

# Examiners' Report Summer 2008

GCE O Level

GCE O Level Bengali (7606)

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## 7606 Bengali Examiner's Report

### General comments

Just over 2000 candidates were entered for the GCE O Level Bengali examination this series, mostly from the existing centres. Many candidates performed well and scored high marks in the paper. The demand of the paper is comparable with past sessions.

Candidates had every opportunity to produce accurate translations. Some key words and phrases helped to differentiate between good and adequate performance of the candidates. It should be noted, that there were a number of outstanding pieces of translations including examples of continuous pieces of writings.

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 and appropriate transmission skills.

### Question 1

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 phrases such as সাম্প্রতিক, বিশ শতকে, চারগুণ বৃদ্ধি, চিন্তার কারণ, দরিদ্রতম, ক্ষতিগ্রস্ত, সমৃদ্ধি, দারিদ্র্য সীমা, চাকরির নিশ্চয়তা, প্রযুক্তি, অবদান and সার্বিক উন্নয়নে. As such, proper transfer of those words were, often unsuccessful and quite a few candidates used the transliteration of these words instead. Also often weaker candidates had difficulty in transmitting structures such as 'গত বিশ শতকে ..... চারগুণ বৃদ্ধি পেয়েছে, ভীতি ও চিন্তার .... দাঁড়িয়েছে' They transmitted the sentences as '*In the past twenty years this population has increased four times, and this increase in population has become a matter of importance and trouble* which in fact was not expected. The average score for this question was 17.

### Question 2

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 translated the passage without any issues. However, there were occasions where the time sequence and the tense concept was not transmitted appropriately. Weaker candidates often struggled to transmit words such as, *amongst locals, half past six, scanning, overtime, comfortably quiet, crammed with and the phrases, 'What a credit .....Munir Bhai', and 'I wouldn't miss it for the world.* Often the weaker candidates translated these sentences as: মুনির ভাইয়ের

জন্য সে কত লাভ! and বিশ্বের জন্য আমি মিস করতে চাই না। It could be due to their lack of knowledge or unfamiliarity to use the corresponding Bengali meaning of these words. On the whole, candidates performed quite successfully, displaying good literacy skills in both languages. The average score for this question was 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. Questions 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 'running a slight temperature'. In fact, they tried to convey the literal meaning of the phrase and so often displayed, 'আমি অল্প তাপমাত্রায় দৌড়াচ্ছি' and so gained no marks. The average score for this question was 12-13.

### Question 4

Questions 4b and 4d were very popular and responded by the majority candidates. 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 wrote about planning for the journey(4b) and similarly, the arrangements for the school trips, ignoring the emotions and thrills or even fear s/he experienced and so scored less marks than expected. There were occasions where candidates started with long irrelevant introductions. Some scripts also contained repetitions. Again, there was a requirement of an anticipation of facts, good flow, analysis and opinion. Unfortunately it was not evident amongst majority candidates, and, 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 question, scored good marks. Amongst the essay options, 4c was well attempted by stronger candidates only.

### Conclusion

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

| Grade                          | A  | B  | C  | D  | E  |
|--------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|
| Lowest Mark for award of grade | 69 | 62 | 55 | 50 | 41 |

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