



20.0 GERMAN (502)

German is examined in the following three papers;

- **Paper 1 (502/1):** Tests Listening and Writing Skills (functional and creative).
- **Paper 2 (502/2):** Tests Grammar and Reading Comprehension.
- **Paper 3 (502/3):** Tests Reading and oral skills (Communicative Skills - intonation, pronunciation and articulation).

20.1 CANDIDATES' GENERAL PERFORMANCE

The table below shows candidates' performance in German (502) in the years 2007 and 2006.

Table 23: Candidates Overall Performance in the years 2007 and 2006

YEAR	PAPER	CANDIDATURE	MAXIMUM SCORE	MEAN SCORE	STANDARD DEVIATION
2006	1		35	20.16	4.85
	2		40	25.15	6.92
	3		25	16.58	3.88
	Overall	306	100	61.89	14.00
2007	1		35	22.06	4.73
	2		40	20.38	8.10
	3		25	16.74	3.75
	Overall	418	100	59.18	15.00

The following observations can be made from the table above:

- 20.1.1 The general performance in the year 2007 declined in comparison to that of the year 2006. This is evidenced by the mean score which dropped from **61.89** in the year 2006 to **59.18** in the year 2007.
- 20.1.2 The candidature rose significantly in the year 2007 (**418**) when compared to the year 2006 (**306**), an increase of **112** candidates.

20.2 PAPER 1 (502/1)

This paper contains two sections; section I and II. Section I tests listening skills of all levels i.e. general, selective and detailed listening. Section II tests writing skills in form of letters (formal & informal) and essays. The written product should be **about 250 words**.

Weaknesses

In the listening section, the candidates had challenges in selective listening. Some candidates who had not acquired the necessary vocabulary could not understand some of the passages. In the writing section candidates had a problem with question 4 which expected them to creatively complete the story which had already been started for the candidates. This type of essay requires mastery of language structures and possession of a varied vocabulary in different topics. Difficulties with German expressions and tendency to translate from English were evident. This was as a result of limited linguistic abilities.

Advice to Teachers

Selective listening should deliberately be taught and practiced in teaching. Simple readers which can be borrowed from the Kenya Institute of Education, German Library and Goethe Institute can be used by the teacher to expose the learners to the German language more, especially in the written form to enable them acquire the correct expressions and avoid direct translations. This exposure should begin as early as in form I, using level appropriate materials. To develop vocabulary and creativity, learners need to be given an opportunity to write more.

20.3 PAPER 2 (502/2)

This paper contains two sections; section I and II. Section I comprises of Grammar items and section II reading comprehension passages. In section I, the candidates are expected to complete given sentences by filling in gaps, combining parts of sentences and /or transforming the sentences. In section II, two reading passages are presented, a fictional and non-fictional one. Candidates are expected to read these passages and respond to the comprehension questions using their own language and not just extract excerpts from the passage.

Weaknesses

In section I, the candidates exhibited weaknesses in mastery of grammar. This is coupled with careless mistakes. In section II the comprehension questions testing higher order abilities were a challenge to candidates. Extraction of excerpts from the texts is also common with the candidates, instead of understanding and rewriting in their own language/words.

Advice to Teachers

Grammar teaching should not be neglected and tips on its mastery should be taught to the learners. Learning strategies that encourage autonomous learning are invaluable and need to be imparted on the learners early enough. Communicative approach in grammar teaching makes it more interesting and easier to master. The Kenya Institute of Education published teachers' handbooks would be of great help. To avoid careless mistakes, accuracy and precision in answering the questions should be emphasized by regular practice.

20.4 PAPER 3 (502/3)

This paper has two parts, part one is a reading aloud passage and part two contains conversation topics. In part one, the candidates are expected to read the passage aloud with correct articulation, pronunciation and intonation. The reading passage contains typical German sounds; *diphthongs, umlauts, long and short vowels, composites etc.* In part two, the candidates are offered a choice of four topics where they are expected to choose one and make a presentation on the topic and later be engaged by the examiners in a conversation on the chosen topic and other related areas.

Weaknesses

Some candidates were unable to read fluently. The intonation at word and sentence level is wanting and requires more practice. The limited scope of vocabulary in some candidates reduces the options when selecting the topic for discussion. This made the candidates choose topics that they had very little to comment on.

Advice to Teachers

The candidates showed tremendous improvement on the reading aloud section. Teachers should continue with the good work of deliberately training *pronunciation, articulation* and *intonation*. Individual challenges should however be addressed by the teacher by paying more attention to individual learners. Forums for self expression should be created consistently in school, for example: Interclass/interschool debates on selected topics as indicated in the syllabus. The learners need to be encouraged to speak German as often as possible, for example: in the German lesson, learners should be made to speak in German as far as possible.