

Examiners' Report/
Principal Examiner Feedback

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In Bengali (4BE0) Paper 01
Written Paper

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4BEO - 01 IGCSE BENGALI – CHIEF EXAMINER’S REPORT – January 2017

General comments

About 1135 students were entered as well as processed for the IGCSE Bengali in the January examination totally from the overseas centres. A good proportion of students performed well and scored high marks in the paper. The demand of the paper is generally comparable with previous papers. Overall this season the student performances were comparable to last year. It was evident from marking students' samples, backreading and monitoring qualities of marking and the markers' report.

Students 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.

Question 1

Able candidates generally performed well in translating all 5 sentences without any difficulty, and scored good marks. However, less able candidates struggled due to the lack of appropriate transmission skills and lack of appropriate knowledge of targeted vocabulary which was evidenced in 1(c) and 1(d). Less able candidates often struggled to translate, '**last week**', '**tomorrow morning**'; in 1e. Lack of punctuation marks often resulted in scoring lower marks though candidates produced correct transmission. The average mark on this question recorded was **12**.

Question 2

This question was about a boy called Romel who was travelling to an Airport to greet his childhood friend by car. Generally, the transmission of this passage by the majority of candidates was well throughout the passage except a small number of candidates struggled to transmit the Bengali meanings of words and phrases such as '**pleasant surprise**', '**academic**', '**traffic-jam**', '**boarding school**', '**jerk**' and '**rules**' and used inappropriate meanings or their transliterations instead. Nevertheless, the stronger candidates performed well and scored good marks. The average mark recorded was **17**.

Question 3

This question was about a Bangladeshi restaurant called '**Dashi shaad**' meaning Bangladeshi taste (referring food). The passage was very interesting and popular for the Bangladeshi food lovers. Most candidates performed equally well this question as for question 2 in transmitting the passage. In transmission, a considerable number of candidates showed their poor knowledge of Bengali meaning of many ingredients of Bangladeshi food crops that are used in breakfast and lunch along with other Bengali words and phrases such as '**biponikendra**', '**rokomary**', '**poripati**', '**proshantir chhowa**', and '**sarthokota**'. In these situations, they used either their transliterations or inappropriate words. However, the average mark recorded was **18**.

Question 4

Questions 4(a) and 4(c) were well responded by most of candidates. However, the candidates who attempted questions 4(b) and 4(d) performed comparatively well and scored better marks. The able students put their view points, feelings, and thoughts coherently and sequentially giving their justifications followed by displaying facts and information, hence scored good marks. Only a very small number of the students had written essay less than the required number of words, the quality and the required relevant information being taken into account; that resulted them in scoring lower marks. There was a requirement of an anticipation of facts, good flow, analysis of points of view and opinion/s. unfortunately, it was not evident amongst candidates in general. On average, the responses were mainly descriptive. Also, not very many candidates used high level vocabulary or idiomatic phrases or expressions. The manipulation of languages was very basic on occasions. The use of syntax and wrong use of verb forms, mismatching of verb endings gave the impression as if it was 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 and continuous piece of writing, obviously scored the top range marks. The average mark recorded for Q4 was **26**.

Conclusion

Overall, this paper appeared to be fair accessible and well balanced. The overall performances of able students showed that the standard of literacy including the transmission skills to and from the target language has improved on several occasions. It was because a number of centres have embedded appropriate exam techniques required for this examination. However, less able students' performances on average were not as good as expected. It was due to their lack of good grasp of the grammatical knowledge in both English and in the target language, inability to display a range of structures and phrases, manipulation of tense concepts/ time frames and common spelling errors. Also, a wide display of transliterated words/ phrases was evident in the students' performances across the board.

Grade Boundaries

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