

Rubric for translations

Please note that when reading translations into Chinese, I always grade the “readability” and “style” categories in consultation with a Chinese native speaker (usually a colleague in the LCC).

	Poor <i>(very significant problems of a fundamental nature)</i> “amateur”	Adequate <i>(competent but with plenty of room for improvement)</i> “workmanlike”	Very good <i>(only minor problems)</i> “shows craftsmanship”	Flawless <i>(no problems)</i> “masterful”
Readability	Difficult or almost impossible to read. The reader might often feel tempted to consult the source text to understand the translation.	Reading requires effort, but it is still possible to follow from beginning to end.	Reads smoothly, but the reader may experience some minor distractions and confusions.	An utterly smooth read for a reader familiar with the genre. No distractions whatsoever.
Accuracy	Contains major unintended deviations from the meaning of the source text resulting from misunderstanding, lack of thought, lack of research, or (if L2 translation) misuse of L2 vocabulary.	Contains a fair number of deviations from the meaning of the source text that serve no clear purpose, but the overall meaning is competently conveyed.	Shows a high degree of attention to detail and the nuances of meaning. However there may be noticeable small deviations from the source text that serve no clear purpose.	Shows a high degree of attention to detail and to the nuances of meaning. Deviations from the source text clearly serve a good purpose, such as enhancing readability or stylistic appropriateness.
Style	Style is confused. There is not a single discernable style. OR Style is utterly inappropriate for the genre.	Style is not always appropriate to genre. OR Stylistic choices leave something to be desired. May feel “stiff,” “awkward,” or “robot-like”	The text is written in a style appropriate for the genre, but it is uneven: occasionally word choices or sentence patterns are inappropriate for the genre. A sense of “voice” may be present, but this too is uneven or not always appropriate for the writer or speaker(s).	Style is pitch-perfect: utterly appropriate for the genre. A sense of “voice” is present (when appropriate), both for the writer/narrator and for characters or other speakers within the text. Characters or other speakers speak in ways that are convincing and appropriate.

Rubric for translator’s notes

Please note that when reading Chinese writing, I always grade the “language use” category in consultation with a Chinese native speaker (usually a colleague in the LCC).

	Poor	Adequate	Very good	Outstanding
Language use	Difficult or almost impossible to read.	Reading requires effort, but it is still possible to follow from beginning to end.	Reads smoothly, though the reader may experience some minor distractions and confusions.	An utterly smooth read, with a sense of individual style (“voice”)
Insight and substance	Devoid of substance – has almost nothing to say. (Or says it so incoherently that it seems that way.)	Says something meaningful, but doesn’t go particularly deep. Might lack focus, scattering attention over too many unrelated points; or might state things too vaguely, without specific examples.	Explores a single idea (or several closely related ideas) in depth, illustrating points using specific examples from the text. May draw a connection with the ideas we’re exploring in this class, or offer some other interesting angle or insight.	← Does everything in “very good” in a particularly eloquent way. Has the polish and maturity of publishable writing.

Final grade calculations

Note: Scoring in the “flawless / outstanding” category functions as a tiebreaker. If you have at least one of these and yours is a borderline case between two of the grade levels below, I’ll bump it up to the higher grade level.

A	6 or more “very goods” total, with at least 3 in the final challenge, and no “poors” in the final challenge
A-	4 or more “very goods” total, with at least 2 in the final challenge, and no “poors” in the final challenge
B+	At least one “very good” on any challenge, and no “poors” on the final challenge
B	No “poors” in the final challenge
B-	One or two “poors”
C range	More than two “poors”
D and below	More than two “poors,” and a pattern of late, missing, or incomplete work, and/or a pattern of lates and absences