CIOL Qualifications Level 7 Diploma in Translation

Examiner Report July 2022

22 language combinations were assessed and there were 7 source languages: Chinese, English, French, German, Italian, Russian and Spanish.

English into Chinese

The most popular options chosen by candidates were General Translation and Business. The group pass rate was 33%.

Candidates did not follow the format/layout of the original text. For example, in Unit 01, there were three phrases emboldened in the original text, ie ***Stop the Spread***, ***Reporting Misinformation***, and ***Go Viral!***. Some candidates emboldened two of the terms and the others emboldened all three, but they also unnecessarily turned *mythbusters* into bold. Other candidates ignored that practice entirely.

Candidates did not entirely understand the English source text, for example, some rendered correctly *the data suggest that while there is a large segment of the population anxious to be vaccinated right away* as '这數據顯示雖然人口中有一大部分人急於立刻接種疫苗'. The rest of the cohort got *anxious to be vaccinated* wrong.
As regards the neologism *infodemic*, only a few candidates rendered it appropriately as '信息流行病' and '資訊流行' respectively.

In the Business paper, some candidates managed to render correctly the meaning of the expression *concentration* as in *11 times the <u>concentration</u> of cyber security businesses than the UK norm* as '企業密度' and '集中度'. Paragraph nine proved to be difficult for candidates and no one was able to render the paragraph in its entirety.

When translating the Social Science paper, candidates struggled mainly with register and collocations as in '我们的人口就会更加安全' and '有一個更安全且健康的人口' for *we would have a much safer population as well as a healthier one*. In the former translation, '人口' was a register error and it did not collocate with '安全' and '健康'. In the latter, '一個' did not collocate with '人口'. *人民/民众* would have been a better choice of vocabulary.

The candidates who chose Law showed very good Target Language writing skills. Unfortunately, the sentence: *five years of living apart in a 'separation' period before the marriage could be legally dissolved* was mistranslated as '<u>婚前五年</u>以"分居"的形式各自居住，婚姻关系也可以合法解除'.

There are a number of comments and recommendations that may be of assistance to candidates:
- based on the results, candidates were weak in understanding the English original texts. At the level of the DipTrans, the best way to check one's English comprehension is to read more bilingual articles such as those published in *The World of English* 英語世界, and similar publications. Reading more English

essays, articles, and books is also a good way of improving one's comprehension of the Source Language;

- tense is another area candidates need to pay attention to. Since there isn't any verb tense in Chinese, candidates should make sure that they indicate the tense appropriately using grammatical time markers;

- when encountering long and complex sentences, the best way to understand the context is by breaking them up into manageable sections, then translate them into grammatical and idiomatic Chinese;

- pay attention to the format/layout of the source text and follow as closely as possible special features such as italics and bold types;

- read, write, and translate as frequently as possible in Chinese to ensure one's writing is idiomatic and grammatical in the transfer of languages. Look for bilingual articles for practice and compare one's own work with the suggested translation published;

- try to avoid writing spoken Chinese, such as Putonghua or colloquial Cantonese. Always stick to the same register as in the source text throughout the translation.

English into French

The most popular options chosen by candidates were Science and Business. The group pass rate was 38%.

Candidates should pay particular attention to punctuation and spelling. For example, the word for *American* in French is either: *Américain* (noun) or *américain* (adjective).

Candidates should also remember that accents in French are not optional. At least one translation was written without a single accent and consequently, marks were lost.

Similarly, candidates should not neglect agreements, for example 'grande fenêtres' should be spelt: *grandes fenêtres*, as the adjective agrees with the noun in the plural.

Candidates are advised to prepare in advance for their specific semi-specialised options and not choose a text which appears easier, on the day of the exam.

Candidates are advised to allow time to read through their translation before submitting it.

English into German

The most popular options chosen by candidates were Social Science and Science. The group pass rate was 38%.

Candidates are advised to always take the time to check their translation, especially if they are working on a PC, typos easily happen and they will count as spelling, grammatical and punctuation errors.

Read the text with the eyes of a non-English speaker. Does the meaning come across clearly or is there some possible ambiguity or confusion?

Double-check semi-specialised vocabulary and place names, do not just assume you know. Check for omissions and ask yourself: does the text flow well?

During your check, if you rephrased a sentence – does the next sentence still follow on smoothly?

Make sure you transfer the names of institutions and place names correctly. If there is no well-known equivalent in your language, keep the original name. The name of a university, for example, can be left in the original language. If it is based abroad, you can add the country for clarification. If the title of an institution needs to be explained and there is no officially recognised translation, keep the English title and put a brief explanation in brackets.

Be a little brave – do not stay too close to the source text with your translation. While you need to ensure that you include all the information, don't follow the source text word by word. The sentence structures of English and German are often quite different. Just because something can be understood, it does not necessarily look like authentic German.

Remember that your translation should read like a text originally written in your target language. Get the meaning of the sentence, then rephrase it into idiomatic German.

Do not hedge your bets. Be consistent with terminology. If you are not quite sure about the correct translation and cannot find anything conclusive in the dictionary or other sources, make a decision and stick to it. Do not use different words for the same term within the same text as this can be confusing for the reader and therefore may lose you marks.

Keep up-to-date with developments in your special fields of interest in both languages.

English into Polish

The most popular options chosen by candidates were Technology and Law. The group pass rate was 20%.

Candidates should remember that even small linguistic details can have a very significant effect on the sense of larger textual units. For example, the adjective *anxious* can either express a worry (anxious about something) or desire/eagerness (anxious to

do something). A number of candidates misinterpreted the expression *anxious to be vaccinated* as meaning "anxious about vaccinations", even though the same sentence mentioned another group opposed to being vaccinated. This error could have been avoided by paying close attention to both the syntactic structure and the logic of the entire sentence.

Advice to candidates: If something in your translation does not sound right, appears illogical or irrelevant (based on the perceived meaning of individual words), check if you have correctly understood larger parts of the source text (sentences, paragraphs), and ask yourself if other interpretations are possible or likely.

French into English

The most popular options chosen by candidates were General Translation and Technology. The group pass rate was 31%.

Most candidates took the right approach to the task inasmuch as their choice of register, idiom and terminology demonstrated their awareness of the quality of expression that the task required. Nevertheless, the high failure rate bears witness to deficiencies in command of the source language in some cases (there were a surprising number of elementary errors) or a lack of familiarity with the lexis of the subject area.

As regards the latter deficiency, it cannot be stressed too often that candidates hoping to attempt a semi-specialised option – especially Technology, Business, Science, Social Science or Law – must prepare themselves for this by reading material relating to the subject in both source and target languages and must do this frequently and purposefully. This means, for example, making a regular habit of reading and making notes on material in both languages in journals, magazines and newspapers.

An important feature of a good translation is that it should make sense. There were several occasions when marking candidates work when the marker must have asked themselves: "How could they possibly have thought this was right? It completely contradicts what the previous sentence said!" Examiners do not set passages that are surreal, if you think to yourself "This sounds rather peculiar", you've probably got it wrong!

In conclusion, there were several candidates who lost marks because they obviously had not checked their work before submitting it: omissions, incorrect spelling or punctuation and mistypes can all lose marks that might make the difference between a pass and a fail.

German into English

The most popular options chosen by candidates were General Translation and Law. The group pass rate was 54%.

Candidates are reminded that careful checking – both of content (comparing Source Text and Target Text line by line) and of written English, including logical flow, word choice, grammar and punctuation – can make the difference between passing and failing the exam. Adequate time needs to be set aside for the checking process (or processes), if candidates check content and style separately, which can be a very useful method.

This year, several candidates failed to create grammatically acceptable sentences in the General paper, where the German text included several "fragment" sentences that required a finite verb to be inserted in English.

For the semi-specialised papers, it is not expected that candidates will be experts in every field. However, in order to offer a convincing and appropriate translation, it is important to achieve the right tone of voice and use of semi-specialised terminology. Candidates can prepare for this by reading extensively in the target language. Not only is this an indispensable way of gaining familiarity with typical styles and lexis, but it is also the best way to keep abreast of current debates and basic knowledge of the semi-specialised topics.

One special point regarding the Social Science paper: the paper contained the figure *12 billion*. Translating this as '12 million' is clearly a serious error. Social science writing very often includes statistical language, and this should be included in candidates' preparation and checking regimes.

Spanish into English

The most popular options chosen by candidates were General Translation and Social Science. The group pass rate was 42%.

A small number of candidates performed very well. These candidates demonstrated that they had understood the original, with only minor lapses of comprehension, and produced authentic-sounding translations that contained only minor errors of grammar, cohesion or orthography.

Other candidates demonstrated an acceptable level of comprehension and translations that, while they were stilted in places or contained some weak lexical choices and grammatical errors, would be usable with some editing.

Less successful candidates struggled to decode the source text accurately and/or produced target language texts that suffered from significant grammatical errors, a lack of cohesion or an unacceptably large number of errors of orthography.

There are a number of comments and recommendations that may be of assistance to candidates:

- pay great care when reading and decoding the source text as this will help to avoid unnecessary errors and minor omissions. Examples from the General paper included confusing the concessive *Si* with the emphatic *Sí* and reading *Carmen puede no molar* ('Carmen may not') as *Carmen no puede molar* ('Carmen cannot');

- care must be taken with technical terminology and inappropriate synonyms avoided. For example, 'coolant' should not be replaced by 'refrigerant' when talking about nuclear reactors and 'natural circulation' cannot be expanded to 'natural air circulation' as this is too restrictive (the term *circulación natural* can also describe the circulation of liquid coolants);

- beware of false friends/cognates, for example, *mercado editorial* should be rendered in English not as 'editorial/editing market' but as 'publishing market';

- consider reorganising the text by, for example, breaking the source language text into shorter sentences in the target language or changing the order of clauses in a sentence. It is, however, essential to ensure that doing so does not distort or obscure the meaning of the original;

- leave time to read through your translation carefully as a piece of English, without reference to the original, and check spelling and punctuation (remember that spellchecker is not allowed). This will help to ensure readability and avoid unnecessary errors. There were quite a few examples of target-language grammar and spelling errors that could have been picked up by more thorough proofreading;

- read good quality specialised publications in both source and target languages to build up knowledge of the relevant terminology;

- read extensively in both native and target languages to develop a broad cultural knowledge of both countries, their histories, customs and societies.

Small Entry – Group A [English into Albanian, English into Arabic, English into Czech, English into Greek, English into Hungarian, English into Russian, English into Spanish, English into Swedish, Russian into English]

There were some examples of good or exceptionally good performance, when candidates showed the ability to transfer the information accurately and present it appropriately in their target languages.

The majority of candidates were not able to reach the required standard of this examination totalling around 66%. However, this number was lower in comparison with 2021 when there were 77% of Fail marks across all scripts but higher in comparison with 62% during the winter round this year.

In a few instances, candidates did not show good translation skills and the ability to paraphrase or present the information appropriately in the target languages, especially when it concerns proper names, some specific semi-specialised terms, or phrases.

Candidates need to pay more attention to detail and ensure their translations do not distort or change the Source Text message. Some candidates are advised to complete a course in Translation before sitting this examination as it was obvious that they did not have sufficient translation skills.

Another important area for improvement is candidates' language skills in the target language and the ability to encode the information appropriately. Candidates need to learn how to deliver a text free from any influence of the Source Language.

Small Entry – Group B [Chinese into English, English into Italian, English into Portuguese, English into Romanian, Italian into English]

The majority of candidates did not do well in the paper/s they took. This may partly be due to candidates resitting papers they took in the DT0122 session, the results confirming that their work was not of a professional standard, though there were quite a few candidates who sat all 3 papers (suggesting first-time candidates). The candidates with the lowest marks underperformed on both Aspects 1 and 2, and those with borderline marks appeared to show weak skills, in particular, in producing cohesive and fluent target language versions.