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Mark Scheme with Examiners' Report
GCE O Level Bengali (7606)

June 2005

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BENGALI 7606, MARK SCHEME

The table below shows how marks are distributed throughout the paper.

Question	Transmission Communication/Content	Quality of Language	Total for Question
1	15%	10%	25%
2	15%	10%	25%
3	10%	5%	15%
4	20%	15%	35%

Assessment criteria and mark scheme

Assessment criteria reflect the standard expected at GCE O level. It will therefore not be necessary for candidates to perform 'perfectly' in order to attract the highest marks available in each grid. References to 'standard' should be interpreted in this context.

Minor errors include, for example, the **occasional** omission of accents, incorrect gender, article, slight spelling errors.

Major errors include, for example, the **consistent** mismatching of subject and verb forms, use of inappropriate tenses and/or incorrect vocabulary.

Marks are awarded positively using the following assessment grids. The mark awarded reflects the extent to which the task as a whole has been successfully communicated and completed. To determine if a candidate should gain the upper or lower number of marks in the box it is important to refer to the boxes above and below. If the candidate's performance borders more on the performance of the box below than the box above, then the lower mark is allocated. On certain occasions, a candidate performance may require a 'best fit' mark.

Question 1 and Question 2: Translation

	Transmission
13-15	Excellent transmission skills with clear grasp of detail. Excellent transfer of inference, nuance and idiom. Pleasant to read.
10-12	A generally very competent rendering of the original text with grasp of most detail, nuance and idiom. Some passages, usually more complex, misinterpreted. Some successful attempts at rephrasing. The style is generally pleasing.
7-9	The main points, usually narrative and concrete, are conveyed successfully for the most part, although problems are encountered with more complex language. Inference, nuance and idiom transmitted successfully on occasions. Some passages misunderstood and attempts at rephrasing only partially successful. The style is not always coherent.
4-6	Only the more straightforward concrete points are transmitted successfully. Very little or no awareness of nuance and/or idiom. Several sections totally misunderstood. The style is incoherent with communication impaired at times.
1-3	Only the very basic points are transmitted successfully with some very straightforward sections totally misunderstood. The style is often incomprehensible. Communication is frequently impaired.
0	No language worthy of credit.

	Quality of Language
9-10	A very high level of accuracy with only minor errors. Confident use of a wide range of lexis and structures appropriate to the task. Excellent grasp of tense use. Very pleasant to read overall, although not necessarily faultless.
7-8	A high level of accuracy overall with however occasional basic errors, usually in more complex language. Uses a wide range of lexis and structures appropriate to the task with occasional lapses. Grasp of tense concept/time sequence generally secure although occasional lapses are evident. Pleasant to read for the most part.
5-6	Largely accurate when using simple, short phrases: incidence of error increases in more complex language. Lexis and structures appropriate to the task tend to be adequate with several items unknown. Problems at times with tense use. Some use of given adjectives and/or adverbial phrases with some degree of success. About half of what is written should be free of major errors. Not always easy to read.
3-4	Some inaccuracies in basic grammar although narrative sections, usually short and straightforward, are in general correct. Lexis and structures appropriate to the task restricted with some often quite basic items unknown. At times some fairly basic problems with tense concept/time sequence. Use of given adjectives, and/or adverbial phrases occasionally evident, though these are likely to be only partially successful. Often quite difficult to follow.
1-2	A very high incidence of basic error in all aspects of grammar, syntax and morphology. Basic lexis and structures appropriate to the task unknown. No awareness of tense concept/time sequence. Large sections totally misunderstood. Communication impaired. Very little of credit.
0	No language worthy of credit.

Question 3 - Practical application of grammar

Five sentences each worth 2 marks, plus a global mark for Quality of Language.
Marks are awarded for **Communication** as well as for **Quality of Language.**
Please refer to the following grids:

Communication	
2	Fully communicated in the target language although with some ambiguity in the expression.
1	At least half the sentence is correctly communicated in the target language.
0	No relevant communication.

The Quality of Language grid is applied **GLOBALLY** to all five sentences.

Quality of language	
5	High level of accuracy with only minor errors.
4	Level of accuracy generally secure but incidence of error increases in more complex language.
3	Accuracy variable with some basic errors.
2	High incidence of error which impedes communication at times. Inconsistent.
1	Frequent basic error with only isolated examples of accurate language.
0	No language worthy of credit.

Question 4 - Writing

This question attracts marks for **Communication and content** and **Quality of Language.** Please see the following grids:

	Communication and content
17-20	Responds fully and appropriately to the stimulus with excellent and relevant expansion. Gives detailed descriptions, expresses and justifies opinions as appropriate to the task. The time sequence is clear and unambiguous. A coherent piece of writing which is pleasant to read.
13-16	Responds to nearly all of the task although there may be some omissions. Some relevant expansion at times. Provides evidence of description, narration and opinion as appropriate to the task. Time sequence generally sound with occasional lapses. A generally well structured piece of writing. A sound attempt overall to link the piece into a coherent whole with, however, some lapses. May be a little pedestrian and predictable or somewhat over-ambitious at times.
9-12	Majority of task completed with, however, some significant omissions. There may be some irrelevance. Goes beyond a minimal response with some expansion of ideas and straightforward opinion relevant to the task. Time sequences show a degree of ambiguity at times. Comprehensible overall with some attempt to link the piece into a coherent whole. Ambiguous in places especially in more ambitious language. Tends to be somewhat predictable.
5-8	Main points of the task understood but some points totally misunderstood. Some major omissions with a degree of irrelevance and/or repetition. Level of response fairly limited with little opinion and justification appropriate to the task. Functions predominantly in simple, concrete sentences for the most part. Some evidence of correct time sequences but mostly inconsistent and insecure. Just about comprehensible overall with, however, a marked degree of ambiguity. Not easy to read.
1-4	Task generally misunderstood with little relevant information conveyed. Much ambiguity, confusion and omission. Level of response minimal with only a few relevant phrases. Communication largely impaired. Time sequences rarely correct. Largely incomprehensible with the exception of isolated items. Very difficult to read.
0	No language worthy of credit.

	Quality of Language
13-15	Predominantly accurate: free of all but minor errors in grammar, syntax and morphology. Uses a wide range of vocabulary, idiom and structure appropriate to the task with very little or no repetition. Excellent use of tense concept/time referents. Excellent examples of subordination and appropriate use of more complex structures. Clear ability to manipulate language with a high degree of accuracy to suit the purpose. Very pleasant to read, though not necessarily faultless.
10-12	Generally accurate and secure in grammar, syntax and morphology with some lapses. Accuracy less secure when more complex language is attempted. Uses a good range of vocabulary, idiom and structure, which are for the most part appropriate to the task. Attempts at more ambitious structures not always successful. Generally a secure grasp of tense concept/time referents. Manipulates language to suit the task at hand with, however, some errors. A wide range of vocabulary, idiom and structure may compensate for a lower level of accuracy. Generally easy to read despite the errors.
7-9	Fairly accurate in simple language however tends to be inconsistent in application of grammar, syntax and morphology when attempting more complex language. Range of vocabulary, idiom and structure standard and somewhat predictable. Some inconsistency in use of tense concept/time referents. Some attempts at subordination and sentence linking which are only partially successful. Attempts enhancement of fact with adjectives and/or adverbial phrases with moderate success. About half of what is written should be free of major errors. Despite inaccuracies the basic message is conveyed.
4-6	Accuracy is inconsistent with frequent basic errors in grammar, syntax and morphology. Simple, short sentences are sometimes correct but very little beyond. Range of vocabulary and structure very limited. Use of tense concept/time referents limited and often inappropriate. Limited success in attempts at enhancement of fact with adjectives, and/or adverbial phrases. Not easy to read.
1-3	A high level of inaccuracy with very frequent and basic errors in grammar, syntax and morphology. There may be the occasional correct phrase. No awareness of tense concept/time referents. Vocabulary very basic with little or no evidence of correct use of basic structures. Communication is severely impaired overall. Extremely difficult to read.
0	No language worthy of credit.

BENGALI 7606, CHIEF EXAMINER'S REPORT

General Comments

About 1,600 candidates were entered for the GCE O Level Bengali examination in June 2005, mostly from existing centres. The most entries came from the British Council, Dhaka (centre number 90320).

The majority of candidates found the paper fairly accessible and attempted the paper according to their abilities. A significant proportion of candidates performed well and scored high marks. Although the demands of the paper were similar to that of the previous year, with differentiated text materials and relevant vocabulary, the translations from Bengali into English (Question 1) and from English into Bengali (Question 2) possibly took longer for candidates to complete than the notional time allotted. Performances from most candidates overall, however, showed that the standard of literacy in both languages was very high. A criteria-referenced mark scheme, which was revised this year, was used to assess candidates' work.

Question 1
A large proportion of candidates were able to translate the Bengali passage into English with only a few spelling mistakes and with the use of correct grammatical structures. Most candidates that performed well did so due to good 'communication'. Weaker candidates scored lower marks in this question due to weak usage of appropriate 'language', as detailed in the marking criteria. It was evident from scripts that almost all candidates seemed to understand the Bengali passage, about a mountain expedition, and most of the related vocabulary. However, some Bengali phrases, for example

পঞ্চমদিনে, তাঁবু, আবৃত, শেরপাদের, অতিক্রম, স্রোত, টিবিটার, প্রান্তে, তীক্ষ্ণ শিষের

শব্দ, ইয়েতি

proved unknown to some candidates. It was good to see that most candidates, including some of the weaker ones, grasped the overall concept of the text, which helped them to translate the passage using their thinking skills, even if they were not always accurate.

Question 2
The translation of the passage from English into Bengali was answered by most candidates with reasonable success. Stronger candidates scored high marks on this task due to competency in transmitting skills and wider grammatical knowledge. Almost all candidates used standard Bengali; however, a number of dialectical errors were evident in some candidates' writing. Although most candidates could write a continuous piece of Bengali text on the theme of a Bangladeshi restaurant in Oxford Street, London, some missed out a number of phrases and words when translating. However, the Bengali sentences were blended in such a way that these mistakes were almost unnoticeable. Some of the words and phrases that candidates tended to struggle with were 'battled our way to', 'shiny wooden counter', 'best to go straight to the top', 'lit up in blue', 'in full flow', 'proceeded in an orderly fashion', 'they were captioned'. 'Pot of tea' was sometimes confused with 'cup of tea'. Overall, candidates coped well with the English passage and translated it into Bengali demonstrating a high level of literacy in both languages.

Question 3
Translating sentences from English into Bengali was done very well by stronger candidates.

(a) Most candidates were able to score full marks for the Bengali translation of this sentence. For 'God' candidates used a variety of words, for example

আল্লাহ, ভগবান, ঈশ্বর, প্রভু etc.

(b) Only the most able candidates coped well with this sentence. The word 'handicap' was incorrectly translated by many candidates and was avoided by others who were unsure about the meaning in Bengali.

(c) Most candidates scored full marks for this sentence. However, the word 'She' was translated as 'Woman' or 'Lady' by many candidates.

(d) Most candidates found this sentence difficult to translate. 'What it is like' was translated in a variety of ways.

(e) A number of candidates misinterpreted 'to cool slightly' and 'beat in' and so translated the whole sentence literally or left the translation incomplete.

Question 4
The letter option was quite popular and it was answered comparatively well by those who attempted it. Stronger candidates coherently linked and sequenced their viewpoints using a variety of vocabulary, idioms and structures while expressing feelings, concerns and thoughts about a beggar's life. Some candidates, however, did not fully justify their viewpoints and so scored fewer marks for 'communication'. Candidates also often missed out or ignored the concept of the affluent neighbourhood and therefore did not score highly for content.

The essay option was a popular alternative. Generally, stronger candidates attempted to write one of the essays. All three essays were attempted across the range, although (a) 'An ambition' was the most popular choice. Essays on this topic described aspirations, hardships, emotions, happiness and the satisfaction of achieving one's goal in life, which might be becoming an airline pilot, a doctor, a nuclear scientist, a politician etc.

Essay (b) 'Your favourite flower' was also well attempted. Why a particular flower was a favourite was interpreted or explained in a variety of ways, for example a flower brought to a Tsunami victim on a hospital bed by a child was favourite to one person, because it was given at a time of tragedy. The smell, colour and shape of the flower were not important at the time.

Essay (c) 'A democratic country' was least popular. Only stronger candidates attempted this essay.

Almost all candidates followed the guidelines regarding the number of words to be written for the essays.

Overall, candidates performed quite well in this examination. The quality of work produced by some candidates was admirable. Generally, standards of literacy in both English and Bengali were impressive. Evidently, candidates had been taught both languages quite well at this level by their teachers and were also obviously well prepared for the assessment tasks, according to the syllabus.

BENGALI 7606, GRADE BOUNDARIES

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Lowest mark for award of grade	61	51	41	36	31

Note: Grade boundaries may vary from year to year and from subject to subject, depending on the demands of the question paper.

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