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In French (8FR0/02) Paper 2

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Introduction

This was the third assessment of this paper. Candidates had to translate a passage of approximately 70 words from English into French and had to write one essay in French on a series of nominated texts and films. One hour and forty minutes were available to complete the paper. It was therefore pleasing to see that centres had advised their students about length of essays according to last year's examiner's report as examiners reported fewer gaps or unattempted/unfinished questions this year.

Pleasingly, there was no evidence to suggest that any candidates had been wrongly prepared for the questions at hand. There was no visible difference in standard between the essay responses. For *No et Moi* a film version is available; as is often the case, some details from the book are altered. It was evident that some candidates had studied the cinema version instead of, or in conjunction with, the text and this affected the quality of the illustration. Centres must decide whether to expose their candidates to both book and film versions of the same work. If they decide that this is a worthwhile thing to do, they must ensure their candidates are aware of the need to refer to the literary version when dealing with a text.

The recommended word count of 275-300 words could not have been expressed more clearly. However, it had been stated that everything a candidate produced would be read and assessed and this was done. It has also been stated that over long essays are likely to lose focus on the question thus affecting the critical response mark. The result of this was that more candidates this year followed the suggested word count thus acknowledging that long pieces tended to be rambling, digressive, repetitive and to a degree irrelevant. Similarly, candidates should refrain from writing about all they have studied and only focus on what is relevant to the specific question. They should then use this to make pertinent, analytical points which they then illustrate with reference to the work in question. Candidates who followed this advice and expressed themselves in fluent, accurate French were well rewarded. Quotations from a work are one form of reference. If they are relevant for the point being made they can be a very effective means of illustration. Quotations in which the French is inaccurate are less effective. Some candidates had obviously learnt a set of quotations and were forcing them into any essay, whichever question they are answering. This is not efficient and does not help the answer.

Some essay titles attracted no responses from candidates and will not be covered in this report which will concentrate on the more popular questions. Amongst the books *No et moi* was the most commonly studied. The favourite films were *Intouchables* and *Les Choristes*. This report will concentrate for exemplification on the titles which were most commonly studied. The overall standard of the work seen was quite pleasing. However, many of the scripts would have been improved with more succinct relevance, better illustration and more accurate French.

The translation into French was worth 20 marks and was assessed according to a detailed, points-based mark scheme.

The essays were judged on the basis of two levels-based marking grids. The first, entitled 'Critical Response' concerned Assessment Objective 4 and was worth 20 marks. The other dealt with the Accuracy and Range of grammatical structures and vocabulary, worth 20 marks, (AO3). The quality of the language used was thus as important as the critical response. The overall total for the paper was 60 marks. As far as the essays are concerned, with the first grid examiners rewarded those who could present points of view relevant to the precise question and justify them with evidence selected from the work under review. The best essays could draw conclusions linked to the argument and to maintain focus on the question throughout. To illustrate points a certain amount of well-chosen narrative and description are needed. However, an essay which depended solely on descriptions was not likely to score highly. When assessing the language examiners considered both the range and variety of structures and vocabulary used. The successful manipulation of complex structures is rewarded. In each section of this grid a descriptor mentions the 'use of terminology appropriate to critical response to the literary or cinematic work'. This does not mean that candidates are expected to emulate professional literary or film critics. Examiners look to see if candidates can write in a correct register, and most do this. It is important candidates have the vocabulary and expressions needed to write a critical as opposed to a descriptive piece. For example, students might include the words for traits of character, ways of rendering concepts such as 'depict', 'describe', 'portray' and the ability to differentiate in French between *personnage* and *caractère*. In questions which specifically deal with style or technique a candidate might be expected to use slightly more precise terms.

Question 1

The translation into French was marked following a points-based mark scheme. There were twenty sections, each worth one point. Many candidates struggled with this and marks rarely entered double figures. Many did not know the word for 'spelling', 'confused', 'older', or 'better'. Many used *étudiants* instead of *élèves*. Boxes that were most successfully accurate: 2, 3, 4, 5, 15, 19.

A pleasing number of responses did manage to successfully translate box 11 – with its subjunctive. Quite a few students lost marks over relatively small errors of agreement or spellings, even though the translation as a whole read well and they knew the vocabulary. Different tenses did seem to be challenging for a number of students. The sections were deliberately not of equal demand. It was thought that boxes 5,7,10,11 would stretch the most able candidates and a pleasing number of candidates gained

the marks for these boxes. Surprisingly, Box 1 and 11 proved to be the most challenging for candidates. more challenging than expected. Most candidates could either not find the suitable adjectival agreement or could not render 'French spelling rules' properly. Some general principles were adopted to make the passage as accessible as possible. Accent mistakes were ignored, unless they were grammatical ones, such as the accent on the past participles of -er verbs, or if they changed the meaning or produced a different word. Minor spelling slips or errors were permitted. Thus, versions such as *développement*, were tolerated in their respective boxes and the mark was given, as long as there were no further errors. This tolerance did not extend to verb endings, adjectival agreements or genders. In box 13 the one letter out rule was applied but spelling mistakes which produced an English word such as 'development' or 'reform' were not allowed.

The repeated errors of *étudiants* in box 3 was accepted in boxes 9 and 14 if everything else was correct. Consequential errors also sometimes appeared. For example, if a masculine word was used in box 4 *ce réforme* then the masculine direct object pronoun was accepted in box 7 if everything else was correct.

The passage was rooted in the education part of theme one and concerned the changes made in French spellings. It was anticipated that this subject matter was almost certainly studied during the course and should have been familiar to most candidates. It was, therefore, disappointing that subject-specific vocabulary quite often caused problems. For example, *élèves* was referred to as *étudiants*, 'textbooks' as *livres* and many candidates had difficulty expressing "it is hoped for" or "getting better results".

The most challenging boxes tested some of the more complex items which appear on the list of Advanced Level grammar. Few candidates realised that a subjunctive should be used after a conjunction such as *bien que* in box 11. A greater number knew how to form the perfect tense in box 3 but often forgot *maintenant* which was indeed a great pity. The conditional tense featured twice, in boxes 7 and 10. It proved to be surprisingly challenging for students to conjugate the verb correctly in the third person plural. The agreement of *confus* in box 7 was often omitted, *les autres* was usually used in box 12 instead of *d'autres*, we also accepted *des autres*, as it was the correct definite article in this instance. Agreements in boxes 1 and 9 of *âgés* and *française* were also proving challenging to the students. The verb in the imperfect tense in boxes 14 and 16 were often mis-conjugated, again in the third person plural. Surprisingly, the idea of "it is hoped" in box 17 was very rarely successful. The final part of the piece was often surprisingly unsuccessful where in boxes 19 and 20 adjectival agreements were not applied. We however accepted *leur chance*. Examiners were careful to insist on agreements throughout which caught a high number of students out. Such mistakes might well have been corrected with a more thorough final revision.

Exemple 1

Les règles d'orthographe Françaises ont maintenant changées dans les livres d'élèves. Cette réforme ne touchera seulement 4% du vocabulaire Français. Mais les professeurs pourraient trouver cela difficile à appliquer et les vieux élèves pourraient être confus. Néanmoins que certains soient contre ces changements, d'autres les voient simplement comme un développement naturel de la langue. Les élèves faisaient trop d'erreurs en écrivant et il est ~~esp~~ espéré que le nouveau système améliorera leur chance d'obtenir de meilleurs résultats.

This was a very competent performance which gained the well above-average score of 13 marks. Only a small number of candidates managed better than this. This candidate was successful in the boxes which tested complex structures, such as 7, 10, 12, 14 and 16 where, as an alternative to the imperfect an entirely natural present participle infinitive was used, where the direct object pronoun was replaced by the use of *cela* and 10 where the candidate correctly applied the agreement, something which escaped the majority of versions. Even for a candidate of this calibre, box 17 proved surprisingly demanding. In box 9 the translation failed to differentiate between *vieux* and *plus vieux/agés* as did many others. All the agreements were correct in the problematic box 20 but which was rare. The anglicised use of *néanmoins que* for although in box 11 was not accepted which was unfortunate given the rest was all correct. The agreements were consistent throughout however *leur chance* was accepted instead of *leurs chances* in box 19. The candidate's use of apt, subject-specific vocabulary is evident in the whole passage especially in box 1 where *orthographe* was rarely used by candidates.

Exemple 2

Les règles d'orthographe française ont changé maintenant dans les livres des élèves. Cette réforme touchera seulement 4% de la vocabulaire française ~~elle~~, mais les ^{enseignants} professeurs peuvent le trouver difficile et d'appliquer et les élèves plus âgés pourraient être confus. Quoique certaines ne soient pas d'accord avec ces changes, autres les voient simplement comme un développement naturel de la langue. Les élèves ^{gaisaient} font trop d'erreurs ~~assez~~ quand ils ^{écrivent} écrivent et on espère que la système nouvelle augmentera leur probabilité d'obtenir des meilleurs notes.

This translation secured the slightly above-average total of 11 marks. The candidate committed several errors which were commonly found in the work of this session's cohort. For example, many candidates failed to apply gender agreements successfully and this often cost able candidate's valuable marks, as here in boxes 6, 7 and 18. The slight misspelling of *développement* was tolerated in segment 13 if it did not make an English word and was only one letter out. As was usually the case, boxes 10 and 11 were not rendered correctly. The part containing the idea of pupils being confused was spoilt by a simple anglicism. In box 11 *bien que* was surprisingly not known but successfully replaced by *quoique* but again mistakes with gender and anglicisms prevented the candidate to score in that box. Many candidates attempted a completely non-French, literal translation of 'changes', as here, which was unsuccessful. The correct use of the direct object pronoun was spoilt by the wrong use of gender. The candidate ends on a strong note, managing to give the surprisingly challenging box 17 accurately. In many ways this was a very typical performance. It gives the impression that this candidate can manipulate French quite effectively but has made several mistakes.

Example 3

~~Les règles de~~ Aujourd'hui les règles de spelling français
ont changé dans les livres des étudiants.
Cette règle va influencer 4 quatre pourcent de
vocabulaire français, mais les professeurs trouve
appliquer ~~et~~ les ^{vieux} étudiants peut être confusé. Mais
certain personnes ~~son~~ n'aiment pas ~~ces~~ ces changes,
autre personnes voient le règle comme un développement
naturel ~~de~~ de la langue. Les étudiants fait
beaucoup de mal ~~quand~~ quand ~~ils~~ ils ~~l'écrivent~~ écri
et ~~il~~ il est espéré que le nouveau system va ajouter
leur chance de

This translation gained only 2 points, a well below-average score. The candidate was successful only in the relatively straightforward boxes 2 and 19 where the benefit of the doubt was given over the singular was accepted alongside the plural for their chances. Elsewhere there are some vocabulary difficulties, including the common use of changes for *changements*, the inappropriate use of the English word spelling for *orthographe* and the anglicised attempt at 'it is hoped'. The piece was compromised by elementary grammatical errors, such as missed agreements, inconsistent genders and poor verb forms. For example, the two instances of the conditional tense proved to be beyond the candidate.

General points about essay writing

Too many introductions acted as a kind of “throat-clearing”, either repeating the question or giving some background information on when the film was made and what it was about generally. This wastes valuable words. Students should think more about the purpose of the bullet points: they are a guide on how to answer the question rather than discrete sections they just need to provide some information about. So, they need to think about how the bullet points can get them to draw more meaningful conclusions about the question and remember they are just a guide, not a requirement.

Conclusions frequently don't add anything to the essay. Conclusions should not merely repeat what has already been said but round the essay off with a more overarching summary, which answers the question, perhaps drawing out wider implications from what has come before in the essay.

Paragraphs in the body of the essay are most successful when they start with a clear point and then provide examples which are explored, with conclusions being drawn from those examples. Some paragraphs only contained one example: it is hard to draw deeper conclusions when a paucity of evidence is used. Top-band essays had paragraphs that contained a range of examples, which allowed the candidate to draw nuanced conclusions at each stage of exemplification.

The most popular questions were predictably ones on *Intouchables* and *Les Choristes* so the remainder of the report will focus on the quality of responses to these works.

Question 12

12a

Examiners read a few essays that simply did not understand the question and therefore didn't write about the opening scene. Most answers managed to recall specific moments of the opening scene and in varying degrees draw conclusions. The weakest responses simply recounted the facts and either didn't draw conclusions or the conclusions they drew were generalised and trite. E.g. the music was lively and this drew the viewer in and made the scene exciting. Other types of weak response: making valid points but in a very generalised way, so without providing justification for their ideas.

Another problem, though less serious, was only focusing on the scene itself, without considering what its impact was for the film as a whole and the way the relationship between the two was depicted.

Most successful paragraphs tended to be on the music – though few considered the

deeper implications of music as a vehicle for Philippe's liberation and greater ability to feel a sense of genuine experience (also an example of how you could go beyond the scene itself to look at more far-reaching implications in the film as a whole).

Examples of good points made: referring to the fact that the opening scene was a flash forward and how it therefore presented the viewer with a sense that the relationship would become one of friendship and therefore set the tone for the film – more light-hearted and optimistic. Not many made this point or expressed it very eloquently, but those that did showed excellent critical analysis here.

Many mentioned the fact that they were friends and could joke together. What demarcated an average response from a good one was the quality of the justification. Weaker responses overall tended to limit themselves to the scene itself without placing it in the wider context of the film.

12b

Some found it difficult to rework the material they had clearly learnt in class to fit the question, so they said things about the relationship generally but without really considering the professional nature of their relationship and how this changed. Others, as in the previous question, limited themselves to just writing about the beginning of their relationship – the best answers considered the beginning of their professional relationship in the context of how this then evolved into one of greater professionalism and friendship. This didn't need to be too lengthy but some awareness and reference to how things would develop would have been necessary.

Some of the same problems as mentioned above occurred: focus on the bullet points but without considering their relevance to the question and therefore limiting the ability to draw conclusions. Nearly everybody managed to convey how unsuitable he was for the job initially. Bullet point 1 elicited many factual recounts of the scene. Better responses commented more on what drew Philippe to Driss – why his difference was appealing. Some candidates then repeated this information for bullet point 2 if they slavishly followed the bullet points. Nearly everybody mentioned how Philippe needed somebody who didn't pity him – the discriminator was in the level of detail in which this was exemplified and explored.

Really good answers considered what Driss got out of the professional relationship and how he changed: from being more unconcerned and hapless to deriving a sense of responsibility and care as the relationship progressed.

Exemple

Dans ~~cette~~ dissertation, nous examinerons le début de la relation professionnelle entre Briss et Philippe en nous ~~des~~ aspect différent; ~~notamment~~ notamment l'entretien ~~avec~~ les deux, l'attitude de Briss au début et l'attitude de Philippe. ~~et comment ces aspects ont contribué au développement de leur relation professionnelle.~~

Pis Premièrement, nous allons attirer notre attention à l'entretien ~~entre~~ Briss et Philippe et c'est clair que la relation professionnelle a bien commencé. Nous avons vu que Briss et Philippe peuvent blâger ~~un~~ ~~par~~ ~~même~~ dans leur premier rencontre, par exemple, leur conversation ~~de~~ propos de la musique classique et la blague des son « berchoz ». C'est évident que la relation professionnelle ~~entre~~ les deux n'est pas très sérieux car Philippe n'a pas du

problème avec la manière en quel bris parle avec

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17

Turn over ►

Magalie. La relation de professionnels au début est plutôt
amicale et à mon avis je pense que ~~plus~~
l'entretien la relation professionnelle est ~~changer vite~~ changer
à un relation entre amis à cause de l'entretien.

Deuxièmement, soulignons que l'attitude bris ~~au début~~
était très important pour le ~~bon~~ développement de la
relation professionnelle ~~avec~~ Philippe. Notons que bris n'avait
pas l'intention de ~~travailler~~ travailler pour Philippe, mais
malgré ça ~~avec~~ son attitude ^{était} de quelqu'un qui voulait
apprendre car il ~~est~~ ^{était} attentif ~~de~~ ^{pour} ces leçons (même si
il fait quelques erreurs) qui lui aident à devenir ~~un~~

Surtout un bon ami pour Philippe ~~mais~~ un bon
travailleur aussi, evident en la maniere ^{ou} ~~il~~ ^{il} a aide
Philippe pendant son crise, il connaissait ce qu'il dev
devoir faire, en aidant Philippe et le ~~se~~ rassurait.
La relation professionnelle ~~devenant~~ ~~peu~~ alors était satisfait
~~par~~ l'attitude briss et je pense que l'attitude
était essentiel pour bien développer la relation.

Enfinement, ~~il faut aussi mentionner que~~ l'attitude
de Philippe était important pour la relation professionnelle
~~briss~~. Philippe savait depuis l'entretien que briss
n'était pas qualifié ~~pour le~~ travailler, il était son
diplôme mais Philippe lui a embaucher et il ne
~~est~~ ~~c'est~~ pas fâché quand briss faisait des erreurs,

il était positif et ~~il~~ il faisait même des blagues, par
exemple quand briss lui a mis du shampooing aux pieds.
Je pense que son attitude plus relaxé a aider briss
à développer ~~peu~~ vite et c'était important pour leur
relation professionnelle.

En conclusion, la relation professionnelle a bien développé à
cause des personnages et attitudes de briss et Philippe.

Critical analysis mark : 12

Accuracy of language : 11

Total mark : 23

This is a sound answer. The introduction sets out the candidate's intentions, which seem well directed. As the essay concludes; however, we get the impression that the candidate is putting down a rushed conclusion in a somewhat haphazard way. In the first two main paragraphs it is reasonably clear that the candidate is focusing on the interview and then the attitude of Driss towards work. They mention the different character traits. This could have been demonstrated more clearly and effectively and with better illustration. However, there are some relevant points of view which are justified with evidence from the film. The essay does not lose focus on the question. For critical analysis the essay was awarded a mark of 12. The language is certainly understandable. Although there are some sections which lack natural fluency, the candidate does show the ability to use some varied, complex language, such as with consistent successful instances of perfect tense use. The vocabulary is a little repetitive and does not go much beyond the basic but it is certainly adequate to convey the desired message. The writing is predominantly articulate. There are many faults but these never impair communication and for Accuracy and Range the piece was given a mark of 11.

Question 14

14a

A few answers tackled the question about Mondain and did a decent job though they struggled to find conclusions to draw apart from the fact he was cruel and caused the closure of the school. Most were able to give examples of his cruelty and mention how his treatment by Rachin was unfair. Good answers clearly explained the reason his actions had an impact: the consequences of the fire in terms of the closure of the school. This question tended to encourage more factual responses.

14b

Most essays I saw were on the question about why Clement Mathieu could be considered a good teacher. Most answers dealt well with his discipline methods and the role of music, again, the discriminator being the level of detail of the exploration and exemplification of this point. The section that caused problems was the one on his colleagues. Weaker candidates gave information about his relationship with his colleagues and how this changed, without linking the information to the question. The

best answers mentioned how he was a role model for the other teachers and that influencing them to change their methods therefore had benefits for the students but there were not too many of these.

Example

Je Je crois que un bon professeur est
quelqu'un qui peut être ~~ce~~ identifié comme
~~don~~ ensemble un professeur et une personne.
Simplement car c'est leur job, beaucoup des
élèves oublient que ils sont aussi personnes.
Alors, je pense que ~~///~~ Clément Mathieu est un
bon exemple de ce.
Commencer avec, il est très responsable avec
les autres. ~~Si~~ Si c'était Père Maxence, Pépint,
Morhange peut-être aussi Mondain. Mathieu
toujours prend les ~~responsibiliti~~ responsabilités
que il pense était nécessaire. Pour Père
Maxence c'était ~~s/à~~ ~~tra~~ Corbin s'aider
parce que il à causée l'incidie. À lieu
de le normal « Action... Réaction! »
qui Radin utilise, qui est le cachot, il a
lui discipline dans un façon différent.
~~Se a~~ Cet a aide les élèves ~~à~~ voir

La sympathie existe. C'est une chose qui un livre ne peut pas aider avec. Aussi, à Violette il a dit que «Je n'ai pas un enfant... j'ai soixante.» Ici, nous comprenons ~~que~~ ~~es~~ combien ils sont important à lui. Ce montre à l'audience ~~que~~ ~~il~~ ~~e~~ qu'il est plus ~~que~~ ~~que~~ juste un professeur; il a des émotions, et alors il adore ses élèves. Il est une personne.

Ce très ^{claire} ~~claire~~ ^{quand} que Mathieu arrivé à le Fond de l'étang. Les enfants sont ne contente pas. Il sont contente quand il cause les problèmes. ~~Et~~ Mathieu ~~prends~~ ~~leur~~ ~~passion~~ de leur même passion et ~~ce~~ ~~ce~~ ~~change~~ dans ~~à~~ la musique. Spécifiquement sur la chanson «Vois sur ton Chemin ~~»~~». Les paroles expliquent le vraiment du ses élèves. Comme sur ~~la~~ «peur de la nuit» quand il y avait un scène où ~~il~~ ~~il~~ ~~y~~ ~~avait~~ un garçon qui ne peut pas dormir. Mais Mathi

~~Le~~ Mathieu est très clair et il écoute. Ces
chansons étaient ~~esper~~ l'espère qu'ils
doit avaient. Peut-être, sans Mathieu,
Morhange n'aurait pas le succès

18



dans son carrière. Après le voix-off a
fini. ~~Le~~ Morhange a le livre près de son
cœur. Ce montre l'impact ^{d'un} profes-
-eur avait sur son élève.

Cinématographiquement, nous pouvons aussi ~~à voir~~
regardons les temps dans lesquels il était ~~tout~~
tout ~~à~~ seul et il pense à propos ~~de~~ les
des garçons et comment il peut fait choses
faire leurs vies améliorer. Alors comme un
bon professeur, il montre que ~~il~~ qu'il
est aussi une personne et les élèves
sont personnes aussi ~~aussi~~.

Critical analysis mark : 7

Accuracy of Language : 7

Total mark : 14

This answer goes beyond the recommended upper word limit and is an example of a piece of work in which the length impacts on the focus required for the question. The essay does not really address the precise terms of the question very closely. Instead, it tends to discuss in very general terms qualities of a good and a bad teacher. The introduction appears to identify in general terms what a good teacher is and then mentions Clement Mathieu as an example of this. What is said about the Choir and the songs the children are singing is no doubt true but it is not linked back to any relevant argument. The same can be said when the candidate mentions the boy that cannot sleep, it is quite hard to see the relevance of the lengthy narrative on the qualities of a good teacher and why Mathieu is a good teacher. At the end of this section the candidate tries to provide a relevant link between his work with Morhange and Morhange's future success as a musician but it is unconvincing. The conclusion does not

lead to any greater relevance. This is a very general essay. It is possible only to infer some tenuous relevance to the question. Conclusions certainly do not fully link to pertinent arguments. Especially where the cinematography mentioned in the conclusion is concerned. The evidence from the work does not illustrate the requirements of the question. For critical analysis the piece was placed at the top of the 5-8 box. this was given a 7. The language is no better than the content, there are certainly lots of imperfections. The syntax is rather clumsy and anglicised, the candidate cannot deal with basic grammatical structures which in turn sometimes impedes communication. The vocabulary is rather mixed. There is definitely some repetition, particularly of expressions rather than of single words but there are also very few lexical items which go beyond the basic and are apt to convey the desired message. The candidate shows the ability to deploy little correct word order. There are straightforward subordinations. There is no variation of structures. The forms of the language have flaws in the shape of missed agreements and gender and the verbs are sometimes correct but there are too many misspellings. Viewed in isolation, the forms of the language were deemed to be worth a mark of 7.

Paper Summary

Based on their performance on this paper, candidates are offered the following advice:

- Practise the exercise of translating from English into French as often as possible
- For question 1, learn to spot the grammatical items being tested and check what is written as carefully as possible.
- In the essays resist the temptation to write all you know about the prescribed work.
- Answer the precise terms of the question, with no irrelevance or digressions, roughly within the suggested word limits.
- Make pertinent analytical points and back them up with appropriate references to the text or film.
- Use narrative sparingly to illustrate the points being made.
- Ensure they have enough time to review everything they have written.

