

3.6 KENYAN SIGN LANGUAGE (504)

Kenyan Sign Language KSL 504 was examined in the following three papers;

Paper 1 (504/1) KSL Receptive Signing Skills – This paper tests the receptive signing skills of the candidates through a signed story, signed sentences and finger-spelt words or concepts. The paper is video based.

Paper 2 (504/2) KSL Language Use -This paper tests the functional and creative language use of candidates in KSL and KSL Grammar.

Paper 3 (504/3) Expressive Signing Skills - This paper tests the practical /expressive signing skills of the candidates in KSL.

3.6.1 CANDIDATES' GENERAL PERFORMANCE

The table below shows the performance of candidates in KSL 2011 - 2014

Table 14: Candidates overall performance in KSL in 2011 - 2014

Year	Paper	Candidature	Maximum Score	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
2011	504/1	125	35	21.90	6.82
	504/2		25	12.90	4.39
	504/3		40	30.40	5.30
	Overall		100	64.34	13.97
2012	504/1	224	35	19.58	7.48
	504/2		25	11.36	4.41
	504/3		40	30.16	3.86
	Overall		100	60.96	14.05
2013	504/1	235	35	19.60	7.73
	504/2		25	12.08	4.54
	504/3		40	28.90	3.97
	Overall		100	60.58	13.26
2014	504/1	323	35	19.06	8.17
	504/2		25	9.23	5.41
	504/3		40	29.03	3.94
	Overall		100	57.26	15.26

The following observations can be made from the table above:

- (i) In the year 2014, the candidature for this paper increased slightly to **323** in 2014 from **235** in 2013
- (ii) The overall Subject Mean dropped slightly in 2014 by **3.32** with a good standard deviation of **15.26**. The paper is continually stabilizing the paper towards the ideal mean (**50**) and ideal standard deviation (**15**).

3.6.2 KSL Paper 1 (504/1) Receptive Signing skills

This paper assesses the candidate's ability to receive signed information and respond to the questions in writing. It comprises of signed stories, signed sentences and concepts and finger-spelt words. Time for candidates to answer the questions has been provided for in the Examination DVD. This paper carries a maximum of 35 Marks.

Weaknesses

It was observed that candidates exhibited poor receptive skills when responding to comprehension questions. Candidates made numerous spelling mistakes when rewriting fingerspelt words. They exhibited poor use of punctuation marks when rewriting signed sentences and thus distorting meaning in KSL. They also lacked sound knowledge of sign language variations used in the signed story.

Advice to teachers

Expose the learners to a wide variety of signed information to enhance their Receptive Signing skills. Explain the use of facial expressions, manual and non manual markers and pause in punctuating glossed work. Improve the learner's ability to decode fingerspelt work through practice so as to improve on the learner's receptive skills.

3.6.3 KSL Paper 2 (504/2) KSL Grammar and Language Use

The paper had 2 sections:

Section A: The candidates were required to gloss an official letter writing of about 220 words, **Section B:** The candidates understanding of KSL Grammar and language use for various purposes was tested. It was noted that the use of KSL for leisure was well done as candidates exhibited a good mastery of elements of signs (hand shape, movement and place of articulation) and were able to correctly use the information and sign given to fill the crossword puzzle correctly. This paper carries a maximum of 25 marks.

Weaknesses

Candidates work exhibited poor use of language in functional and creative writing. Many spelling and punctuation mistakes were noted and a strong interference from the English Language use of punctuation. Candidates found it hard to use KSL grammatical structures in new situations such as the official letter writing task.

Advice to teachers

Expose candidates to more language use practice especially for functional and creative writing purposes.

3.6.4 KSL Paper 3 (504/3) Expressive Signing Skills

The paper consisted of language proficiency interview given for candidates to sign about, a contemporary topic and a picture given for the candidate to choose **one** and sign about. This paper carries a maximum of 40 marks.

Weaknesses

Candidates exhibited lack of creativity as they signed out their responses to the interviewers. Similar to 2013, some candidates would use Signed Exact English as opposed to KSL. Poor use of vocabulary and relevance to topic of discussion was noted. When required at the close of the language proficiency interview to ask the examiners any questions, majority of the candidates would ask similar questions as though coached by the teachers.

Advice to teachers

Teachers are advised to practice more with candidates on correct use of vocabulary in context. Emphasise should be put on acquisition of correct KSL structures and not Signed Exact English. Avoid coaching students on questions to ask the examiners so as to allow for the development of their own creativity in expressive language use.