

Examiners' Report January 2007

O level

O level Bengali (7606)

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7606 BENGALI -EXAMINER'S REPORT - January 2007

General comments

About 1137 candidates were entered for the GCE O Level Bengali examination in January 2007 mostly from the existing centres. A large proportion of candidates were entered from the centre 90320. The majority of candidates found the paper accessible. A good proportion of candidates performed well and scored high marks in the paper. The standard and the demand of the paper were broadly similar and generally comparable to January 2006 Paper.

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 and a number of outstanding pieces of translations including examples of continuous pieces of writings were seen from one of the centres.

Question 1

Question one had addressed a short biography of Begum Rokeya, the pioneer of the Muslim female education in the Indian Sub Continent in the 19th century.

The stronger candidates were able to translate the Bengali passage into English with only a few spelling mistakes and with the use of correct grammatical structures, and so scored high marks. It was also pleasing to see that the majority of the candidates transmitted the passage fairly accurately using simple language with appropriate use of tense. However, the weaker candidates often struggled to translate some words and structures such as ‘পশ্চিম বঙ্গ’, ‘পাশ্চাত্য শিক্ষা’, ব্রাহ্ম, দৃষ্টিভঙ্গি’, ‘জ্ঞানপিপাসু’, ‘বিরোধিতা ও বাধা-বিপত্তি and ‘স্বামীর নামানুসারে’. As such, proper transfer of those words were, often unsuccessful and quite a few candidates used the transliteration of these words instead. Also they had difficulty in transmitting complex structures containing too many ideas in the passage and applying the appropriate application of grammar. For example, in translating the last two sentences a number of candidates used phrases like ‘**only those Hindu’s and Brahmin society in the old educative system** and ‘**if the girls get educated then their behaviour and point of view will change** instead. Also, when translating the sentence in the sentence, ‘নারী শিক্ষা ও নারী জাগরণে যিনি অগ্রগামী ছিলেন’ quite a few candidates transmitted inappropriately such as, ‘**the woman who was aware of education for women**’ or ‘**the lady who was very interested in women’s education**’ or similar. A few candidates also continued to loose marks for simple mistakes and incorrect spellings of reasonably straightforward words. At this level of examination, examiners do not expect to see such errors. The average score recorded for this question was 15/16.

Question 2

The passage is about ‘The Bengali new Year Celebration’. As compared to question 1, this passage was more accessible to most candidates and so majority of the candidates succeeded to transmit the content of the passage fairly well. The

stronger candidates did not find the text very challenging and so performed the translation task in standard Bengali with a good flow. There has also been occasions though where the time sequence and the tense concept was not transmitted appropriately. Weaker candidates often struggled to transmit words such as, **quarter past, amazing view, banyan tree, focal point, profusely, desperate and relish**. It could be due to their lack of knowledge or unfamiliarity about the corresponding Bengali meaning of these words. However, on the whole, candidates performed quite successfully, displaying good literacy skills in both languages. In fact, translations produced without missing out any key words, scored high marks. Translations done as complete sentences and avoiding literal translation or transliteration of commonly known words and phrases are considered to be the best translations in either language. The average score recorded for this question was 17/18.

Question 3

It is quite pleasing to see that almost all candidates were able to translate all five sentences though at varied levels where they were tested on specific grammar points. 3(a), (3b) and 3(c) were pretty straight forward and very well responded by stronger candidates. Weaker candidates often struggled transmitting the appropriate meaning of **consequences and actions** though.

The average score recorded for this question was 12/13.

Question 4

4d was well responded by the stronger candidates. Stronger candidates were able to demonstrate a wide range of vocabulary and grammatical structures followed by comparisons personal opinions and reactions, so scored good marks. However, on occasions, candidates overlooked the main focus of the content. Instead they wrote about a particular song they like ignoring the points of view of their chosen songs and so scored less marks than expected. There were occasions where candidates started with long irrelevant introductions. Some scripts also contained repetitions. Amongst the essay options, **4c was quite popular and well attended**. Again, there was a requirement of an anticipation of facts, good flow, analysis and opinion. Unfortunately it was not evident amongst majority candidates. On average, the responses were mainly descriptive. Also not very many candidates used high level vocabulary or idiomatic phrases. The manipulation of languages was very basic on occasions. The use of syntax and wrong use of tenses gave the impression as if it is 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. Amongst the essay options, **4a** was the least popular. But those who attempted this scored good marks. To sum up: candidates performances in this section were slight less than expected. So centres are requested to improvise:

- a range of structures, vocabulary
- knowledge of time concepts
- appropriate connectives to display a good flow and coherence
- opinion/s, comparisons and analysis of facts and main focus
in preparing candidates for the examination.

The average score recorded for this question was 19/20

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 tense concepts, grammatical as well as appropriate transmission skills.

Statistics

7606/01

Grade	Max. Mark	A	B	C	D	E
Raw boundary mark	100	65	55	45	40	31

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