

Examiners' Report/ Principal Examiner Feedback Summer 2010

GCE O Level

GCE O Level Bengali (7606/01)

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General comments

The majority of candidates found the paper accessible. A good proportion of candidates performed well and scored high marks in the 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 responses.

Item 1

A passage in Bengali required to be translated in English. It was about the world famous Bengali poet Rabindranath Tagore. Most candidates grasped the theme very well and translated most parts accurately using correct vocabulary. 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 tenses. However, the weaker candidates often struggled to translate some words and phrases such as চতুর্দশ সন্ধান, তরণ, পাশ্চাত্য নেতিবাচক, ধোঁয়াটে, আর্দ্র, ঠেলাঠেলি, মুখোমুখি, পেশাদার final, আশুস্ত and really. As such, proper transfer of those words were, often unsuccessful and quite a few candidates used the transliteration of these words instead. In fact, a number of candidates even transmitted "চতুর্দশ " as the fourth; few candidates wrote 'washed' for ধোঁয়াটে. Also, places such as 'Brighton' and 'Ireland' were not spelt correctly by weaker candidates. It was due to the fact that often weaker candidates were unable to transmit and manipulate the phrases associated with these words in correct person and tense forms which has resulted them in scoring lower marks.

Item 2

A passage in English required to be translated in Bengali. This was an authentic afternoon picture of Dhaka in Bangladesh. The stronger candidates translated the passage very well, using appropriate vocabulary to demonstrate and transmit the concept of the scenario with a good flow; This passage displayed an authentic afternoon scenario to be translated in Bengali. Majority of the candidates succeeded to transmit the content of the passage fairly well. The stronger candidates performed the translation task in standard Bengali with a good flow using appropriate vocabulary. There has been occasion though where the time sequence and the tense concept was not transmitted appropriately. Weaker candidates often struggled to transmit words such as, west, dedication, boisterous, trapped, crawled to a halt, ragged shawl and triumphantly. 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.

Item 3

It is quite pleasing to see that almost all candidates were able to translate all five sentences though at varied level where they were tested on specific grammar points. They were pretty straightforward except 3c and 3e. In 3c the word 'waved' was misinterpreted by many candidates and so resulted in scoring 2 marks on it. In 3c the phrase, 'to give in', was expressed in many different ways and a number of candidates translated literally.

This also has resulted in scoring low marks. At all levels 'the enchanting sunset' in 3d was transmitted in a variety of adjectives and was pleasant to read.

Item 4

The average candidates answered questions 4a, 4b and 4c comparatively well. Questions 4b and 4d were well attempted by the candidates. The essay options 4a and 4c were answered well by the majority of the candidates. The stronger candidates demonstrated a wide range of vocabulary and grammatical structures including their views and opinions.

4a as well as 4b were well responded 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 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 the average candidates. The responses were mainly descriptive rather. Also not very many candidates used high level vocabulary or idiomatic phrases. The manipulation of languages was very basic on occasions. 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, 4c was the least popular. But those who attempted this scored good marks. The average score recorded for this question was 26.

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

Grade Boundaries

Grade	Max Mark	A	B	C	D	E	U
Lowest mark for award of grade	100	73	64	55	50	41	0

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