

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

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Pearson Edexcel International GCSE
in Bengali (4BE0) Paper 01

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General comments

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 2013 paper. However, the overall candidates' performances this exam series were slightly better than 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

The able students managed to translate all 5 sentences without difficulty and scored full marks. It was also evident that less able students struggled to translate '**hard work**' in 1a; '**used to have**' in 1b; '**should have done**' in 1d and '**looked through**' in 1e. This has resulted them to score lower marks than expected. The omission of punctuation marks also often resulted in lower scoring.

Question 2

The passage was about an office worker who was shopping on his way back home after work. Generally the transmission of this passage by most students was well throughout except that only a very small number of students struggled with the Bengali meanings of words such as '**commercial**', '**dusk**', '**corner**' and '**cauliflower**' and used their transliteration. However, the able students performed this task quite well and scored very good marks.

Question 3

This question was about a young Dhaka University student who dedicated his life in making and directing stage drama. The majority of the candidates were able to translate the passage without any difficulty except that a number of students struggled with the first paragraph to transmit fully into English. Only a few less able students faced difficulty to put the right meanings of Bengali words such as '**borsho**', '**chitra-somalochona**', '**snatok**', '**snatokuttor**', '**natto-moncho**', '**naattyakalaa**', '**arthoniti**', '**anubaad**', '**snaatak**', '**snaatakottar**', '**prashaar**', and so used their transliteration' instead. Quite a few of them missed some of the main points or misinterpreted them.

Question 4

The essay options **4a**, **4b** and **4d** were well responded by able students. The option **4a** and **4b** was attempted by most students. Only a small number of students had attempted question **4c**. However, those who attempted this essay scored good marks. The able students put their view points, feelings, and thoughts coherently and sequentially giving their justifications followed by displaying facts and information and hence scored good marks. Only a very small number of students had written essays with less than the required amount of words that resulted in them scoring lower marks.

There was a requirement of an anticipation of facts, good flow, analysis of points of view and opinion(s). Unfortunately, it was not evident amongst candidates in general. On average, the responses were mainly descriptive. Also not very many candidates used high level vocabulary or idiomatic phrases or expressions. The manipulation of languages was very basic on occasions. The use of syntax and wrong use of verb forms, mismatching of verb endings gave the impression as if it was the second language for a number of candidates, so they scored less than expected. On the other hand, candidates who fulfilled these criteria and displayed a coherent piece of writing obviously scored the top range marks.

Conclusion

The overall performances of students showed that the standard of literacy including the transmission skills to and from the target language has improved on several occasions. It was due to the fact that a number of centres have embedded appropriate exam techniques required for this examination. However, less able students' performances on average were not as good as expected. It was due to their lack of good grasp of the grammatical knowledge in both English and in the target language, inability to display a range of structures and phrases, manipulation of tense concepts / time frames and common spelling errors. Also, a wide display of transliterated words/phrases were evident in the students' performances across the board.

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