

IELTS GENERAL READING

SECTION 1

WORKING IN THE MOVIES

Subtitling is an exciting part of the translation profession. Melanie Leyshon talks to Virginie Verdler of London translation company VSI about the glamour and the grind.

When people ask French translator Virginie Verdier what she does for a living, it must be tempting to say enigmatically: 'Oh me? I'm in the movies'. It's strictly true, but her starring role is behind the scenes. As translating goes, it doesn't get more entertaining or glamorous than subtitling films. If you're very lucky, you get to work on the new blockbuster films before they're in the cinema, and if you're just plain lucky, you get to work on the blockbuster movies that are going to video or DVD.

Virginie is quick to point out that this is as exciting as any translating job. 'You work hard. It's not all entertainment as you are doing the translating. You need all the skills of a good translator and a top-notch editor. You have to be precise and, of course, much more concise than in traditional translation work.'

The process starts when you get the original script and a tape. 'We would start with translating and adapting the film script. The next step is what we call 'timing', which means synchronising the subtitles to the dialogue and pictures.' This task requires discipline. You play the film, listen to the voice and the subtitles are up on your screen ready to be timed. You insert your subtitle when you hear the corresponding dialogue and delete it when the dialogue finishes. The video tape carries a time code which runs in hours, minutes, seconds and frames. Think of it as a clock. The subtitling unit has an insert key to capture the time code where you want the subtitle to appear. When you press the delete key, it captures the time code where you want the subtitle to disappear. So each subtitle would 'have an 'in' point and an 'out' point which represent the exact time when the subtitle comes in and goes out. This process is then followed by a manual review, subtitle by subtitle, and time-codes are adjusted to improve synchronisation and respect shot changes. This process involves playing the film literally frame by frame as it is essential the subtitles respect the visual rhythm of the film.'

Different subtitlers use different techniques. 'I would go through the film and do the whole translation and then go right back from the beginning and start the timing

process. But you could do it in different stages, translate let's say 20 minutes of the film, then time this section and translate the next 20 minutes, and so on. It's just a different method.'

For multi-lingual projects, the timing is done first to create what is called a 'spotting list', a subtitle template, which is in effect a list of English subtitles pre-timed and edited for translation purposes. This is then translated and the timing is adapted to the target language with the help of the translator for quality control.

'Like any translation work, you can't hurry subtitling,' says Virginie. 'If subtitles are translated and timed in a rush, the quality will be affected and it will show.' Mistakes usually occur when the translator does not master the source language and misunderstands the original dialogue. 'Our work also involves checking and reworking subtitles when the translation is not up to standard. However, the reason for redoing subtitles is not just because of poor quality translation. We may need to adapt subtitles to a new version of the film: the time code may be different. The film may have been edited or the subtitles may have been created for the cinema rather than video. If subtitles were done for cinema on 35mm, we would need to reformat the timing for video, as subtitles could be out of synch or too fast. If the translation is good, we would obviously respect the work of the original translator.' On a more practical level, there are general subtitling rules to follow, says Virginie. 'Subtitles should appear at the bottom of the screen and usually in the centre.' She says that different countries use different standards and rules. In Scandinavian countries and Holland, for example, subtitles are traditionally left justified. Characters usually appear in white with a thin black border for easy reading against a white or light background. We can also use different colours for each speaker when subtitling for the hearing impaired. Subtitles should have a maximum of two lines and the maximum number of characters on each line should be between 32 and 39. Our company standard is 37 (different companies and countries have different standards).'

Translators often have a favourite genre, whether it's war films, musicals, comedies (one of the most difficult because of the subtleties and nuances of comedy in different countries), drama or corporate programmes. Each requires a certain tone and style. 'VSI employs American subtitlers, which is incredibly useful as many of the films we subtitle are American,' says Virginie. 'For an English person, it would not be so easy to understand the meaning behind typically American expressions, and vice-versa.'

Questions 1-5:

Complete the flow chart below. Use **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** from the passage for each answer. Write your answers in boxes 1-5 on your answer sheet.

THE SUBTITLING PROCESS

Stage 1: Translate and adapt the script.

Stage 2: 1..... -matching the subtitles to what said Involves recording time codes by using the 2 and keys.

Stage 3: 3..... – in order to make the 4..... better.

Multi – lingual projects

Stage 1: Produce something known as a 5 and translate that.

Questions 6-10:

Do the following statements agree with the information given in Reading Passage 1? In boxes 6-9 on your answer sheet write

TRUE **if the statement agrees with the information** **FALSE** **if the statement contradicts the information** **NOT GIVEN** **if there is no information on this**

6. For translators, all subtitling work on films is desirable.
7. Subtitling work involves a requirement that does not apply to other translation work.
8. Some subtitling techniques work better than others.
9. Few people are completely successful at subtitling comedies.
10. Every single movie has the same tone and style.

Questions 11-14:

Complete the sentences below with words from Reading Passage I. Use **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** for each answer. Write your answers in boxes 11—14 on your answer sheet.

11. Poor subtitling can be a result of the subtitler not being excellent at
.....

12. To create subtitles for a video version of a film, it may be necessary to
.....

13. Subtitles usually have a around them.

14. Speakers can be distinguished from each other for the benefit of
.....

SECTION 2

BORDER REGULATIONS AND VISA APPLICATIONS

If you wish to come to the United Kingdom, either as a visitor or a student, you may need to apply for a visa. Visas vary according to your age, the length of your stay and your level of English study.

The following visa types are available:

- A. Child Student
- B. Child Visitor
- C. Adult Student
- D. Student Visitor
- E. Prospective Student

The UK operates a points-based system which will decide whether or not you can apply for a visa. You need 40 points in order to apply for a visa. You will obtain 30 points if you have confirmation from the college, university or school that you have been accepted on a course. Your chosen place of studies must be registered on the UK Border Agency list of sponsors. You can obtain a list by clicking on the link below.

You will need to earn a further 10 by demonstrating that you cover the cost of your study fees and living costs. In doing so, you can rest assured that you will avoid financial difficulties while you are studying.

If you wish to extend your study experience in the UK, you will need to pass a further points-based assessment to ensure that you have been accepted on another course and that you can afford to pay the fees and living costs.

To make your UK study experience even richer, you may be eligible for a work and study visa. Getting a job while you are studying can improve your language skills and enhance your CV by showing that you are flexible, team-oriented and wellorganised. You will also be able to get a reference from your employer which will help you gain employment in the future. Before accepting a job, you must find out whether your visa allows you to work in the UK, and the maximum number of

hours you can work each week from the UK Border Agency. Most UK places of study have a career service which will help you to access job listings, write a CV or application form and prepare for a job interview.

To work in the UK you will need a National Insurance number. This number is used to deduct money from your earnings to fund benefits for the unemployed, incapacitated and retired. To obtain a national insurance number, you will need to attend an interview. You can make an appointment for an interview by calling 0845 600 0643 during usual office hours. You will need to take proof of identity, proof of your right to work in the UK and written proof of your job offer. You may start work before your number is issued as long as your employer deducts the appropriate national insurance contributions from your pay.

QUESTIONS 15-19

Each of the short paragraphs below gives information about the five types of visa AE. Read each paragraph and choose which of the five links would contain this information. There is one paragraph that you do not need.

paragraph i. If you have already completed a course of study in the UK and do not intend to study further, you can apply for this visa to extend your stay. This visa allows you to work in the UK for a further 6 months.

paragraph ii. If you are under the age of 17 and wish to study for less than six months, you can apply for this visa. If you wish to extend your course of study, you may not swap to a student visa while you are in the UK. You must return to your home country and do so there.

paragraph iii. Students in post-16 education can apply for this visa. This visa is suitable for students attending courses for over six months. Holders of this visa may be eligible to work in the UK.

paragraph iv. Students over the age of 18 who wish to study for up to six months can apply for this visa. This visa does not allow students to work in the UK. Students may only extend their visa or switch to a student visa by returning to their home country.

paragraph v. You can apply for this visa if you are between the ages of 4 and 15 and intend to attend a full-time, fee-paying independent school for a period of over six months or more. 16 and 17 year olds may attend part-time, fee-paying establishments.

paragraph vi. If you want to come to the UK before choosing your course of study, you can apply for this visa. You will need to start your course within 6 months of arrival. You may switch to an adult or child student visa while in the UK without returning to your home country.

15.A - Child Student

16.B - Child Visitor

17.C - Adult Student

18.D - Student Visitor

19.E - Prospective Student

QUESTIONS 20-25

Choose the correct letter **A**, **B** or **C**

20. You can obtain 30 points towards your visa if... A. You have already paid your school and college fees

B. You have been accepted on to a course of study

C. You have proof that you can cover your study fees

21. If you want to extend your study visa...

A. You need to obtain only 30 points

B. You don't need to repeat points assessment

C. You will need to do the entire process again

22. You can work in the UK if...

- A. You are legally eligible
- B. You are studying full-time
- C. You have 40 points

23. For advice on finding a job, the writer suggests that you contact... A. The UK Border agency

- B. Career service
- C. The National Insurance agency

24. Your national insurance number will ensure that...

- A. You receive all the money you earn
- B. You receive money if you lose your job
- C. Some money is taken from your earnings

25. You can start work...

- A. If your employer pays your contributions instead of you
- B. After applying for National Insurance Number
- C. Only once you have received National Insurance number

SECTION 3

THE STORY OF COFFEE

A Coffee was first discovered in Eastern Africa in an area we know today as Ethiopia. A popular legend refers to a goat herder by the name of Kaldi, who observed his goats acting unusually friskily after eating berries from a bush. Curious about this phenomenon, Kaldi tried eating the berries himself. He found that these berries gave him renewed energy.

B The news of this energy laden fruit quickly moved throughout the region. Coffee berries were transported from Ethiopia to the Arabian Peninsula, and were first cultivated in what today is the country of Yemen. Coffee remained a secret in Arabia before spreading to Turkey and then to the European continent by means of Venetian trade merchants.

C Coffee was first eaten as a food though later people in Arabia would make a drink out of boiling the beans for its narcotic effects and medicinal value. Coffee for a time was known as Arabian wine to Muslims who were banned from alcohol by Islam. It was not until after coffee had been eaten as a food product, a wine and a medicine that it was discovered, probably by complete accident in Turkey, that by roasting the beans a delicious drink could be made. The roasted beans were first crushed and then boiled in water, creating a crude version of the beverage we enjoy today. The first coffee houses were opened in Europe in the 17th Century and in 1675, the Viennese established the habit of refining the brew by filtering out the grounds, sweetening it, and adding a dash of milk.

D If you were to explore the planet for coffee, you would find about 60 species of coffee plants growing wild in Africa, Malaysia, and other regions. But only about ten of them are actually cultivated. Of these ten, two species are responsible for almost all the coffee produced in the world: *Coffea Arabica* and *Coffea Canephora* (usually known as Robusta). Because of ecological differences existing among the various coffee producing countries, both types have undergone many mutations and now exist in many sub-species.

E Although wild plants can reach 10 - 12 metres in height, the plantation one reaches a height of around four metres. This makes the harvest and flowering easier, and cultivation more economical. The flowers are white and sweet-scented like the Spanish jasmine. Flowers give way to a red, darkish berry. At first sight, the fruit is like a big cherry both in size and in colour. The berry is coated with a thin, red film (epicarp) containing a white, sugary mucilaginous flesh (mesocarp). Inside the pulp there are the seeds in the form of two beans coupled at their flat surface. Beans are in turn coated with a kind of resistant, golden yellow parchment, (called endocarp). When peeled, the real bean appears with another very thin silvery film. The bean is bluish green verging on bronze, and is at the most 11 millimetres long and 8 millimetres wide.

F Coffee plants need special conditions to give a satisfactory crop. The climate needs to be hot-wet or hot temperate, between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn, with frequent rains and temperatures varying from 15 to 25 Degrees C. The soil should be deep, hard, permeable, well irrigated, with well-drained subsoil. The best lands are the hilly ones or from just-tilled woods. The perfect altitude is between 600 and 1200 metres, though some varieties thrive at 2000-2200 metres. Cultivation aimed at protecting the plants at every stage of growth is needed. Sowing should be in sheltered nurseries from which, after about six months, the seedlings should be moved to plantations in the rainy season where they are usually alternated with other plants to shield them from wind and excessive sunlight. Only when the plant is five years old can it be counted upon to give a regular yield. This is between 400 grams and two kilos of arabica beans for each plant, and 600 grams and two kilos for robusta beans.

G Harvesting time depends on the geographic situation and it can vary greatly therefore according to the various producing countries. First, the ripe beans are picked from the branches. Pickers can selectively pick approximately 250 to 300 pounds of coffee cherry a day. At the end of the day, the pickers bring their heavy burlap bags to pulping mills where the cherry coffee can be pulped (or wet milled). The pulped beans then rest, covered in pure rainwater to ferment overnight. The next day the wet beans are hand-distributed upon the drying floor to be sun dried. This drying process takes from one to two weeks depending on the amount of sunny days available. To make sure they dry evenly, the beans need to be raked many times

during this drying time. Two weeks later the sun dried beans, now called parchment, are scooped up, bagged and taken to be milled. Huge milling machines then remove the parchment and silver skin, which renders a green bean suitable for roasting. The green beans are roasted according to the customers' specifications and, after cooling, the beans are then packaged and mailed to customers.

Questions 26 - 31

The reading passage on The Story of Coffee has 7 paragraphs A – G. From the list of headings below choose the most suitable headings for paragraphs B – G. Write the appropriate number (i – xi) in boxes 28 – 33 on your answer sheet.

NB There are more headings than paragraphs, so you will not use them all.

- i. Growing Coffee
- ii. Problems with Manufacture
- iii. Processing the Bean
- iv. First Contact
- v. Arabian Coffee
- vi. Coffee Varieties
- vii. Modern Coffee
- viii. The Spread of Coffee
- ix. Consuming Coffee
- x. Climates for Coffee
- xi. The Coffee Plant

26. Paragraph B

27. Paragraph C

28. Paragraph D

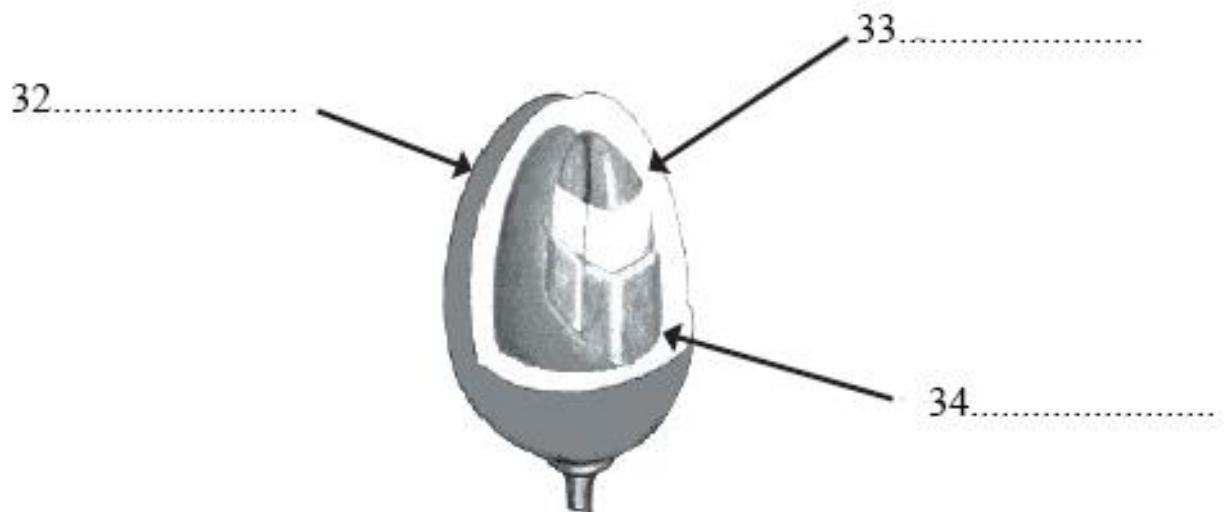
29. Paragraph E

30. Paragraph F

31. Paragraph G

Questions 32 - 34

Complete the labels on the diagram of a coffee bean below. Choose your answers from the text and write them in boxes 34 - 36 on your answer sheet.



Questions 35 – 40

Using the information in the passage, complete the flow chart below. Write your answers in boxes 35-40 on your answer sheet. Use **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** from the passage for each answer.

The Coffee Production Process

