

Institute of Linguists Educational Trust (IoLET)
2010 International Diploma of Bilingual Communication (IDBC)
Modules 1, 2, 3 and 4
General Report on Candidates' Performance

Module 1 – Summary in Chinese

This Module requires candidates to produce a focused written Chinese summary, in the form of a report, a letter, or an article, based on a dossier of four or five texts in English. Passes are awarded to those who have the ability to convey the meaning of the original texts adequately with only a few language faults and errors. Distinctions are awarded to candidates who are able to provide a text that is fully usable and fit for the purpose as defined by the 'Candidate's Task Brief'.

This year candidates were required to write an article on travel, based on the information given in four English source texts. The target audience was readers of a specific journal.

Some candidates demonstrated ability to understand the source texts by identifying relevant material and providing a structured, balanced and cohesive account in Chinese.

鎊 written as “磅” was considered a serious mistake.

Some phrases were inappropriately interpreted. For example,

- *But perhaps the biggest economic winner thus far has been the telecommunications industry* was rendered as “延誤的最大得益者非電訊業莫屬” and
- *Controversy over the use of profiling at airports is charged...* was rendered as “近日社會間為機場決定替每一位旅客進行身份驗證及保留檔案而產生激烈的辯論”.

Candidates who omitted relevant points from the source texts, wrote Chinese characters wrongly, did not fully take into account the Focus Points as listed in the brief or generally produced an article that needed substantial editing were granted a Fail grade.

Module 2 – Business Writing and Communications in English

This Module tests candidates' proficiency in writing communications in English. There are two Tasks, A and B. Each contains a detailed brief and the corresponding Chinese source text. Candidates are required to produce written communications in English in the form of a memo, a letter or a report. Distinctions are always awarded to candidates who demonstrate advanced English writing skills for communication purposes.

In this year's examination, candidates were required to write a memo (in Task A) and a (recommendation) report (in Task B) to help the Managing Director of a beer production company to identify potential business partners in China.

Pass candidates included approximately 60% –70% of the required information. Some problems were shown in the use of terms, articles, prepositions, singular/plural forms and parts of speech, though the final product was satisfactory.

In Task B a few candidates showed problems in presenting the required information in a structured and coherent manner. One script, for example, gave a plausible recommendation; however, the information given in the report was not accurate enough.

The Candidate's Brief stated that candidates were free to address the required points in the sequence they preferred. Those who did not follow the strict order ended up with less coherent accounts. By the same token, sub-headings, although not compulsory, proved to be a clear way of presenting the required information.

Module 3 – Translation from English into Chinese and Chinese into English

This module requires candidates to produce polished translations of source texts in both English and Chinese. Distinctions are awarded to candidates who are able to produce accurate translations with minimal editing.

In the 2010 exam paper, the English source text for Task A was an edited extract from *Cheer up: life only gets better*, an article published in the *Sunday Times* on 16 May, 2010. The Chinese text for Task B dealt with the sky-high price of a luxurious flat sold in Hong Kong.

Candidates who translated the original texts fairly accurately, with faultless grammar, appropriate register and good choice of lexis and style were awarded a Distinction.

Merits were awarded to candidates who produced translations that read well, albeit a need for some editing. For example,

- *...the human race will have expanded in 10,000 years from less than 10m people to nearly 10 billion...* was translated as “人類將會在一萬年間由少於一千萬增至接近約一萬億。”;
- *This view – which I shall call rational optimism – may not be fashionable but it is compelling...* was translated as “我稱這看法理性樂觀，它需或未時尚但仍切實。”.

Examples of inaccurate translations were:

- *按照香港常用的每平方英尺價格計算* rendered as “According to the calculation of normal Hong Kong practise at the selling per square feet” and
- *二手樓價也不斷上漲* rendered as “The overall property price of the second-handed properties have also increased.”

Module 4 – Consecutive Liaison Interpreting and Sight Translation

This is a two-task module. The first part is a Consecutive Liaison Interpreting exercise and requires candidates to interpret between two people who do not understand one another's language. The second part is a Sight Translation test containing two texts and requires candidates to interpret from and into Cantonese, the main spoken Chinese language in Hong Kong, or Putonghua/Mandarin, the national language in China. In order to get an overall pass, candidates should be competent in both consecutive liaison interpreting and sight translation.

This year, the subject for Consecutive Liaison Interpreting was on the euro. The Chinese text for Sight Translation: Task 2A dealt with food labelling systems in Europe; the subject for the English text in Task 2B was on how to make use of anger in a positive way.

For the first part of the module, candidates who conveyed 80% of the original correctly delivered a fluent interpretation and showed adequate command of both languages were awarded a Merit. Some candidates performed better when translating from Cantonese into English. For example:

- C7 was interpreted clearly and smoothly; the word ‘depend’ was appropriately interpreted as “視乎”.

- A good rendering of *That remains to be seen* was “放長雙眼睛”.

Some good examples found in the interpreting and sight translation tests were:

- *economic bloc* rendered as “經濟壁壘” and
- *painful* rendered as “痛苦的決定”.

In the Consecutive Interpreting task, weaker candidates showed flaws related to short-term memory and note-taking skills. This led to omitting or adding unnecessary information. Some frequently sought for repeats which produced undesirable frequent interruptions.

General recommendations

Candidates are advised to read the Handbook carefully and pay particular attention to the objectives set and marking criteria to pass each Module.

Extensive reading both in English and Chinese is recommended to get familiarised with aspects related to style, culture and lexis. For Module 4 intensive practice related to memory exercises, note taking and actual interpreting is paramount to reach the required examination level.

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