Epreuve d'entrée – Master T2M – transcription et traduction EN>FR

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Background

The document shared consists of a presentation by Anna Noonan, PhD candidate at the University of Sydney, on the topic of access to abortion and reproductive health services in regional Australia. This presentation is addressed to the Community Affairs References Committee of the Senate, the upper chamber of the Commonwealth of Australia Federal government.

The video was shared on Twitter by Australian Greens Senator Larissa Waters and can be viewed at the link https://twitter.com/i/status/1630447739720044544. The video file is available in the same folder as this document.

Imagine that you are now a freelance multimedia translator

The French association *Planning familial* (https://www.planning-familial.org/fr) has commissioned you to create French subtitles for this video for use in a series of public events on reproductive rights around the world, in conjunction with its *#LibresDeNosChoix* campaign. A recent press release about this campaign is available at https://www.planning-familial.org/fr/contraception/penurie-de-pilules-abortives-cest-le-droit-lavortement-qui-est-menace-il-en-va-de-la [link no longer available, see #Libresdenoschoix | Le planning familial (planning-familial.org)].

Task 1:

Carefully transcribe the video from 0:00 to 1:05. You do not need to transcribe the entire video.

You may use the embedded captions to help with your transcription but should be careful to transcribe **what you hear** and to follow standard English grammatical, spelling and punctuation conventions as far as possible. UK or US spelling conventions are acceptable, but be consistent.

Comment in English on the embedded captions. What could be improved, and why?

*Transcription was generally well done for this exercise. Most candidates realised that the embedded captions were a very close transcription of the words spoken, though a few candidates encountered difficulties forming the spoken words into coherent sentences and there were a few careless spelling and punctuation errors that later presented problems in the translation exercise. One transcription issue appears around 0:20, where the third word in the clause 'we saw **the** (at least) partial decriminalisation of abortion' (a determiner) is subtitled as **that**, which can be easily misinterpreted as a conjunction forming part of the construction '**we saw *that**' that does not match the syntax of the rest of the sentence.*

While the embedded captions offer a very faithful transcription, they have a few issues that might be problematic for people watching the video without sound or for viewers who rely on captions because they are deaf and hard-of-hearing. There is no effort to condense or reformulate the spoken dialogue, which is presented relatively quickly, in long sentences with relatively complex syntax that is characteristic of a formal environment. Segmentation between subtitles is not ideal from a syntactic point of view, since the placing of breaks in the middle of constructions like 'the / at least partial decriminalisation' (0:20) or 'national data / collection' (0:53) may cause difficulties in interpreting the syntax of each sentence. Several lines are much longer than users of captions typically encounter and there are often no gaps between adjacent captions, both of which hinder readability.

Task 2:

Identify three terms or expressions that you need to research in order to translate the document successfully. For each term or expression, find at least one equivalent in French that is appropriate to the context given by your client. Write a sentence or two in English to comment on each choice, making sure to cite and explain the sources used.

Several terms and expressions were problematic for many candidates and this highlights the importance of making sure you understand the text completely before attempting to translate it. Some of the most frequent were:

*rural, remote and regional [people]: the adjectives given here refer to where people live, not to their outlook, level of education or other factors not mentioned in the video, whose focus is on the question of access to reproductive health services. All three adjectives describe people living outside Australia's large coastal cities where populations and health services are concentrated: finding a direct equivalent for each category was a possible strategy (something like '*les personnes habitant nos régions, en zone rurale ou dans les zones réculées'*) but a generalisation such as '*les personnes habitant loin de nos grandes villes' would also be appropriate and arguably easier to understand for viewers unfamiliar with the distinction between 'rural' and 'remote' as understood in Australia.*

*Wiradjuri Country: this use of 'country' (with no article, often capitalised as a proper noun) is specific to Australia and represents an attempt to acknowledge that the mostly European toponyms and geographical divisions of modern Australia ('central west New South Wales') displaced the geographies and toponyms of Aboriginal Australians and the ecologies, societies and belief systems associated with it. It has become fairly common in Australian public life (subject to a certain amount of political debate) to give both the traditional and European toponym when referring to a geographical area: see [What Is Country? | Common Ground](#) and [The relevance of Aboriginal political concepts (5): Country, Place, and territory - ABC Religion & Ethics](#) for useful background information. Existing French translations of the term often use calques such as '*terre' or 'pays'*, often with a few words to explain the original usage (e.g. [Quand les conteurs indigènes vous font découvrir l'histoire et le cœur de l'Australie | Lonely Planet](#) or [Cultures aborigènes australiennes - Tourism Australia](#)). Expanding a translation to add extra information is often not possible or appropriate in time-sensitive audiovisual contexts and a solution like '*les terres [des] Wiradjuri' or '*[de/en] pays Wiradjuri'*, the latter of which offers an analogy with French expressions like '*en pays bourguignon' would be acceptable provided that the reasoning was explained. A translation along the lines of '*sur une reserve de la tribu Wiradjuri' is not acceptable, being both inaccurate and likely to cause offence.*

Commonwealth (along with States and Territories): a clue to the specific meaning of this term was given in the 'Background' section of these instructions: 'Commonwealth' does not refer here to the Commonwealth of Nations, an international association of mostly former British colonies ([About us | Commonwealth (thecommonwealth.org)](#)) but rather to the Commonwealth of Australia, a federation of six states and two territories that constitute the sovereign nation of Australia ([1. Introduction to Australia and its system of government | Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (dfat.gov.au)](#)). More specifically, 'Commonwealth' is used in this video (filmed in the Australian Senate, whose protocols the speaker is bound to respect) to refer to the federation and its government, as distinct from individual states and territories and their governments. As is also the case in federal nations such as the USA, there is sometimes debate about where the responsibility of federal and state governments begins and ends, especially where sensitive topics such as reproductive rights are concerned and where laws may differ between individual states and territories. Depending

on the context and the viewer's assumed knowledge about the Australian political system, solutions such as 'l'état fédéral' or 'le gouvernement fédéral' would be appropriate. 'Commonwealth' could arguably be left untranslated as a proper noun, though this carries the risk of confusion with the Commonwealth of Nations.

*[rural] **women and people who can experience pregnancy**: the adjective 'rural' applies to both referents here and this should be reflected in your translation, which needs to render the idea of 'women and [other] people' who can experience pregnancy, all of whom live in rural areas'. The expression '[femmes et [autres]] personnes pouvant devenir enceintes' appears in several Canadian sources (e.g. https://www.covercontraception.org/wcd-2021-joint-statement, https://www.canada.ca/fr/sante-canada/nouvelles/2022/05/ameliorer-lacces-a-des-renseignements-et-a-des-services-en-matiere-davortement-dans-le-contexte-du-fonds-pour-la-sante-sexuelle-et-reproductive.html), though is hard to locate in sources from France. Other solutions such as 'personnes susceptibles de/pouvant se retrouver en situation de grossesse' or 'personnes ayant un utérus' would be acceptable here, especially if a source is given. Translations that omitted the element 'women and' would also be acceptable, especially if it was explained that this group was already covered by 'people who can experience pregnancy'. Note, however, that the expressions 'personnes enceintes' or 'personnes en situation de grossesse' are not strictly accurate, since they refer to people who are currently pregnant.*

Task 3:

Translate your transcribed text into French. Your translation should be appropriate to the context given by your client and should incorporate your solutions from Task 2. It should follow standard French grammatical, spelling and punctuation conventions but should also try to take into account the oral dimension of the original document.

The comments above and below give an idea of the strategies for research and analysis that were essential for providing an acceptable translation. Within these parameters, several approaches were possible, and candidates that did well submitted a text in idiomatic and error-free French that incorporated their terminology/phraseology research and that matched the analysis given below.

While there was no explicit prohibition on the use of machine translation tools, candidates who made use of MT output without acknowledgement or without intelligent critical analysis of the results were severely penalised. Please bear in mind that the staff grading entrance exam papers are well aware of what responses MT and other AI tools are likely to give and may also ask questions about the written exam when candidates are interviewed.

Once your translation is complete, **write a few lines in English to explain the strategy you adopted to translate the document**, the difficulties you encountered and how you resolved them. You are encouraged to comment on specific examples and may discuss possible alternative solutions.

See above for comments on the choice of words and phrases. Candidates who did well in 2023 made useful comments about:

- *the tools and resources used – this was a requirement for all parts of the entrance exam and the failure to acknowledge sources was severely penalised.*
- *the need for the translation to reflect accurately the meaning of the source text but also to match the expectations of the target context and audience. The best answers explained what assumptions or specifications were used and what choices were made as a result, giving examples. In this context, explaining the Australian (federal) political system to the viewer, or rendering specific points of protocol (such as the idea that the speaker is answering a*

question asked by a Senator in front of the rest of the Senate) is secondary to the discussion of access to reproductive rights, which forms the context given for translating the document into French. Several candidates made the useful suggestion that the terminology and phraseology already used by the French Family Planning association should be adopted where possible, to ensure clarity and consistency between the different parts of the planned public advocacy campaign but also to make the content clearer for the association's broader target audience, including teenagers and other young people and people using French as a second language, whose needs may not always be covered by other public initiatives focused on sexual health and reproductive rights.

- *the need for subtitles to be condensed and sometimes reformulated when large volumes of text are presented, with the aim of keeping the subtitles to a target reading speed (traditionally around 15 characters per second), with subtitles divided into discrete syntactic units to aid readability. Many of the better translations broke longer sentences in the source text into shorted ones in the target text. Very good translations made some attempt to refer to subtitling norms such as those available on the ESIST's website: [AVT Guidelines and Policies – Esist](). While there was no specific requirement for the translation to adhere to standards for subtitling for Deaf/deaf and hard-of-hearing viewers, several of the better responses took this into account.*

The better answers to this question gave details and examples to support their argument, and were written in clear and error-free English, using precise terms to refer to linguistic features and citing sources used. Responses that made use of ChatGPT or other generative AI tools without acknowledgement and without critical analysis of the information given were (1) all too easy to spot and (2) heavily penalised.