

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

January 2012

International GCSE Bengali (4BE0)
Paper 01

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General comments

About 1101 candidates were entered for the International GCSE Bengali examination in January 2012 mostly from the existing centres. A good proportion of candidates performed well and scored high marks in the paper. The demand of the paper is generally comparable with the January 2011 paper. It was also pleasing to see that overall candidates' performances this season were comparable to last year.

Candidates had every opportunity to produce good and proper translations. Some key words and phrases helped to differentiate between good and adequate performance of the candidates. Also a number of outstanding pieces of translations including examples of continuous pieces of writings were evident from a number of responses.

Question 1

It is quite pleasing to see that almost all candidates were able to translate all five sentences though at varied level where they were tested on specific grammar points. The less able candidates often struggled to transmit fully and appropriately particularly on 1d and 1e. In 1d many candidates transmitted, "held me up" as "*uchu kore dhore rekhecche*"; on occasions, "*kept me still up,*" and, "*was pulling me upstairs*" etc. On 1e the problem occurred with omission of speech marks and punctuation. Also, the less able candidates while transmitting 1c, often ignored the correct tense form, and were not able to score full marks.

Question 2

The passage was about the rich heritage of theatre performances in Bangladesh. The candidate's performance indicated that they did not have much knowledge of the background of theatre performances. A large number of candidates found this passage very difficult and hard to transmit the actual meaning of the words such as diversity, aspiration, conscience raising, exploitation, articulation, sophisticated and characterised etc., and instead, used either their transliteration or inappropriate meaning in the transmission. Some candidates even failed to differentiate between cinema, theatre, drama, folk and Jatra. As a result, the majority of the candidates did not perform as expected.

Question 3

This required translating a question to English. This was a unique piece of writing, which touched most of the candidate's emotion. The poor boy, Shaju, and his pitiful lifestyle. Majority of the students transmitted the theme successfully and scored average mark of 20 on this item.

Some confusion occurred by a handful of candidates was, "Zami Roj" as they thought 'Roj' was his surname. Other minor mistakes occurred to translate, 'Teacher Student centre of Dhaka University". This was translated in many different phrases, such as 'auditorium', 'meeting place', 'college', 'high school', and in many more words. There were only a few candidates who wrote this correctly.

Question 4

The vast majority of candidates have done well in their essay options this year. However, the number of candidates who have chosen to answer question **4a** and **4c** scored considerably higher marks. Only a significantly low number of candidates attempted question 4d. Stronger candidates were able to demonstrate a wide range of vocabulary and grammatical structures followed by comparisons, personal feelings and reactions, so scored good marks. However, on occasions, candidates overlooked the main focus of the content and so scored less marks than expected. The option 4b was responded by the vast majority of the candidates and was the most popular question. Question 4d was the least popular.

Conclusion

On the whole, this paper appeared to be fair and well balanced. The overall performance of candidates showed that the standard of literacy including the transmission skills to and from the target language has improved though on occasion, candidates' performances were not as good as expected due to their lack of good grasp of a range of structures and tense concepts, inadequate knowledge of grammar. Also, a wide display of transliterated words / phrases was evident in the candidates' performances across the board. Also, on essay section, candidates were as usual expected to display their understanding of the main concept of their choice, adequate explanation, comparisons where needed, analysis and synthesis with their personal opinions and reasons. Unfortunately, it was not evident in the broader range of performances. Candidates' performances would have been even better if the points raised are incorporated in preparing candidates appropriate examination techniques followed by the appropriate Specification.

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