

**Preparing for
the Chartered Institute of Linguists
Diploma in Translation
Examinations**

**A seminar aimed
at
candidates
and
course-providers**

September 2006

Preparing for the Diploma in Translation

The attached file contains a seminar which was delivered in London in September 2006. It focuses on the criteria used for assessing translation quality; the use of resources, both when preparing for the exam and during the exam, and common pitfalls when doing a translation in exam conditions. The languages used for illustrative purposes are English and Italian; however all the excerpts and examples are presented in such a way that they can be approached without any detailed knowledge of Italian.

We hope this seminar will be of interest both to tutors and to candidates preparing for the examination in any language combination.

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PREPARING FOR THE DIPLOMA IN TRANSLATION

As with any other professional exam, the Diploma in Translation requires focused preparation. Two essential aspects are involved:

1. learning how to translate to the appropriate level
2. passing the exam successfully

The techniques involved in the preparation for the two aspects are related; they are not identical however. No one can expect to pass the exam if they are not good translators. The converse however is not true, and a good translator will not necessarily pass the exam, or perform to the best of their abilities. It is essential therefore to consider the two different aspects when preparing for the exam.

Learning how to translate to the appropriate level is a fundamental requirement for success. This involves a clear awareness of the nature of the criteria used to assess translation quality. The following documents provide a detailed analysis of the criteria used, both in terms of general principles, and in terms of the specific criteria used to award a Pass or a Fail, and also a Merit or a Distinction.

It is important to appreciate that a competent / good translator is not simply one who understands and can handle all of the grammatical features of source and target languages. Linguistic knowledge is a fundamental requirement. It is not enough however, and must be supplemented by sound cultural knowledge, as well as general subject area knowledge for the semi-specialised options. Many candidates have difficulties because their background knowledge is inadequate. Preparation for the exam therefore must involve:

1. the building up of detailed knowledge of all of the linguistic features of both source and target languages
2. the building up of sound cultural and general subject area knowledge

The latter can be achieved in at least three ways:

1. reading newspapers / magazines / specialised publications regularly
2. reading books written as guides to specific countries such as Tobias Jones' *The Dark Heart of Italy* (Faber and Faber), Tim Parks' *Italian Neighbours* (Vintage) for Italian and Jeremy Paxman's *The English: A Portrait of a People* (Penguin) for English
3. carrying out detailed research on any cultural / background points when doing practice translations (using dictionaries / encyclopaedias / reference books / the Internet / informants)

Improving translation skills is a gradual process: starting with easy materials, and gradually moving on to more challenging material; working slowly and thoroughly at first (overchecking rather than underchecking). If time is limited, doing 30% of a translation thoroughly is much more productive than trying to struggle through the whole text, and producing a poor translation. Only good translators can work at speed and under pressure.

Passing the exam successfully is something which should be considered only when the candidate can systematically produce quality translations. Candidates who always try to produce their practice translations in the official time allocated stand little chance of improving. For the exam, a number of points need to be taken into consideration:

1. working in unfamiliar surroundings and conditions
2. working at speed
3. working in a stressful situation

The problems of stress and speed are very like the conditions encountered in a professional situation, where clients can make quite unreasonable demands regarding speed and quantity of work produced. Speed combined with quality comes with practice. But the basic principle should be: aim for quality first, then aim for speed.

The unfamiliarity of the surroundings and conditions will affect the stress levels (no opportunity for a coffee break, or for a quick run round the block to clear the brain). It will also affect the approach to the translation, because of, in particular:

1. the limited space available for working (small desk, no shelves etc)
2. the restrictions on resources
3. the non-availability of computers
4. the production in many cases of a handwritten paper

Candidates need to be well-prepared for working in these conditions, by practicing working in exam conditions (and this includes doing a translation with pen and paper, using only the resources which will be allowed).

For both learning to translate to the appropriate level, and for exam-specific preparation, candidates will find many useful tips in Douglas Robinson's Becoming a Translator (1997: Routledge) (even though the author does not discuss preparation for translation exams as such).

The following material is divided into several sections:

- The criteria for assessing translation quality: General Principles
- The criteria for assessing translation quality: What leads to a Fail?
- The criteria for assessing translation quality: What is required to earn a Merit?
- The criteria for assessing translation quality: What is required to earn a Distinction?
- Using Resources
 - During the exam
 - When preparing for the exam
- Translator's Notes
- Pitfalls

A number of passages follow, analysed to illustrate pitfalls, problems and their solutions:

1. Paper 1: General translation, Italian to English
2. Paper 1: General translations, English to Italian (2 texts)

The criteria for assessing translation quality: General Principles

The Diploma in Translation assesses and rewards basic professional competence in translating from any language into English or from English into any other language. Examinations in other combinations not using English are also possible.

The underlying assessment principle recognises, in practical terms and in the context of the texts set for the examination, what constitutes a professionally acceptable standard of translation.

“Professionally acceptable” is generally taken to mean of a standard acceptable for submission to a commercial client. For a translation to be deemed ‘professionally acceptable’, it should be functionally accurate and stylistically appropriate and should faithfully render the style and meaning of the original piece of writing. It should, therefore, have the intended effect on the target audience, as the original did on the source audience.

Candidates need to use analytical language skills and be able to handle specialised and semi-specialised terminology in both the source and target languages. They should bear in mind the differences in the relevant norms of the two languages in question. Where appropriate, they should respect any originality of syntax, vocabulary, etc in the source text and find equivalents for the connotations, the cultural significance of any facets of civilisation (local custom, manners, food, clothing, etc.), natural usage, colloquialisms, phatic language, routine formulations, common metaphors and technical terms in the target text. Candidates are expected to write in their target language at mother tongue level, reaching a high standard of accuracy.

What is basic professional competence?

What is a standard acceptable for submission to a commercial client?

- A faultless translation is not expected
- Some editing is expected
- Position envisaged: reasonably competent junior translator
- The seriousness of errors: absolute v. relative / the seriousness of an error in relation to a specific context (the same error can be serious in one context, minor in another)
- Approaches ruled out: gist translation, broad/loose semantic translation, adaptation

What does writing at mother tongue level mean?

- Not all native speakers write well / some native speakers write better than others
- Native speakers who normally write well do not necessarily write well when translating
- Native speakers may write well some types of text, and others badly
- No native speaker is beyond problems of interference from the SL
- Non-native speakers can write at mother tongue level – though many can’t

What is a high standard of accuracy when writing in the mother tongue?

- Using all grammatical features correctly (including tenses, grammatical words such as articles, agreements etc)
- Spelling words correctly
- Using punctuation correctly
- Respecting TT textual conventions

What does similarity of effect involve?

- Establishing the function of the text
- Establishing the style of the ST
- Establishing the register of the ST
- Seeing the ST from the ST reader's point of view

How important is specialised / semi-specialised terminology?

- Text function/type dictate the importance of terminology
- Terminology and accuracy (using either *arteries* or *veins* instead of *blood vessels* to translate *vasi sanguigni* is a fairly serious inaccuracy in a scientific text discussing the effects of diabetes)
- Terminology and appropriateness (using *higher blood pressure* instead of *hypertension* in a medical text with a target readership of health professionals is inappropriate)
- Terminology and tone (some subjects are highly sensitive and using the wrong term can cause serious offence/be considered offensive; for instance using *handicap* instead of *disability*; or using *i vecchi* instead of *gli anziani* to describe a group of old people)
- Terminology and availability of resources (being able to trace the appropriate terminology is dependant on having the appropriate resources)
- Terminology and Translator's notes

How important are cultural aspects?

How should candidates deal with cultural aspects?

- Item and/or text function/type dictate translation solution
- Using a TC equivalent (Number 10 / Palazzo Chigi)
- Explaining / amplifying / using a translator's note
- Quoting the item as in ST / importing foreign item into TT

Abbreviations used

ST: source text
TT: target text

SL: source language
TL: target language

SC: source culture
TC: target culture

Some key terms

Collocation: one of the more difficult notions for a language learner to come to grips with, this refers to the specific environment within which a particular word or group of words normally functions. The adjective *brown* for instance can be used to describe many things. In Italian however, the word *marrone*, though it is the exact equivalent, is not normally used to qualify hair. If *capelli marroni* is found in a text therefore, the reader might understand what the colour of the hair is but will realise that it is an improper use of the language or might assume that a child is talking, or perhaps a foreigner, who has not mastered fully the rules of language use.

Colloquialism: this does not necessarily refer to familiar language, but rather to set expressions which are often (though not always) impossible to translate literally. In the Italian / English combination, *Prendere il toro per le corna / To take the bull by the horns* is an example of a colloquial expression with a direct / word-for-word equivalent. *Prendere due piccioni con una fava / To kill two birds with one stone* is an example of a colloquial expression with an equivalent. *Morire in odore di santità* is an example of a colloquial expression which is specifically Italian, with no obvious equivalent in English.

Faux-ami: this describes lexical items which are identical / very similar in two different languages, but have meanings which are either entirely or partially different. Many words fall into this category, and there are dictionaries of faux-amis available for specific language combinations. For the English-Italian combination, *Eventually/eventualmente*, *pavement/pavimento* all fall into this category.

Metaphors: where a word or expression is used in a sense other than the literal, or in an unusual setting (*he is a tiger; the rocket ploughed the stars*). These can cause particular difficulties when trying to understand the ST. For example, *Le paste lunghe hanno dei destini coniugali diversi*. The word *coniugali* here has nothing to do with marriage. The author is simply talking about combinations. *Re* means king but does not have the same meaning when used in *re dei media* = media mogul.

Phatic language: this refers to those features in a text which are meant to establish / maintain communication. Some greetings for instance are simply used to acknowledge someone's presence, without a reply being expected (as is often the case with *How are you?*)

The criteria for assessing translation quality: What leads to a Fail?

General principle

Translations with 5% or more of the source text missing will automatically be awarded a Fail mark.

General Paper (600 words): 5% = 30 words

Semi-specialised papers (450 words): 5% = 23 words

A Pass is required for each of the 3 aspects of performance assessed

Aspects of performance

Aspect of Performance 1: Comprehension, Accuracy and Register – the correct transfer of information and evidence of complete comprehension.

Fail

The translation shows an inadequate grasp of the informational content. There are a number of inaccuracies, both major and minor, leading to information being conveyed wrongly at several points. There may also be serious omissions. The translation contains a number of clumsy or inappropriate renderings, which impair or distort the message. There may be some incorrect choice of register and terminology, and some idiomatic usage may not correspond to the intention or sense of the original.

Aspect of Performance 2: Grammar, Cohesion, Coherence and Organisation of work

Fail

The translation does not read like an original piece of writing; it may be stilted and incoherent with little attempt to modify the sentence structure of the original to the target language. There may be over-elaboration and excessive paraphrasing.

Aspect of Performance 3: Technical points relating to spelling, accentuation, punctuation and the transfer of dates, names, figures, etc

Fail

A considerable number of technical faults are present which would render even an otherwise good translation unacceptable in professional terms.

Note: Serious errors which may lead to a Fail

In a professional context, there are errors which are quite simply unforgivable. These are errors which could lead to serious consequences, for instance cause a company to lose a lot of money; cause a serious accident because the wrong figure was quoted; cause a machine to overload and break down because the wrong connections have been given; render experimental results meaningless because of incorrect information about the cohort; cause a death because the wrong dosage was quoted etc. Such errors can be the result of

one simple error: a punctuation problem; a missing digit; a missing letter (10g instead of 10mg); a mistranslated preposition; an incorrect pronoun, etc.

For instance: in a text reporting the results of a study on the effects of passive smoking, the novice translator who rendered *di almeno 40 anni* with *aged under 40* completely falsified the results of the study, just by mistranslating the preposition and adverb. In a scientific context, this is a very serious error. In an exam situation, a similar view would be taken, and the result is likely to be a Fail, regardless of the quality of the rest of the translation. Note that the seriousness of an error depends on the context, and the same error can be serious in one context, but minor in another.

The criteria for assessing translation quality: What is required to earn a Merit?

Aspect of Performance 1: Comprehension, Accuracy and Register – the correct transfer of information and evidence of complete comprehension.

Merit

The translation shows a good command of the subject matter although at times there is some under or over translation or a slight lack of clarity. The vocabulary, terminology and idiom chosen are appropriate throughout, though occasionally a more appropriate rendering than that given in the translation may be found. The register chosen is faithful to the register of the source text.

Aspect of Performance 2: Grammar, Cohesion, Coherence and Organisation of work

Merit

The translation is well organised, with good sentence structure and overall coherence. While not perfect, it has clearly been written as if it were an original piece of writing in the target language, with appropriate reorganisation of the information contained in the source text where necessary.

Aspect of Performance 3: Technical points relating to spelling, accentuation, punctuation and the transfer of dates, names, figures, etc

Merit

There are only minor technical lapses.

The criteria for assessing translation quality: What is required to earn a Distinction?

Aspect of Performance 1: Comprehension, Accuracy and Register – the correct transfer of information and evidence of complete comprehension.

Distinction

The translation shows an excellent command of the subject matter with accurate transfer of information throughout. The choice of language and register are entirely appropriate to the subject matter and to the spirit and intention of the original.

Aspect of Performance 2: Grammar, Cohesion, Coherence and Organisation of work

Distinction

The translation reads like a piece originally written in the target language. The sentence structure, grammar linkages and discourse are all entirely appropriate to the target language.

Aspect of Performance 3: Technical points relating to spelling, accentuation, punctuation and the transfer of dates, names, figures, etc

Distinction

The spelling, accentuation, punctuation, and transfer of dates, names and figures in the translation are faultless.

Using resources

During the exam

Candidates may use dictionaries and other reference works, including their own glossaries (Candidate Handbook)

Only **paper** dictionaries / reference material are allowed.

Amount / quantities / type allowed in: no restrictions - **but**: limited time available for checking / looking things up.

Essential requirements for accuracy:

- Always use bilingual **and** monolingual sources together
- Never rely on the bilingual dictionary alone
- Never use the bilingual dictionary to check the meaning of a lexical item
- Always use the monolingual dictionary to cross-check unfamiliar equivalents suggested in the bilingual dictionary
- Use sources which provide a context whenever possible

Essential requirements for speed:

- Familiarity with all resources used (no two dictionaries are presented in the same way)
- A high level of linguistic competence
- A high level of cultural / background knowledge
- Sound basic specialist knowledge (for science for instance, a sound knowledge of basic scientific procedures and processes is essential)

Minimum requirements:

- 1 SL monolingual dictionary (one which includes proper names)
- 1 general bilingual dictionary
- 1 TL monolingual dictionary (one which includes proper names)

Supplementary resources:

- thesaurus
- dictionary of idioms (for instance for English Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable ; for Italian Dizionari dei modi di dire della lingua italiana (BUR Biblioteca Univ. Rizzoli))
- encyclopaedia type works, general and specialised (for instance for Italian De Agostini's Enciclopedia della Scienza e della Tecnica; for English Philip's Science and Technology Encyclopaedia etc)
- Specialised dictionaries, monolingual and bilingual (NB: not just for the relevant specialisations. A business dictionary is often useful for the General paper for instance)

- Grammar books (SL for comprehension of less usual structures and features; and TL for points such as verb endings and forms, rules of agreement, word formation, punctuation etc)

When preparing for the exam

Always keep in mind two essential aims:

- Preparation for carrying out a translation in exam conditions
- Developing professional translation skills (translation quality and speed)
For success at the exam, both aims are important, and justify the use of extensive resources, many of which are not available during the exam.

Paper sources

As for the exam:

- Monolingual dictionaries, for SL and TL
- Bilingual dictionaries, general and specialised
- Encyclopaedias, general and specialised

These have drawbacks:

- No dictionary / encyclopaedia can be comprehensive
- None is totally accurate
- Entries can be rather misleading
- These resources can get outdated very quickly

There are other paper sources:

- Textbooks
- Manuals
- Catalogues
- Newspapers, magazines, journals

These have a number of advantages:

- They present lexical items in context, and related items will be presented together, therefore speeding the translation process
- They are much more likely to be up-to-date
- They are more likely to be accurate, as they will use the language of the specialisation, rather than the language that linguists feel to be correct

Non-paper resources

- Dictionaries and encyclopaedias on CD-ROM
These have the same advantages / drawbacks as paper dictionaries and encyclopaedias, with the added advantage of speed and flexibility.
- Human sources, i.e. client, fellow translators, specialists for the subject area
- On-line dictionaries and terminology banks
- Internet-based sources, including parallel texts and material in TL and SL on the same topic from specialist sources

These have some drawbacks:

- Availability is never guaranteed (some online dictionaries are often down; the technology can fail)
- Accuracy is variable, as anyone can put material up on the net, whether they are specialists or not (but dictionaries are often compiled by non-specialists, general dictionaries in particular)
- It can be quite difficult / time-consuming to get precise information from an informant

- Informants may give the information they feel they should give, rather than the information that is correct

They also have advantages:

- When on-line resources are working properly, searching and cross-checking is very quick
- The material is much more likely to be up-to-date (some on-line dictionaries are updated on a monthly basis)
- It is very easy to get material in context, and therefore obtain correct information
- Human resources are invaluable for clarifying ambiguous structures, culture-bound notions, puzzling references etc

For the purposes of developing linguistic knowledge, cultural knowledge of the SL and specialist knowledge, sources other than standard monolingual and bilingual dictionaries should be used extensively. There is a clear correlation between linguistic, cultural and specialist knowledge, and translation skills, including accuracy and speed.

Translator's notes

In a real life situation, professional translators sometimes have recourse to translator's notes where a text lacks clarity and it is not possible to consult its author and when there is need to inform a target audience of any issues that may affect the quality or presentation of a translation.

The use of translator's notes is permissible for all three papers, reflecting their use in a **professional** context to provide the target readership with an explanation or to resolve an issue in situ.

- Translator's notes are the exception rather than the rule. They should be used sparingly, and only if absolutely necessary.
- Translator's notes are not meant to be an opportunity for the translator to display their knowledge. Unnecessary translator's notes are likely to be penalised.
- In this professional exam, translator's notes should be addressed to the client and not to the examiner. Not every translation will require translator's notes.
- Translator's notes may appear at the bottom of the page as footnotes, at the end of the translation, or on a separate sheet. They do not need to be preceded with the heading 'Translator's note' (although this is standard practice in a professional context) since standard footnotes do not feature in the exam papers, and there is therefore no risk of confusion between author footnote and translator's note.
- Translator's notes may be used to indicate that there is / may be an error in the Source Text (spelling error; error in dates, figures or units quoted etc). The tone of the comment needs to be diplomatic, remembering that the assumed error may not actually be an error.
- Translator's notes may be used to indicate an ambiguity in the text which cannot be clarified (in a real-life situation, the translator would need to consult the client / the author of the Source Text).
- Translator's notes may be used when a needed equivalent cannot be traced, given the resources available at the time. The translator / candidate then needs to indicate the **specific** sources that could be consulted in order to solve the problem (a particular online dictionary; a website; a specialist etc). A generic translator's note such as: 'If I had access to the Internet, I could find...' would be deemed inappropriate.
- Translator's notes may be used to provide necessary information for the reader (for culture-bound notions for instance) if this information cannot be provided within the body of the translation (because it would be too cumbersome, or because it would break the flow of the text).
- Translator's notes are **not** meant to explain a translation problem or to justify the solution opted for.

PITFALLS

1. Time management and organisation
 1. Assuming there will be time to write a neat copy
 2. Leaving gaps unflagged
 3. Leaving alternative renderings unflagged
 4. Spending too long choosing the option for papers 2 & 3
 5. Changing options half-way through

2. Approach to ST
 1. Failing to establish function/style/register of ST
 2. Failing to use context of word / group of words / sentence to clarify meaning
 3. Failing to use background knowledge (cultural, technical etc) to clarify meaning
 4. Adopting a strictly linear approach / tunnel vision when reading the ST
 5. Failing to understand a syntactic structure
 6. Failing to understand less common grammatical words
 7. Failing to understand processes described
 8. Failing to see the importance of a particular item
 9. Failing to consider that a familiar lexical item may have a meaning other than the familiar one(s)

3. Use of resources
 1. Using the bilingual dictionary to clarify the meaning of an item
 2. Grabbing the first equivalent suggested
 3. Failing to consider that the source used may be incomplete / erroneous / misleading / out-of-date
 4. Failing to confirm the equivalent suggested in an appropriate monolingual source
 5. Relying exclusively on the bilingual dictionary

4. Approach to TT
 1. Leaving parts of the ST untranslated
 2. Adopting a strictly linear / tunnel vision approach
 3. Guessing inappropriately, either a meaning or an equivalent
 4. Avoiding the closest equivalent systematically
 5. Failing to see the TT from the TT reader's point of view
 6. Failing to stand back from the TT
 7. Attempting to translate into FL when writing skills are not of native speaker standard
 8. Failing to consider issues of style / register / text function
 9. Failing to address issues of cultural transfer
 10. Failing to convert figures / units of measurement when required
 11. Failing to edit out spelling and grammatical errors
 12. Failing to use punctuation and TT conventions appropriately

PITFALLS (explanation)

1. Time management and organisation

- i. For all 3 papers, time is at a premium. Doing the general paper in 3 hours, doing the semi-specialised papers in 2 hours, is challenging, particularly if things need to be looked up and resources need to be used. Producing the translation as a rough copy which is too rough to be presented as a professionally usable document (scruffy/illegible handwriting, crossing items out, using arrows, including various options for a particular rendering etc), on the assumption that there will be time to produce a neat copy is a risky gamble. Candidates regularly get caught out in this way because they run out of time. A useful definition for a professionally usable document is one that can be handed to a secretary with minimal/no knowledge of the TL for typing.
- ii. When translating, it is perfectly reasonable to leave difficult problems till later, and to get on with the rest of the translation first, as spending too much time on a tricky item can lead to the candidate being unable to finish the translation. It is vital however to flag all such gaps, otherwise they may well remain as permanent gaps (always remember the 5% rule leading to an automatic Fail)
- iii. When translating, it is perfectly reasonable to note alternative renderings which come to mind, leaving the final decision till later if the solution is not immediately obvious. However, it is vital to flag these, so that only one rendering remains. It is up to the candidate to choose the final rendering, not the examiner. If alternative renderings are offered, candidates are always penalised.
- iv. 2 hours is not a lot of time for tackling the semi-specialised options. Spending more than 10 minutes choosing between the 3 options is highly likely to mean that the candidate will run out of time. Very able candidates have been known to fail a semi-specialised option for this reason.
- v. Once the choice is made, it is extremely risky to change half-way through. Again, time is at a premium. The option should be chosen before the exam, or within the first 10 minutes.

2. Approach to ST

- i. In order to produce a TT which is accurate, and which achieves the same effect as the ST, it is essential to look at factors such as style and register, and to determine the function of the text, and of particular elements within the text
- ii. The meaning of words/groups of words/sentences is rarely black and white, and often depends on the context, both immediate and broader. It is also wise to remember that words can be used metaphorically rather than just literally
- iii. Background knowledge (subject matter, but also cultural) can play an important part in the interpretation of the meaning of words/groups of

- words/sentences. This can be particularly important when trying to work out what particular pronouns refer to.
- iv. No text is made up of separate units which would be contiguous, and independent from each other. Using tunnel vision when trying to understand a text is bound to lead to serious misinterpretations.
 - v. Texts are not just an assemblage of words. Syntax and word order are all vital features.
 - vi. A frequent problem is the mishandling of less usual grammatical words. Many candidates would benefit from a thorough study of more sophisticated grammatical features of the SL.
 - vii. Problems are often caused in the semi-specialised options because candidates fail to understand processes described or referred to, including very basic processes. It is essential to acquire a basic understanding of the fundamental notions of particular specialisms before attempting to do the exam.
 - viii. Some items/elements/aspects are vital within a specific text, and their mistranslation is likely to lead to a serious misrepresentation of the ST, and to a Fail (figures in a business text, the name of the precise species being studied in a scientific text, style in a literary text etc)
 - ix. It is always wise to assume that one's knowledge of the ST is imperfect, and in particular that a familiar item may have a meaning which was hitherto unfamiliar to the translator – and which may not be listed in the bilingual dictionary.

3. Use of resources

- i. No bilingual dictionary is perfect, and the only safe way to use bilingual dictionaries is to look upon them as a source of suggested equivalents, and this only when the full meaning of the item being looked up is absolutely clear
- ii. Where a particular word/entry is divided into sub-entries, it is wise to check each of these, even though the exercise may be tedious and time-consuming. Choosing the first equivalent suggested may be a sound idea – it is more likely than not to be unsound though.
- iii. Bilingual dictionaries are never perfect. They quickly get out-of-date, the entries may be incomplete (a particular meaning of a particular entry may have been left out), the equivalents suggested may be incorrect, or they may be correct in one context, but not in the context at hand.
- iv. Unless the bilingual dictionary has triggered a memory, and the translator is absolutely certain the equivalent suggested is the one needed, it is essential to crosscheck in a monolingual source.
- v. It is essential to combine monolingual and bilingual resources, and to combine dictionaries with other resources (such as encyclopaedias, which give lexical items in a broad context)

4. Approach to TT

- i. It is remarkably easy to leave parts of the ST untranslated, whether words, groups of words, titles, or even whole lines or sentences. 5% or more left untranslated means a Fail – so it is worth checking and double-checking
- ii. Translating the ST one bit at a time may be satisfying (good – I've done this bit, I can forget about it, let's move to the next one), but it invariably leads to inaccuracy, and to problems of cohesion and coherence, as the translator fails to take into account what came before the current bit, and what comes after the current bit
- iii. Working things out from the context and on the basis of background knowledge is very important. There are however situations where guessing without checking will lead the translator into serious difficulty, whether it is the meaning of an item, or an actual equivalent
- iv. The problem here is being able to distinguish between faux-amis and the best equivalent. Some people systematically assume that if an equivalent is very close, it must be a faux-ami. This is true in some cases, but not invariably so. There are situations where the best equivalent is the one that is the closest in form to the ST item.
- v. The most common problem faced by novice translators is the difficulty involved in seeing what they are writing from the point of view of the TT reader. Novice translators know what they are trying to say, and they cannot see that the reader will understand something different.
- vi. Distancing oneself from the TT is a vital skill, and it takes much practice.
- vii. The standard expected when writing in the TT is that of a good native speaker. Those candidates whose skills are not of that standard are bound to fail.
- viii. Candidates are expected to render the source text accurately. This relates to the semantic content, but also to issues of style, register and function, as defined in the task brief. The importance of each of these aspects will vary according to the type of text, and where it is not possible to render all aspects, the candidates will need to demonstrate that they are able to prioritize. In a literary text for instance, issues of style may take precedence over issues of semantic content (if this is the only way to preserve the rhythm which is an essential feature in the ST for instance)
- ix. Candidates need to demonstrate that they are aware of problems of cultural transfer, and that they can deal with these as the context demands, using equivalents, amplification and so on as appropriate
- x. Depending on the text type, failing to convert figures and units of measurement where appropriate may well lead to an automatic Fail.
- xi. a small number of spelling and grammatical errors will be tolerated. This includes the use of accents as well as the use of upper and lower case, and the correct use of agreements etc.

- xii. Candidates are expected to use punctuation appropriately, remembering that punctuation can alter the meaning of a sentence/text, and that some rules of punctuation are compulsory, though others are optional, and that these rules are not identical from one language to the other. The appropriate TT conventions must also be followed (for the presentation of dialogue in a literary text for instance).

An analysis of potential difficulties in a source text (ST)

PAPER 1: GENERAL TRANSLATION (Italian to English)

For information, not to be translated: the following text is from an article written by an Italian journalist for 'L'Europeo' published in September 1992. Translate into your target language to appear in a weekly magazine.

TRANSLATION TO BEGIN HERE:

Colpiti da un'insana voglia di tropici

5 Nel mondo del turismo internazionale c'è una bestia rara che gli antropologi del "tutto compreso" chiamano *homo esoticus italianus*. Fisicamente assomiglia a un turista qualsiasi, ovvero ha statura eretta e porta al collo, come appendice, una macchina fotografica.

10 Ma a differenza degli altri individui della sua specie, l'*homo esoticus italianus* è capace di stranezze. Pretende gli spaghetti alle vongole in Thailandia. Corre in Amazzonia in abito da sera e tacchi a spillo sperando in chissà che notti folli. Affronta traversate del Sahara come se andasse al bar dell'angolo.

15 Dopo anni di studi, gli esperti sono arrivati a una conclusione unanime. Questa: l'*homo esoticus italianus* è sicuramente appassionato di viaggi transcontinentali, ma raramente sa dove va, conosce poco la geografia, ignora tutto dei climi. Né, per carità, si preoccupa di informarsi. Così riesce a volare verso i Carabi in piena stagione degli uragani, alle Maldive in quella dei monsoni e se decide di arrampicarsi sulle Montagne Rocciose d'America non sta tanto a guardare se è estate piena, quando da quelle parti il sole ammazza anche le pietre.

20 Voglia di paradisi. Eccome. Il conto è presto fatto. Secondo un'inchiesta Doxa del luglio scorso un italiano su tre coltiva il romantico mito di Gauguin, sogna di vivere in un'isola tropicale l'esistenza avventurosa e felice che non ha.

25 Ma perfino uno come Roberto Brunelli del Movimento Consumatori, che di solito cerca di tutelarli da truffe non indifferenti, sostiene che i turisti italiani son fatti di una pasta assai particolare.

30 "Sono tutt'altro che grandi viaggiatori, non hanno ancora imparato come si fa", dice. "Vogliono l'avventura, ma anche tutte le comodità, l'aereo sotto casa, il Brasile a un'ora di volo, l'aria condizionata nel tucul in pieno deserto. E guai soprattutto se non trovano gli spaghetti cucinati al dente. Come li fa la mamma. Anzi meglio".

35 Questa insistenza sul cibo può apparire artificiosa, ma le cose stanno così, né più né meno. Un inglese o un francese mangia quel che c'è da mangiare. Un americano sta forse un po' più attento all'igiene. A un tedesco basta mettergli in tavola patate e birra in quantità.

Quella è gente che non viaggia per mangiare, ma per prendere sole, fare bagni, conoscere usi e costumi locali.

40 Con gli italiani niente da fare. Degli usi e costumi se ne fregano, bagni quel che basta, sole
idem tanto per tornare con la tintarella esotica. Ma alla pasta non si rinuncia, quella ci deve
essere per forza, pasta e pizza, a qualsiasi latitudine. “È un’abitudine di cui gli italiani non
sanno proprio fare a meno”, dice sorridendo Francesco Bassini, uno degli uomini marketing
della milanese Turisanda. “Noi abbiamo un villaggio nello Sri Lanka, dove per legge è
45 proibito importare prodotti alimentari. Abbiamo dovuto acquistare macchinari per fare gli
spaghetti, altrimenti rischiavamo di perdere la clientela italiana”.

50 Agli agenti di viaggio poco importa sapere se questi cordoni ombelicali sono figli del
mammismo italiano piuttosto che delle gite domenicali, delle scampagnate fuori porta, dei
pranzi di nozze per cui non c’è festa se non si mangia tanto e bene. Loro, gli agenti di
viaggio, si limitano ad arrendersi all’evidenza e si organizzano per offrire ai clienti ciò che i
clienti desiderano.

55 Eccoli là, gli italiani. Agli antipodi ma con la caffettiera appresso. E poi per stare sempre
imbracati. Cercano l’evasione, ma viaggiano in gruppo, fanno migliaia di chilometri ma per
lo più per conoscere altri italiani, parlare italiano, mangiare italiano portandosi dietro
l’occorrente per sentirsi a casa il più possibile.

60 Che farci? L’*homo esoticus italianus* è così, carnefice e vittima di una esigenza collettiva.
Solo che non sa dove va, e quando ci è arrivato si chiede non di rado: ma io che ci faccio
qui?

Strategy, terms of reference, audience

Candidates need to adopt a strategy, decide on an audience, and reflect the author’s style. The principal conceit of the text is the Italian package tourist as a species and the phrase *homo esoticus italianus* line 3 is key to setting the style and author’s attitude to the subject. The obvious tactic is to transfer the phrase as it is, given the reference to anthropologists. In this case the translator needs to consider marking it out as unusual, e.g. by using italics, as the author does, or inverted commas, so that the reader recognises that this is not ‘normal’ usage.

Failure to consider issues of style/register/text function

Having decided on the approach to translating the phrase *homo esoticus italianus* **line 3**, the translator needs to bear this in mind in the rest of the translation, for example the use of pronouns referring to this phrase in the next sentence (he, she, it, they?) and subsequent consistency of these, otherwise the cohesion of the text will be seriously impaired.

...*per carità* **line 14** The translator needs to have an awareness of the register the author is writing in.

**You have got to be joking* is far too informal.

Compare:

God forbid This is much nearer what is required.

Dangers of linear translation

Candidates are sometimes tempted to follow the word order of the Italian resulting in unnatural-sounding or stilted English:

...truffe non indifferenti **line 25**

*...no small rip-offs

*...not inconsiderable swindling

Loro, gli agenti di viaggio **line 49**

**They, the travel agents'*

The author is using a pronoun for emphasis, a strategy that is not available to writers of English, so the translator needs to use a different approach, perhaps eventually deciding that emphasis is not necessary here.

Questa: l'homo esoticus italianus è sicuramente appassionato di viaggi transcontinentali **line 12**

This construction is not possible in English:

*This: homo esoticus italianus is undoubtedly an enthusiast of transcontinental travel

Compare:

This is that homo esoticus italianus really does love transcontinental travel

Homo esoticus italianus really does love transcontinental travel

(In this case the candidate may feel that the emphatic loss from omitting *Questa* is amply compensated by *really does love*.)

Namely that homo esoticus italianus really does love transcontinental travel

Ma perfino uno come Roberto Brunelli **line 24**

**However even one like Roberto Brunelli*

Compare:

But even someone like Roberto Brunelli

...sole idem **line 39**

*...the sun idem

Apart from being incorrect register, this is meaningless. Compare:

...the same goes for sunbathing

Using a close lexical equivalent

Adhering slavishly to the original is often a strategy adopted by candidates when they do not know how to approach a phrase, but this can produce a stilted, unnatural-sounding version, e.g.

...il sole ammazza anche le pietre **line 17**. Any version involving rocks being 'withered', 'tortured' or 'destroyed' by the sun will not sound natural and it is necessary to adopt a more radical approach, compare:

...you could fry an egg on the rocks.

...sostiene che i turistici italiani **line 25**

**...sustaining that Italian tourists*

Compare:

...maintains that Italian tourists

...l'aereo sotto casa **line 29**

**...an aircraft outside the house*

Compare:

...an airport nearby

The dangers of sticking to the literal meaning of a word/group of words

...se questi cordoni ombelicali sono figli del mammismo italiano **line 46**

This phrase is problematic because it is an unusual mixture of metaphors in the original.

Attempts to render this literally are likely to result in something that sounds very un-English, e.g.

**...umbilical cords are connected to the usual Italian apron strings*

or that is simply meaningless:

**...umbilical cord facilities exist for children with excessive attachment to their mothers.*

It is safer simply to refer to the concept and to steer clear of anything figurative here.

...carnefice e vittima di una esigenza collettiva **line 58**

The cliché-like force of the Italian is lost if it is rendered literally, giving an effect that is far too strong, and almost shocking:

**...persecutor and victim of the common needs*

**...torturer and victim*

**...perpetrator and victim of the herding instinct*

The translator consequently needs to adopt a different approach as the effect in the two languages is not equivalent.

...ma le cose stanno così ne più ne meno **line 33**

A rendering such as:

**...things are like that, no more and no less*, though not 'incorrect' shows inexperience on the part of the translator, and a lack of judgement when to be faithful and when it is not so important.

Dangers of avoiding the closest equivalent

...il conto è presto fatto **line 20**

This is straightforward in the context, however candidates may be tempted to stray too far from the actual meaning:

**...it does not take much to add two and two together*

...the figures speak for themselves

...after all things considered

Careless reading of the ST: inaccuracy

This type of error is self-explanatory. Careless errors are easy to make, such as those caused by false friends, but they can have very serious repercussions for meaning:

...*ignora tutto dei climi* **line 14** means
...*knows nothing about the climate* and not
**ignores everything about climates*

tutt'altro che grandi viaggiatori **line 28**

**They are altogether great travellers*: this version says the exact opposite of what the author intended, i.e.
they are anything but great travellers.

non sa dove va **line 59**. Candidates may be tempted to over-complicate a sentence like this, or simply to misread it.

**does not know where to go*

la geografia **line 14**. Candidates may misread this due to carelessness, rendering it **the geography* rather than simply *geography*.

Inappropriate guessing/lack of checking

It is easy to fall into the trap of wrongly guessing the meaning of a word, particularly when time is limited, e.g. *statura eretta* **line 4** does not mean straight-backed, but erect.

nel tucul in pieno deserto **line 30**

**in the oasis in the middle of the desert*

Compare:

in their 'tucul' in the middle of the desert

A 'tucul' is actually a type of hut. The second candidate, while not being able to find out what a 'tucul' actually is, has not introduced any incorrect information into the sentence, unlike the first one.

Failure to stand back from the TT

Candidates may fail to grasp the author's meaning in the context, render words or phrases literally, and then fail to examine their rendering in the context of the translation as a whole, e.g.

antropologi del tutto compreso **line 2**.

Several candidates failed to connect this phrase with the subject of the passage (package holidays) and translated it misleadingly:

**all inclusive anthropologists*

**anthropologists of all-inclusive types*

**anthropologists of all-inclusive holiday packages*
**those who study all-inclusive holiday packages*

Similarly *al bar dell'angolo* **line 9** may cause problems because it is deceptively easy to translate. Candidates may fail to give it enough thought in context, producing renderings such as:

**the pub around the corner*
**just popping out for a drink*
**at the bar on the corner*

come appendice **line 4**

**wears a camera around the neck, like an appendix*

Failure to consider TT from reader's point of view

The passage contains much that is culture-specific, for example *spaghetti alle vongole* **line 8** and *al dente* **line 31**.

It is quite acceptable for the translator to simply transfer these phrases, provided s/he believes that the reader will understand them. If not, an English version must be given, but this may be in the form of a footnote, so as not to lose the impact of the Italian or break up the text.

agli antipodi **line 53**

The meaning of this depends on the geographical location of the reader. The translator will need to make sure that his/her version will have the same effect for readers in Australia, for example, as for the audience of the original article.

chilometri **line 54**

Are readers familiar with kilometers? Will this need converting to miles?

Montagne Rocciose d'America **line 16**

The author, who was writing for an Italian audience, felt it necessary to explain where these mountains are. An English-speaking audience might be expected to be fairly familiar with *The Rockies* and not need further explanation.

The need for background knowledge: problems of interpretation

The translator may not necessarily be familiar with a referent in the translation, e.g.

Doxa **line 20**

but enough information can be derived from the context for the translator to transfer the reference and to decide whether the reader will need additional explanation.

Movimento Consumatori **line 24**

In this case, the translator can give a translation:

Consumer Movement and, as above, decide whether additional explanation is needed.

Furthermore in *della milanese Turisanda* **line 43**

the translator may not know that *Turisanda* is a travel company, but there is enough information in the text to tell him/her that it is a company in Milan, which should be sufficient information for the reader.

Poor handling of technical aspects of the text

Introducing errors into the text unnecessarily:

* *Gauguin (an 18th century novelist)*

The candidate should ask him/herself whether it is really necessary to add extra information (would the reader need further clarification?), and if so, should make sure that it is accurate.

Incorrect transfer of information:

* *homo esoticus italianis* **line 3**

* *Roberto Bruneli* **line 24**

Incorrect spelling of something that was spelt correctly in the original, or incorrect transfer of figures such as dates should be avoided at all costs. It gives a very bad impression of the translator, suggesting a lack of attention to detail, and should be regarded very seriously.

An analysis of problems encountered when producing the target text (TT)

PAPER 1: GENERAL TRANSLATION (English to Italian)

This short biography of Mick Jagger, the front man of the Rolling Stones, was taken from the following website: <http://www.sing365.com>. Translate into your target language for a music website.

The celebrated singer of the Rolling Stones, Mick Jagger – born Michael Philip Jagger on 26 July 1943 in Dartford, Kent, England – has become less a pop star than a media icon. Initially a shy, middle-class student at the London School of Economics, his love of blues, distinctive vocal style and charismatic stage persona marked him out as an original. The image of Jagger has arguably been as crucial to the ultimate long-term success of the Rolling Stones as the quality of their songwriting and music. The antithesis of the pretty-boy lead vocalists of the era, Jagger’s demeanour, rubber lips and scarecrow body were initially greeted with bemusement by the pop magazines of the time. What Jagger did was to reinforce those apparent pop star deficiencies and, with remarkable effect, transform them into commodities. The lascivious stage presence was emphasized to such a degree that Jagger became both an appealing and strikingly odd-looking pop star. His self-reconstruction even extended as far as completely altering his accent.

Jagger’s capacity to outrage the elder members of the community in the 60s was perfected in his highly energetic dervish-like stage persona, anti-authoritarian stance and unromantic song-writing. In songs such as “(I Can’t Get No) Satisfaction”, “Get Off Of My Cloud” and “19th Nervous Breakdown”, Jagger was irreverent about sex, women, religion and even life itself. He was, undoubtedly, one of rock’s most underrated and nihilistic lyricists. The force of his negative catechism was, of course, complemented by the musical contribution of Keith Richards, the architect behind the Rolling Stones’ most memorable melodies. Jagger was also assisted by the quality of his players, especially Bill Wyman, Charlie Watts, Brian Jones and, later, Mick Taylor. From the mid-60s onwards the rebellion implicit in Jagger’s lyrics was reflected in increasingly bizarre real life situations. From urinating against an East London garage wall to drug sessions and short-term imprisonment, Jagger came to embody the changing social values and bohemian recklessness that characterized the rock culture of the 60s. It must also be said that he performed a similar role in the 70s when his broken marriage, jet-set romances and millionaire seclusion in exotic climes typified the complacency of the musical elite of the period.

The barometer of his time, Jagger yet resisted the temptation to branch out from the Rolling Stones into too many uncharted areas. An appearance in the movie Ned Kelly revealed that he was unable to come up with a convincing Australian/Irish accent. The experiment was not repeated. Jagger was even less concerned about expressing himself in a literary form, unlike others of his generation. The most articulate of the Rolling Stones has frankly admitted that he could not even remember sufficient details of his life to pen a ghosted biography.

35 That peculiar combination of indolence and disinterest may have kept the Rolling Stones
together as a performing unit, for Jagger studiously avoided customary rock star solo
outings for virtually 25 years. When he finally succumbed to the temptation in the late 80s,
the results were insubstantial. Apart from a small handful of tracks, most notably the driving
“Just Another Nigh”, the albums “She’s The Boss” and “Primitive Cool” proved
40 disappointing. Jagger’s third solo album, 1993’s “Wandering Spirit”, left his critics once
again unmoved.

Jagger once stated that he would retire before middle age for fear that the Rolling Stones
might become an anachronistic parody of themselves. These days such fears appear to
have been banished as the band are still recording and undertake regular high-grossing US
45 and European stadium tours. Away from the band the new millennium saw a blitz of
Jagger-related stories, including his high profile separation from Jerry Hall, his production
debut on the movie “Enigma”, and a credible new solo album, “Goddess In The Doorway”.

PAPER 1: GENERAL TRANSLATION (English to Italian)

This is an extract from Status Anxiety by Alain de Botton, published in 2004. The extract is taken from a chapter entitled “Art” and quotes the poet and critic Matthew Arnold, Professor of Poetry at Oxford in the 1860s. Translate for a book publisher in the country of your target language.

What is art good for? The question was in the air in Britain in the 1860s and, according to many commentators, the answer was: not very much. It wasn't art that had made the great industrial towns, laid the railways, dug the canals, expanded the empire and made Britain pre-eminent among nations. Indeed, art seemed capable of sapping the very qualities that had made these achievements possible; prolonged contact with it risked encouraging effeminacy, introspection, homosexuality, gout and defeatism. In 1865, John Bright, MP for Birmingham, described cultured people as a pretentious cabal whose only claim to distinction was 'a smattering of the two dead languages of Greek and Latin'. The Oxford academic Frederic Harrison held an equally caustic view of the benefits of prolonged communion with literature, history or painting. 'Culture is a desirable quality in a critic of new books, and sits well on a possessor of belles lettres,' he conceded, but 'as applied to everyday life or politics, it means simply a turn for small fault-finding, love of selfish ease, and indecision in action. The man of culture is one of the poorest mortals alive. For simple pedantry and want of good sense no man is his equal. No assumption is too unreal, no end is too unpractical for him.'

When these practically minded disparagers looked around for a representative of art's many deficiencies, they could find few more tempting targets than the poet and critic Matthew Arnold. He had the impudence to keep hinting, in a variety of newspaper articles, that art might be one of the most important pursuits of life. This in an age when for the first time one could travel from London to Birmingham in a single morning and Britain had earned itself the title of workshop of the world. The Daily Telegraph, stout upholder of industry and monarchy, mockingly accused him of trying to lure the hard-working, sensible people of the land 'to leave their shops and duties behind them in order to recite songs, sing ballads and read essays'.

Arnold accepted the ribbing with good grace until, in 1869, he was goaded into writing a systematic, book-length defence of what he believed art was for and why exactly it had such an important function to play in life – even for a generation that had witnessed the invention of the foldaway umbrella and the steam engine. Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy* began by acknowledging some of the charges laid at art's door. In the eyes of many, it was nothing more, than 'a scented salve for human miseries, a religion breathing a spirit of cultivated inaction. It is often summed up as being not practical or – as some critics more familiarly put it – all moonshine'.

All great artists are, said Arnold, imbued with 'the aspiration to leave the world better and happier than they find it'. They may not always embody such an aspiration in an overtly political message, they may not even be conscious of such an aspiration, and yet, within

their work, there will almost always be a protest against the state of things and so an effort to correct our insights or to educate us to perceive beauty, to help us understand pain or to reignite our sensitivities, to nurture our capacity for empathy or to rebalance our moral perspective through sadness or laughter. Arnold concluded his argument with pronouncement upon which this chapter is built. Art, said Arnold, is 'the criticism of life'.

The dangers of linear translation

This approach tends to see the ST as a succession of more or less disconnected bits, and often leads to:

Problems of **emphasis**, because the TT inappropriately **follows the clause order** of the ST:

The celebrated singer of the Rolling Stones, Mick Jagger... line 1

**Il celebre/osannato cantante dei Rolling Stones, Mick Jagger...*

Compare with the more natural clause order, where the name is given first:

Mick Jagger, il celebre cantante dei Rolling Stones...

Problems of **cohesion**, again because the TT inappropriately **follows the clause order** of the ST:

...they could find few more tempting targets than the poet and critic Matthew Arnold. He had the impudence to keep hinting... line 17 (2)

**...riuscirono a trovare ben pochi bersagli più allettanti del poeta e critico Matthew Arnold. Egli aveva l'impudenza di...*

Compare:

...non riuscirono a trovare ben pochi bersagli più allettanti del poeta e critico Matthew Arnold che aveva l'impudenza di...

Where the two sentences have been turned into one coherent sentence.

His self-reconstruction even extended as far as completely altering his accent lines 11 and 12

**La sua auto-ricostruzione è arrivata al punto di cambiare completamente accento...*

Compare with the properly coherent:

Nella costruzione del suo personaggio, si è spinto al punto da cambiare completamente accento...

Problems of **style**, as the linear rendering, using the same grammatical categories and word order as the ST, comes across as awkward or cumbersome:

What Jagger did was to reinforce... lines 8 and 9

**Ciò che Jagger fece fu di rafforzare...*

Compare:

La reazione di Jagger fu quella di rafforzare...

Where the relative construction is replaced by a much more natural nominal one.

The dangers of using a close lexical equivalent

Opting for an equivalent which is very like the source lexical item may be the right decision. It is important to be aware of potential difficulties though:

Problems of **accuracy** may follow:

...that had made these achievements possible... lines 4 and 5 (2)

**...che avevano reso possibili questi risultati/obiettivi/traguardi.*

Compare:

...che avevano reso possibili queste conquiste...

...no end is too unpractical for him. line 15 (2)

**...nessuna fine / nessun finale è poco pratico per lui.*

Compare:

...nessun fine è poco pratico per lui.

The most articulate of the Rolling Stones... line 32

**Il più articolato dei Rolling Stones...*

This is a classical faux-ami, and the only solution is amplification, given the lack of an obvious single word equivalent:

Il Rolling Stones con maggior facilità di espressione...

Lyrics

**liriche*

This should be:

testi

Keith Richards, the architect behind the melodies... lines 19

**Keith Richards, l'architetto dietro le melodie...*

Architetto is another partial faux-ami, and the Italian sentence tells the reader that KR was an architect – which he wasn't. There is also a problem of **appropriateness**, as *dietro* is not normally used in this context.

Compare:

Keith Richards, che ha creato le melodie...

Where a simple transposition to a verb, modulating from the action to the person, provides a neat and accurate solution.

To such a degree

**a un tal grado*

Much more appropriate would be:

A tal punto

The resulting TT may also come across as translationese, or even nonsense:

His unromantic song-writing... line 14 and 15

**le sue parole non romantiche...*

Compare:

Le sue canzoni, con testi/parole per niente romantici/romantiche ...

Sue parole on its own (as opposed to *I testi delle sue canzoni*) is very misleading, and the reader is likely to understand this as meaning “the things he said”, rather than “the words of his songs”. More seriously, *non romantiche*, which attempts to replicate the English structure, is very awkward, and therefore inappropriate.

...described cultured people as a pretentious cabal...line 7 (2)

**...descrisse le persone colte come una cabala pretenziosa...*

Compare:

...descrisse le persone colte come una combriccola/conventicola/cricca pretenziosa...

There is also a danger of grabbing the first equivalent suggested by the dictionary:

...whose only claim to distinction was ‘a smattering of...line 7 (2)

**...la cui unica pretesa per distinguersi / rivendicazione di originalità / scusa per emergere / prerogativa...*

Compare:

...il cui unico merito / vanto era ...

The dangers of avoiding the closest equivalent

Avoiding at all costs / systematically an equivalent which is very like / identical to the source lexical item can lead to inaccuracy, inappropriateness, and even nonsense:

...risked encouraging effeminacy, introspection, homosexuality, gout and defeatism. lines 5 and 6 (2)

**... rischiava di promuovere / portare a / alimentare / provocare manifestazione di modi effeminati /*

scarsa virilità, introspezione, omosessualità, pessimismo e arrendevolezza.

Compare:

...rischiava di incoraggiare l'effeminatezza, l'introspezione, l'omosessualità, la gotta e il disfattismo.

...described cultured people as a pretentious cabal...line 7 (2)

**...descrisse le persone colte come una combriccola presuntuosa / arrogante / saccente...*

Compare:

...descrisse le persone colte come una combriccola pretenziosa...

...according to many commentators... line 2 (2)

**...secondo molti cronisti / osservatori / esperti / critici di letteratura moderna...*

Compare:

...secondo molti commentatori...

...an equally caustic view... line 9 (2)

**...un'opinione altrettanto pungente / mordace / sarcastica / poco ortodossa...*

Compare:

...un'opinione altrettanto caustica...

For simple pedantry and ... line 13 (2)

**In quanto a semplice saccenteria...*

Compare:

In quanto a semplice pedanteria...

In the eyes of many... line 29 (2)

**Era opinione diffusa / Erano in molti a pensare che...*

Compare:

Agli occhi di molti...

...our capacity for empathy... line 38 (2)

**...la nostra capacità di compenetrazione / spirito empatico / solidarismo / simpatia / capacità di comprendere gli altri...*

Compare:

...la nostra capacità di empatia...

The dangers of careless reading of the ST

It is very easy to miss important words in the ST, or to add some in order to fit with a rushed interpretation. It is also very easy to misinterpret the ST because of the word order.

...in the 1860s... line 1 (2)

**...negli anni '60 / nella seconda metà del XIX secolo / alla fine degli anni 1860 / intorno al 1860 / nella seconda metà dell'Ottocento.*

Compare:

...nel decennio 1860-1869 / nel decennio che seguì il 1860 / negli anni '60 dell'800. (this last one is slightly awkward)

It wasn't art that had made the great industrial towns, laid the railways, dug the canals, expanded the empire and made Britain pre-eminent among nations. lines 2-4 (2)

**...a costruire la ferrovia o a scavare i canali che hanno reso invece la Gran Bretagna...,*

**...non era nemmeno grazie all'arte...che si erano costruiti i canali che avevano contribuito all'espansione dell'impero britannico e collocato la Gran Bretagna...,*

**...ed ampliato l'impero rendendo così l'Inghilterra...*

Compare:

Non era stata l'arte ad aver creato le grandi città industriali, costruito le ferrovie, scavato i canali, ampliato l'impero e reso la Gran Bretagna superiore alle altre nazioni.

...of what he believed art was for and why exactly it had such an important function to play in life. lines 26 and 27 (2)

**...lo scopo dell'arte, spiegando esattamente perché avesse una funzione così importante nella vita..*

Compare:

...su quello che, a suo avviso, fosse lo scopo dell'arte e i motivi per cui avesse una funzione così importante nella vita.

The dangers of inappropriate guessing / lack of checking

This is a common trap for the unwary, and particularly so in an exam situation, due to stress / pressure of time:

Oxford academic **line 8 (2)**

**studioso ossoniense / oxoniense / oxfordiano / ossoniano* (non existent)

Compare:

l'accademico di Oxford

...critic of new books **line 10 (2)**

**...critica / recensione di libri nuovi / libri contemporanei / letteratura contemporanea*

Compare:

...critico di libri nuovi

...there will almost always be a protest against... **line 32 (2)**

**...ci sarà sempre una protesta contro...*

Compare:

...ci sarà quasi sempre una protesta contro...

Failure to establish function / style / register of ST

...the answer was: not very much. It wasn't art that... **line 2 (2)**

**...la risposta era: non a molto poiché non era stata l'arte...*

Compare:

**...la risposta era: non a molto. Non era stata l'arte...*

...for a representative of art's many deficiency... **line 15 (2)**

**...un degno rappresentante / l'esponente più illustre delle molteplici lacune dell'arte...*

Compare:

...un rappresentante delle numerose lacune dell'arte...

Failure to consider that a familiar lexical item may have a meaning other than the familiar one(s)

Indeed, art seemed... **line 4 (2)**

**In effetti / Eppure / Invece / Tuttavia / Certamente, sembrava che l'arte*

Compare:

Anzi / Al contrario, sembrava che l'arte...

FAILURE TO UNDERSTAND VERB TENSES

He had the impudence to keep hinting... **lines 18 (2)**

**Ebbe l'impudenza di...*

Compare:

Aveva l'impudenza di...

This in an age when for the first time one could travel from London to Birmingham... line 19 (2)

**E questo in un'epoca in cui per la prima volta si poté viaggiare da Londra a Birmingham...*

Compare:

E questo in un'epoca in cui per la prima volta era possibile / si poteva andare da Londra a Birmingham...

It wasn't art that had made the great industrial... line 2 (2)

**Non è stata l'arte che ha contribuito...*

Compare:

Non era l'arte che aveva contribuito a...

He had the impudence to keep hinting...that art might be one of... line 18 (2)

**Egli ebbe l'insolenza di continuare ad accennare...che l'arte potrebbe essere uno dei...*

Compare:

Aveva l'insolenza di continuare ad accennare...che l'arte potesse essere uno dei...

Failure to use context of word / group of words / sentence to clarify meaning

... sensible people of the land 'to leave their shops and duties behind them... line 22 and 23(2)

**...i sensibili contadini / la popolazione della campagna / la gente della terra 'ad abbandonare le loro botteghe e i loro doveri...*

Compare:

...gli assennati cittadini / conterranei 'ad abbandonare le loro botteghe e i loro doveri

Failure to stand back from the TT

Foldaway umbrella lines 28 (2)

**ombrello chiudibile / richiudibile / piegabile*

Compare:

ombrello pieghevole

...and made Britain pre-eminent among nations... lines 3 and 4 (2)

**...e aveva reso la Gran Bretagna preminente tra le nazioni...*

Compare:

...aveva reso la Gran Bretagna superiore alle altre nazioni... or

...aveva fatto della Gran Bretagna una nazione di spicco...

Failure to consider the local context often leads to inappropriateness, due to the use of unsuitable collocations. It can also lead to serious problems of cohesion

**incapace di prendere un accento...*

where *di prendere* should be replaced by *di riprodurre*

Failure to consider the register leads to both inappropriateness and inaccuracy

...some of the charges laid at art's door. **lines 29 (2)**

*...alcune delle accuse fatte all'arte.

Compare:

...alcune delle accuse mosse / rivolte all'arte.

moonshine **line 32 (2)**

*una montagna di fesserie / un mucchio/mare di fesserie / un sacco di ciance

Compare:

Fandonie / Bagatelle

Failure to consider issues of style / register / text function

The decision to not 'translate' quotations as such obviously has an impact on the accuracy of the translation.

...sensible people of the land 'to leave their shops and duties...' **line 22 (2)**

*...gli assennati conterranei affinché 'lasciassero alle loro spalle...'

Compare:

...gli assennati conterranei 'ad abbandonare le loro botteghe e i loro doveri...'

...imbued with 'the aspiration to leave the world better and happier than they find it'. **line 33 (2)**

*...'aspirazione a lasciare un mondo migliore e più felice di quello che avevano trovato'.

Compare:

*...'aspirazione a lasciare un mondo migliore e più felice di quello che trovano / hanno trovato.

Failure to consider the text from the reader's point of view can lead to serious inaccuracy

Writing down (and leaving) double renderings: *gruppo / squadra; negozio / boutique*

Poor handling of technical aspects of the text

This includes spelling and grammatical errors:

Federic instead of **Frederic**.

Deficenze instead of *deficienze*

Un'accademico instead of *un accademico*

Qual'è instead of *qual è*

Translating titles / proper names where this is not appropriate:

*19a *depressione nervosa*

(songs by the Rolling Stones are known by their English titles in Italy)

**La Scuola di Economia di Londra*

The London School of Economics is a very prestigious institution, and would be unrecognisable under the translated Italian version suggested. The solution here is to simply use the English name, or even the common acronym LSE.

Di origini borghesi, all'inizio era uno studente timido della London School of Economics / LSE

Misquoting titles:

**Get off my cloud*

instead of

Get off of my cloud

Inappropriately using ST conventions

Born in Dartford, Kent, England...

**nato a Dartford, Kent, Inghilterra...*

instead of the appropriate textual convention in Italian

nato a Dartford, nella contea inglese del Kent / nel Kent, in Inghilterra ...