

KENYA NATIONAL EXAMINATION COUNCIL KCSE, 2014

FRENCH PAPER 1 ANALYSIS

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3.3 FRENCH (501)

In the year 2014, KCSE French Examination was tested in the following three papers;

Paper 1 (501/1) – tested listening Comprehension, Dictation and Composition.

Paper 2 (501/2) – tested Reading Comprehension and Grammar.

Paper 3 (501/3) – tested Reading Aloud, Exposé and Conversation. This is an oral paper.

CANDIDATES' GENERAL PERFORMANCE

The table below shows the performance of candidates in French (501) in the years 2013 and 2014.

Table 11: Candidates' Overall Performance in French for the last two years

Year	Paper	Candidature	Max. Score	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
2013	1		45	24.19	7.59
	2		30	15.29	6.56
	3		25	17.28	4.05
	Overall	2838	100	56.73	16.89
2014	1		45	24.13	6.93
	2		30	14.47	6.63
	3		25	17.83	3.99
	Overall	3117	100	56.40	16.27

The following observations can be made from the table above:

- (i) The candidature in French language continues to increase steadily.
- (ii) Paper one and two saw a slight decline in performance.
- (iii) Performance in paper three, which is a practical paper improved with a small margin.
- (iv) In general, as a result of the decline in two papers, the performance in French language as a subject declined slightly with 0.37 from that of last year. However the average and the spread of the marks for the candidates in the combined mean and standard deviation is good.

3.3.2 French Paper 1 (501/1)

This paper consists of three sections:

Section 1: LISTENING COMPREHENSION

Question 1 -5

In 2014 examination, this area dealt with the identification of people, giving directions, programme, numbers, leisure activities, career and customer complaints. The recording included instructions. The passages were played twice to allow candidates to listen and respond to the questions.

Weaknesses

Candidates had many spelling errors. They confused words which have similar sounds. Simple figures and numbers posed a challenge to them too.

Advice to teachers

Teachers should continue working on simple topics like numbers, dates through and through till form four. Spelling tests should be done regularly to ensure the candidates' ears get used to correct French pronunciation, intonation and accents. Teachers need to encourage peer assessment in spelling so as to establish a system in the learners right from form one.

Section 2: Dictation

In this section, candidates are expected to reproduce a dictated passage. The Dictation passage is recorded on a tape, with various punctuation marks and is marked out of 5 marks. The passage is read three times. The first time it is read through for the students to acquaint themselves with the text. The second time, it is read with pauses calculated to enable the candidates to write down what he/she has heard. The third and the last time, it is read through without pauses.

Weaknesses

Some candidates had problems spelling some verbs in the first person singular form and gave different versions.

Advice to teachers

Students should be given opportunities to listen to various accents by listening to authentic materials which presents different speakers. They should also be taught how to analyse text structures.

Section 3: Composition

In the first composition, the candidates were to write a dialogue between oneself and a teacher. They were to explain why they were late. In the second one they were to write an essay on the loss of a bag during a trip.

Weaknesses

Formal address was a challenge to some candidates. They could not differentiate the register used when talking to the peers and talking to the teacher. Some would not be consistent with one and could mix the two. The vocabulary needed for leisure activities and travelling was not readily available to others. This gave them a difficult time when they needed to express themselves in the second essay.

Advice to teachers

Teachers need to train the students on formal ways of addressing people and how to be logical while explaining events and how these events happened. They should also train students to see the positive side of the teacher instead of seeing teachers as unkind, insensitive, and impatient.