

## 9 Bengali (25 marks)

Bengali (or Bangla, written **বাংলা**) is the official language of Bangladesh (literally "land of Bangla") and West Bengal, India, and is spoken by 230 million people. Here are some Bengali sentences (as spoken in Bangladesh) and their English translations:

1. Ami meyeṭir alindaṭar nice thekechi.	I've stayed under the balcony of the girl.
2. Kobiṭi goruṭir kôtha lekhe.	The poet is writing about the cow
3. Tumi jhoṭaṭa kôro.	You are making the basket.
4. Khiṭi boṭolokṭir gaṛiṭa dekheche.	The maid has seen the car of the rich man.
5. Tumi baṛiṭa theke khiṭir śathe aso.	You are coming from the house together with the maid.
6. Kukurṭi khēlnaṭa ghōrṭar modhye ane.	The dog is bringing the toy into the room.
7. Ami mondīṛta theke gaṛiṭa kore ghuri.	I'm traveling from the temple by car.
8. Se dinṭa dhore ghureche.	He has traveled during the day.
9. Ami khēlnaṭa cheleṭir śathe kori.	I'm making the toy together with the boy.
10. Kobiṭi kukurṭike baṛiṭar baire dēkhe.	The poet is seeing the dog outside the house.
11. Guruṭi boṭolokṭir môto nace.	The teacher is dancing like the rich man.
12 Kobiṭir dinṭa eseche.	The day of the poet has come.
13. Ami cheleṭike baṛiṭar kache dhorechi.	I've held the girl near the house.
14 Meyeṭi deṣṭar kôtha pôṛe.	The girl is reading about the land.

Note: ê and ô are wider versions of e and o. ś sounds like sh in shoe. t̪ and r̪ are specific consonants. h after a consonant denotes aspiration.

## Questions

**9.1.** If *jadukôr* is “wizard”, and *skul* is “school”, translate:

- a. Guruṭir cheleṭi khitir śathe ghore.
- b. Tumi guruṭir môto likhecho.
- c. Jadukôrti jhorāṭa ghôrta theke eneche.
- d. Se skulṭar kache thake.

**9.2.** If “cat” is *bîral*, translate into Bengali:

- e. I'm seeing the house of the poet near the school.
- f. You've traveled from the house of the rich man.
- g. The teacher is holding the cat outside the car.

**9.3.** If ‘towards’ is *dike*, and ‘after’ is *pôre*, you should be able to translate one of the following sentences into Bengali, but a crucial gap in your information prevents you from translating the other. Decide which sentence you can translate with certainty, and translate it; and show why you can't be sure how to translate the other.

- h. You travel towards the teacher.
- i. He's coming after the maid of the wizard.

## 9 Bengali [25 marks]

27 points:

- 9.1: 3 points per sentence fully correct.
  - 2 points for:
    - all lexical words correct and a single error in grammatical relations,
    - or vice versa – all grammatical relations correct but a single wrong lexical word
  - 1 point for just two errors.
  - Try not to penalise the same error more than once.
  - Accept:
    - simple present (e.g. *stays*) for present progressive (*is staying*)
    - simple past (e.g. *wrote*) or past progressive (e.g. *were writing*) for present perfect (*have written*) – but not for present progressive (*are writing*)
    - *the teacher's boy, travels with*
    - near synonyms, e.g. 'live' for 'stay', 'son' for 'boy', 'take' for 'bring'
    - 'girl' or 'child' for 'boy' – there's an error in the data at #13.
    - 'the' for 'a' or nothing, and vice versa;
- 9.2: 3 points per sentence fully correct.
  - 2 points for:
    - all lexical words correct and a single error in inflection or word order or spelling.
    - or vice versa – a single wrong lexical word, but correct inflections and word order.
  - 1 point for just two errors.
  - Require correct order for *kobiṭir bariṭa*,
  - Require correct diacritics, e.g. ṭ not t; but don't penalise for their omission in more than one word across all sentences.
  - If it's really illegible, mark it wrong.
- 9.3: 6 points:
  - 3 points for correct translation of sentence (i) (as in 9.2 above)
  - 3 points for explanation for why (h) can't be translated.
    - 1 point for 'travel' can't be translated because all examples are present progressive (another error in the data!).
    - See the full explanation of the grammatical background below the solutions.

<b>9.1.</b> a. The boy of the teacher is traveling together with the maid.
b. You have written like the teacher.
c. The wizard has brought the basket from the room.
d. He is staying near the school.
<b>9.2.</b> e. Ami kobiṭir bariṭa skultar kache dekhi.
f. Tumi boroloktir barita theke ghurecho.
g. Guruṭi bıralṭike gařiṭar baire dhore.
<b>9.3.</b> h. Tumi guruṭi/guruṭir dike ghoro. – untranslatable because of uncertainty about the form of guruṭi/guruṭir.
i. Se jadukörtir khitir pôre ase.

## Background grammar for Bengali

[provided by the problem's author, Bozhidar Bozhanov]

Bengali sentences have the following structure

<subject> <direct object> <indirect object> <verb>

All animate nouns end in -ti, and all inanimate nouns end in -ta (a definite article, in a way)

Animate direct objects also get -ke after the article. Possessors come before the possessed and end in -r. The same ending is present on nouns that are followed by: nice ‘under’, kôtha ‘about’, śathe ‘together with’, modhye ‘in’, baire ‘outside’, môto ‘like’, kache ‘near’. The ending is not added before theke ‘from’, kore ‘with’, dhore ‘during’.

Verbs have the -ech suffix in the past tense, and end in -i, -o or -e for 1st, 2nd and 3rd person respectively. In addition to that, there is a vowel change in the root:

in pres.tense, 1st person, and in past tense (all persons) it is a narrow one, and in present tense, 2nd and 3rd person it is wide (i~e, e~ê and e~a; u~o, o~ô).

For question 9.3:

The 2nd group mentioned before, consisting of three special postpositions (theké, kore, dhore), requires the noun before them to be in the same form as the subject (nominative), and the rest of the postpositions require it to be in possessive form.

What separates these postpositions from the rest is the fact that they resemble verbs (stay, make, hold) with a 3rd person ending, but with a narrow vowel.

?Tumi mondırta/mondırṭar dike ghoro.

Se jadukôrtir khitir pôre ase.

If translating one of the sentences is easy, then it is certain that one of the postpositions is not from the 2nd group. dike (assuming root "dik~dek) could be from the 2nd group (though it is not, in fact). We can say that in the vowel system of Bengali the sound ô doesn't have a wider counterpart and then pôre can only be a member of the first group of postpositions (requiring possessive).