experience in tackling grammar items.

Teachers should expose students to as much reading materials as possible and promote a reading culture by setting themselves as a good example.

3.4.4 German Paper 3 (502/3)

A passage to be read aloud to the assessor forms the part A of this paper. It includes the typical German sounds. Part B is made up of topics from which the candidates selects one and talks on. Articulation, pronunciation and intonation are tested in part A and in part B all the language skills are tested.

Weaknesses

Candidates had challenges with pronunciation of typical German sounds like /s/, /ch/ and /z/. Wrong intonation at word and sentence level was also observed. Mastery of language was not good in some cases.

Advice to teachers

Candidates should speak more German in and out of class. Authentic conversations need to be provided to learners to work with at club time. This will provide practice of the typical German sounds and improve vocabulary mastery. Learners should interact with the language often.