

Examiners' Report

GCE O Level Bengali (7606)

June 2006

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General comments

The examination paper, as a whole, was of a comparable standard to those of previous years. The majority of candidates found the paper fairly accessible and a good proportion of candidates performed well and scored high marks on the paper. The overall performance of candidates showed that the standard of literacy including the transmission skills to and from the target language was very good.

Difficulty of the Paper

Question 1

Stronger candidates were able to translate the Bengali passage into English with only a few spelling mistakes, with the use of correct grammatical structures, and therefore scored high marks. It was also pleasing to see that the majority of candidates translated the passage accurately using simple language with appropriate use of tense. However, less able candidates often struggled to translate 'ঐত্তর', 'সুমেৰু প্রদেশ, মেৰুজ্যোতি, বিচিত্র শোভা', 'ছটা', 'শ্বেত'পাথর', and 'মায়াপুরী'. Proper translation of these words were often unsuccessful and a few candidates transliterated the words instead. Also, they had difficulty translating more complex structures and at times using the correct grammar. For example, in first sentence a number of candidates used phrases like 'when the wind blows towards north or in the north instead of writing from the north. Also, in the third paragraph, many candidates used inappropriate sentences such as, 'The more north you go the lesser trees will fall in your eyes' or 'The more you come towards the north, the more you will see that your eyes could hardly see any trees' or similar. The average score recorded for this question was 16/17.

Question 2

As compared to question 1, this passage was more accessible to most candidates, therefore the majority of the candidates succeeded to provide an accurate translation. There has also been occasions where candidates used phrases not commonly used in Bengali such as, 'শেষ পর্যন্ত মেলাৰ দিনটি এসে পড়ল' or 'শেষ পর্যন্ত মেলাৰ দিনটি এসে পৌছল' etc. Less able candidates often struggled to translate the phrase 'my heart stopped working' doing a literal translation instead. Also, in a few occasions a number of candidates showed lack of knowledge in using the formal form of verbs e.g., 'তিনি আমাকে বলল' instead of 'তিনি আমাকে বললেনা'. As a whole, candidates performed successfully, displaying good literacy skills in both languages. The average score recorded for this question was 18/19.

Question 3

It is very pleasing to see that most candidates were able to translate all five sentences even though they showed different levels of accuracy on specific grammar points. Sentences 3(a), (3c) and 3(d) proved accessible and was very well responded by stronger candidates, less able candidates often applied wrong tenses and therefore, were unable to score full marks in communication. A number of candidates found 3(b) and 3(e) very tricky particularly 3(b). Almost all candidates misinterpreted this sentence and translated it literally instead. The same applies to 3(e) in which a vast majority of candidates translated the sentence as, 'বইটির বিপরীতে / বদলে তুমি কি পেয়েছো', where the most accepted translation would be, 'বইটির বিপক্ষে তোমার কি যুক্তি / বলার আছে / তুমি কি বলতে চাও' or similar. The average score recorded for this question was 11/12.

Question 4 - Essay

Choice (4d) was well responded by the vast majority candidates. Stronger candidates were able to demonstrate a wide range of vocabulary and grammatical structures followed by personal opinions and experiences. However, on occasions, candidates overlooked the main focus of the content. There were occasions where candidates started with long irrelevant introductions and some scripts also contained repetitions. On options (4a) and (4b) candidates who produced coherent narratives using their imagination, own experience and own words were rewarded with top range marks. However, there need to be more awareness for the correct spelling, grammatical constructions and verb agreement.

Fewer candidates chose 4c but those who attempted this option scored good marks. The average score recorded for this question was 22/23.

Conclusion

Overall, candidates performed well in this examination, some paper were a delight to read and clearly presented. Standard of literacy and the knowledge of grammar in both English and Bengali was impressive. However, on some occasions, candidates struggled to translate more complex language. Candidates had been taught both languages well at this level and were also well prepared for the assessment tasks of the syllabus.

GRADE BOUNDARIES

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Lowest mark for award of grade	64	55	47	42	31

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