

Diploma in Translation Seminar

Improving the learning process
(with German examples)

Introductory questions

- Who are you?
- Where are you from?
- What do you know about the Diploma in Translation?
- What are your expectations from this course?

The Diploma in Translation Exam

- Translation exam between English and other language or other language and English
- Exam provided by IoL Educational Trust
- Differing units with differing exam durations

The Diploma in Translation Exam

- Unit 01 - General Translation (3hrs)
- Unit 02 – Semi-specialised Translation of passage (2 hrs) to choose from
 1. 2A Technology
 2. 2B Business
 3. 2C Literature

The Diploma in Translation Exam

- Unit 03 – Semi-specialised translation of passage (2 hrs) to choose from
 1. 3A Science
 2. 3B Social Science
 3. 3C Law

The Diploma in Translation

- Possible marks:
 - Distinction
 - Merit
 - Pass
 - Fail

Candidates must achieve a Pass in each of the three aspects of performance assessed in order to gain an overall Pass (or Merit or Distinction).

Marking Aspects

- Aspect 1: comprehension, accuracy and register (appropriateness of rendering and lexis & translator's notes if any)
- Aspect 2: grammar, organisation of work (cohesion and coherence)

Marking Aspects

- Aspect 3: technical points (spelling, punctuation, accents, transfer of names, figures, dates, legibility etc.)
- [Recommendations](#)

Distinction

- A1: excellent command of subject matter; accurate transfer of information; evidence of complete comprehension
- A2: reads like piece originally written in TL; sentence structure, grammar and discourse entirely appropriate to TL
- A3: spelling, accentuation, punctuation, transfer of dates, names and figures are faultless

Merit

- A1: good command of subject matter; some over-/under-translation; vocabulary, terminology and idiom chosen are appropriate, register is faithful to ST register
- A2: well organised, good sentence structure, overall coherence; not perfect but clearly written as if original piece of writing in TL; appropriate reorganisation of information where necessary
- A3: only minor technical lapses

Pass

- A1: adequate command of subject matter; no serious errors or omissions in transfer of information; any inaccuracies or omissions are minor and will not give false or misleading information to reader, acceptable translator's notes where given
- A2: sentence structure sound, though with some awkwardness and lapses in grammar; nothing too serious
- A3: correct in all major technical elements; one or two serious lapses of spelling, some errors in punctuation

Fail

- 5% or more of ST missing = automatic fail
 - General Paper (~600 words) = 30 words
 - Semi-specialist (~450 words) = 23 words
- A1: inadequate grasp of informational content; number of major and minor inaccuracies leading to information conveyed wrongly; number of clumsy/inappropriate renderings which impair or distort message; incorrect choice of register, terminology or idiomatic usage
- A2: does not read like original piece of writing; stilted and incoherent; over-elaboration; excessive paraphrasing
- A3: considerable number of technical faults rendering otherwise good translation unacceptable for professional usage

Serious errors

- Serious errors may lead to a Fail: they can have serious consequences:
 - Lose a company a business contract
 - Cause serious accidents (wrong figures)
 - Cause a death (wrong dosages)
 - Cause serious injury (wrong measurements), etc.
- They can be caused by:
 - Incorrect punctuation
 - Missing digits
 - Missing letters
 - Mistranslated preposition, etc

Pitfalls and Pressures

- Time management and organisation
 - Writing a draft, unflagged gaps or alternative renderings, spending too long choosing options (Paper 2&3, semi-specialist options), changing options halfway through
- Use of resources
 - Not consulting a monolingual source for equivalent confirmation, not considering if resource used is appropriate/correct/misleading, using first finding without consideration or double checking.

Pitfalls and Pressures

- Approach to ST
 - Not reading properly, not identifying function/style/register, not using context for clarification, no background knowledge, no understanding of syntax or grammar, tunnel vision, etc.
- Approach to TT
 - Leaving parts untranslated, tunnel vision, writing skills standard, ignoring style/register/text function issues, no conversion of figures/units of measurement, inappropriate guessing, no checking for mistakes, gaps, good preparation, etc.

Translation Theory

How does translation work?

1. Relationship between target text (TT) and source text (ST)
2. Adaptation of translation to cultural situation of target audience

Some Translation Methods

1. Substitution
2. Structural change
3. Word for word translation
4. Permutation
5. Expansion/Reduction
6. Transposition
7. Transformation
8. Other translator's tools

1. Substitution

- Replacing a lexical element with an element in the target language
- e.g. English: table →
 German: Tisch

2. Structural Change

- Changing the structure of the source text in the target text.

English: Influenza is passed on by people breathing in liquid droplets containing the virus, which has been sneezed or coughed into the air.

Deutsch: Das Influenza Virus wird vom Menschen übertragen, indem sich durch Ausniessen und Aushusten in der Luft befindliche flüssige Tröpfchen, die den Virus enthalten, eingeatmet werden.

3. Word for word translation

- Keeping the number of words, word types and syntax

e.g.	English:	Where is he? →
	German:	Wo ist er?

4. Permutation

- Restructuring of components
- e.g. English: I *have read* the book. →
German: Ich *habe* das Buch
gelesen.

5. Increase/Reduction

- Increasing or reducing the number of words
- e.g. French: il pourra →
 English: he will be able to

6. Transposition

- Changing the word type
- Grammatical structures not often identical:
e.g. English: She likes swimming. →
 German: Sie schwimmt
 gerne

Gerunds and infinitives work in English and German. German even adds an adverb.

8. Other Translator's Tools

- Translator's notes
- Comments, for example to explain a cultural issue
- Footnotes
- Translator's summary comment at end of text

Interference Issues

- Interference issues often appear with translators who are not currently living in a country where their target language is spoken (and often have not done so for a number of years).
- Source language expressions start to “interfere” with the target language (even though the target language is often their mother tongue).

Types of Interference

Interference occurs when languages are used alternately by same person

1. Translatory interference
2. Lexical interference
3. Textual interference
4. Cultural interference

1. Translatory Interference

- False friends (*faux amis*)

For example: *bald* (German) = soon (Eng.)

or *kahl* (German) = bald (English);

- Possible collocations

For example: *to perform an operation* but not a discussion;

- Idiomatic expressions

Bark up the wrong tree (English) = *auf dem Holzweg sein* (German);

- Phraseology

A Dutch auction, where, instead of rising, prices fall;

- Grammatical rules

– 🤪 certain grammatical tools do not exist in TL (cases)

2. Lexical Interference

- In the case of native Germans living in UK
 - German coexists with uniform/stable host language
 - Grammar and phonology are hardly ever subject to change. The vocabulary of a language in use, however, is easily infiltrated by foreign or new words.

For example:

Foreign words: cool, die Casting-Show, der Surfer, das Surfbrett, das Portemonnaie

New words: Euro + teuer = Teuro,

3. Textual Interference

- Selection of terminology from memory can lead to unnatural translations as they may be affected by SL interference, e.g. collocational errors
German: ein Überblick über
English: an overview of (rather than over – a mistake often made by Germans)
- More prevalent in non-technical translations
- Gideon Toury: “Interference from the parent text is what one expects to find in translations”
Gideon Toury Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1995.

4. Cultural Interference

- There are unknown object, ideas, elements and behaviours that have to be transferred into the other language by loan word or description
- phenomena: airing cupboard (not a German concept), in Germany: the use of surnames and appropriate titles until the older person offers to use first names
- Behaviour: the German expression “Mahlzeit!” literally translated as “Enjoy your meal” is used to greet another person around lunchtime.

Teaching Translation

Skills in translation

- Sufficient language skills in all languages used
- Evaluation
- Synthesis
- Analysis
- Application
- Comprehension
- Knowledge

Exercise – Teaching

- Work in groups of 3
- Think about good approaches to teaching in light of the points discussed so far
- Note them down for group feedback later

- Time: 15 mins

Teaching Ideas

- Translations under exam conditions
- ST analysis
- TT analysis
- Paraphrasing exercises in SL and TL
- Glossary work
- Topic specific research exercises
- Constructive TT critique as group work
- Constructive, detailed and specific feedback

Issues to consider when teaching translation

- Handwriting if the Diploma in Translation exam is not taken on a computer
- Attention to detail – e.g. not missing words, nuances etc.
- Importance of source text understanding
- Teaching basic research skills for translators

Student Preparation

- Candidates have to focus on:
 - Carrying out translation in exam conditions
 - Developing professional skills (quality translation at appropriate speed)
 - Appropriate use of paper and non-paper resources when and where applicable
 - Adequate SL and TL skills to avoid being too dependant on their resources
 - Appropriate examination room behaviour

Improving Language Skills

- Glossaries
- Reading aloud
- Practising summarising, paraphrasing, presentation skills (with feedback)
- Translation analysis
- ST / TT comparisons
- Creative writing exercises
- Comprehension exercises
- Memory training

Linguistic aspects

Some points to incorporate in teaching:

- Semantics
- Structural semantics
- Syntax
- Pragmatics
- Text linguistics

Descriptive stylistics

- Dimensions of language user
 - Geographical origin
 - Social background
 - Time
- Dimensions of language use
 - Medium
 - Participation
 - Social relation(ship)
 - Level of intimacy
 - Area of usage

Text design

- Specify demand and requirement
- Produce a text
- Control the overall process
- At the same time: research
- Adjust results to situation
- Defend any decisions made
- And continuously adapt working methods

s. Holz-Mänttari 1993:308f.

Use of Tools

Dictionaries and Glossaries

NB: minimum exam requirement: 1 monolingual SL, 1 monolingual TL, 1 general bilingual dictionary

- Paper resources:
 - Monolingual (SL and TL) + bilingual dictionaries, encyclopaedias (general/specialist), glossaries (self-prepared for specific areas)
 - ☹ not comprehensive, not totally accurate, misleading entries, out-of-date/context, too heavy/bulky
 - ☺ tailored to needs, familiar, to the point
 - In addition: manuals, text books, catalogues, journals, newspapers, etc.
 - ☹ not comprehensive, too much information, can not be used in exam
 - ☺ lexical items in context, related items presented together, up-to date, more accurate as specialised (not linguistic)

Dictionaries and Glossaries

- Non-paper resources
 - Monolingual + bilingual dictionaries, encyclopaedias, glossaries on CD-ROM
 - ☹ and ☺ as above PLUS advantage of speed, flexibility and access
 - On-line dictionaries and terminology banks
 - Web-based resources, parallel texts from specialist sources, human sources
 - ☹ availability not guaranteed (technology failures, specialists not available, not in exam), accuracy variable (anyone can publish on internet), no guarantee of correct information
 - ☺ much quicker than paper version, can be shared more easily, more likely to be up-to-date, easily obtained, cheap or free

Use of technical equipment

- Machine translation

CAT (computer-aided translation)

- Basic: translate text from one language to another by substitution of words in one language to the other
- Corpus techniques: more complex translations possible: better handling of phrase recognition, idiom translation etc
- Currently: software allows for customisation (payroll reports) – improved output by limited scope of allowable substitutions

Use of technical equipment

- Mainly designed to help “human translator” as opposed to “stand alone device”
- Increased productivity, particularly highly repetitive texts (technical documents)
- CAT Tools – examples
 - OmegaT
 - LogiTerm
 - SDL TRados

Useful Research Methods

- In addition to the usual research methods such as the internet, dictionaries etc. there are also
 - Parallel text comparisons e.g. to help find differing text conventions
 - Expert advice

Book Suggestions

Translation – general

- Snell-Hornby, Mary and Hönl, Hans G. and Kußmaul, Paul and Schmitt, Peter A. (2006) *Handbuch Translation*. Tübingen: Stauffenberg Handbücher.
- Kelly, Dorothy (2005) *Handbook for Translation Trainers*. Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing.
- Munday, Jeremy (2003) *Introducing Translation Studies – Theories and Applications*. London: Routledge.

Book Suggestions

Translation – general

- Shuttleworth, Mark and Cowie, Moira (1999)
Dictionary of Translation Studies. Manchester:
St.Jerome Publishing
- Best, Joanna and Kalina, Silvia (2002)
Übersetzen und Dolmetschen. Tübingen: A.
Francke Verlag
- BDÜ (1999) *Übersetzen und Dolmetschen im
20. Jahrhundert*. Berlin: Schriften des BDÜ

Book Suggestions

Translating specific topics:

- Alcaraz, Enrique and Hughes, Brian (2002) *Legal Translation Explained*. Manchester: St.Jerome Publishing
- Mayoral Asensio, Roberto (2003) *Translating Official Documents*. Manchester: St.Jerome Publishing

Book Suggestions

Terminology Work:

- Sager, Juan C. (1996) *A Practical Course in Terminology Processing*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing

Book Suggestions

Translation Theory and Research:

- Schäffner, Christina (2004) *Translation Research and Interpreting Research – Traditions, Gaps and Synergies*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Ltd.