

Examiners' Report Summer 2009

GCE O level

GCE O Level Bengali (7606)

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Bengali 7606/01

General Comments

About 2347 candidates were entered for the GCE O Level Bengali examination in June 2009 mostly from the existing centres. The majority of candidates found the paper accessible. A good proportion of candidates performed well and scored high marks in the paper. The demands of the paper is comparable with the June 2008 paper. It was also pleasing to see that overall candidates' performances this season 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 answers.

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, knowledge of grammar and also appropriate transmission skills.

Question 1

The stronger candidates were able to transmit the major key ideas from the Bengali passage into English with only a few spelling mistakes. They also applied the use of correct grammatical structures and the appropriate use of tense. However, the weaker candidates often struggled to translate some words and phrases such as প্ৰথম বৰ্ষ, ক্লাস বৰ্জনের সিদ্ধান্ত, পুরনো ঢাকার ট্রাফিক জ্যাম অনিবার্য, ফেরিওয়ালারা, কুলিদের টানাটানি, মুখ বাড়িয়ে, পুরনো ঢাকার চৌহদ্দি, আনমনা হয়ে পড়লাম, অস্তিত্বের মতোই, and গিজগিজ। As such, proper transfer of those words were, often unsuccessful and quite a few candidates used the transliteration of these words instead. Also, quite a few candidates misinterpreted words/ phrases i.e., বৰ্ষ as monsoon, নদী as sea, চৌহদ্দি as ghat, and মুখ বাড়িয়ে as stretching the mouth. The average score recorded for this question was 18.

Question 2

As compared to question 1, this passage proved slightly difficult to average candidates and so they were often unsuccessful to transmit some key ideas of the passage which resulted them scoring low marks in the content. Despite a number of difficult words, the stronger candidates often transmitted the main key points fairly well in standard Bengali with a good flow. There has also been occasions though the time sequence and the tense concept was not transmitted appropriately. Weaker candidates often struggled to transmit words such as, **inherited, turbulent, administrative governors, reinforced, exiled Nawabs, and accomplished.** It could be due to their lack of knowledge or unfamiliarity regarding the corresponding Bengali meaning of these words. However, on the whole, candidates performed quite successfully, displaying good literacy skills in both languages. The average score recorded for this question was 17.

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 on occasion struggled transmitting in the appropriate tense though in 3(d) and 3(e). The average score recorded for this question was 14.

Question 4 (a)(b)

These were chosen by the stronger 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 incidents occurred in their own families and so scored less marks than expected. Amongst the essay/letter options, 4d was quite popular & 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, 4b was the least popular. But those who attempted this scored good marks. The average score recorded for this question was 25.

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 good grasp of a range of structures and tense concepts, knowledge of grammar. Also, a wide display of transliterated words / phrases were evident in the candidates' performances across the board.

Statistics

Grade	A	B	C	D	E
Lowest Mark for award of grade	72	64	56	51	42

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