

Cambridge University Press
978-1-316-61257-6 — Junior Translation from French
R. L. Graeme Ritchie , James M. Moore
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

**JUNIOR TRANSLATION
FROM FRENCH**

Cambridge University Press
978-1-316-61257-6 — Junior Translation from French
R. L. Graeme Ritchie , James M. Moore
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

Cambridge University Press
978-1-316-61257-6 — Junior Translation from French
R. L. Graeme Ritchie , James M. Moore
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

JUNIOR TRANSLATION FROM FRENCH

BY

R. L. GRÆME RITCHIE, M.A., D.LITT.

*Docteur de l'Université de Paris: Lauréat de l'Académie
Française: Professor of French in the
University of Birmingham*

AND

JAMES M. MOORE, M.A.

Lecturer in French in the
University of Edinburgh

CAMBRIDGE
AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS
1928

Cambridge University Press
978-1-316-61257-6 — Junior Translation from French
R. L. Graeme Ritchie , James M. Moore
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781316612576

© Cambridge University Press 1928

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 1928
First paperback edition 2016

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-1-316-61257-6 Paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication, and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Cambridge University Press
978-1-316-61257-6 — Junior Translation from French
R. L. Graeme Ritchie , James M. Moore
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

PREFACE

This book deals with translation from French into English, from the beginnings up to the standard of the School Certificate Examinations. It requires no excuse. On the one hand no other such book exists, except our own advanced *Translation from French*. On the other hand the examination papers in French, which contain—and always will contain—passages for translation into English, are being attempted by candidates without any real instruction in the art.

It is too often assumed that special training is not essential, that the exercise can be safely left to the inspiration of the moment in the examination room, and that, in the limited time available, attention is more profitably devoted to other things. The results show this assumption to be entirely false. More candidates fail because of weakness in translating into English than because of weakness in any other part of the papers. In the case of those who do pass, the pass is often unsatisfactory to everyone concerned. Of the very numerous failures many are caused not by ignorance of French but by inability to translate it.

It is in fact clear that while translation into French is well taught in our schools, translation into English is neglected. In French Composition the School Certificate scripts usually give evidence of careful teaching. The exercise is performed with adequate, often with complete, success. It is essentially one of exact application of grammatical rules. The passage set was probably chosen for its simplicity, and then simplified still more. Translation from the known to the unknown is in a sense the easier exercise, since the

Cambridge University Press
978-1-316-61257-6 — Junior Translation from French
R. L. Graeme Ritchie, James M. Moore
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

standard of French demanded from English children must always be lower than the standard of English. While translation into French is thus a test of accuracy, translation into English is a test of intelligence, judgment and taste. It tests comprehension of a passage which, even after considerable simplification, remains 'literature', and it involves the handling of English as a means of expressing ideas.

In translating from French the average School Certificate candidate shows such unwillingness to come to grips with the passage, such inability to clothe French ideas in suitable English words, such disregard of French usage and of the King's English as almost to warrant the belief that he has never heard what translation into English really means.

It means, among other things, learning—and practising—an art which, like any other art, has its own principles, rules and methods. Translation requires knowledge of the foreign language, but knowledge of a special kind, for good linguists may be bad translators. It demands three qualities: power to understand the exact sense of foreign words, power to *see* what they describe or to grasp the idea they convey, and power to express this correctly in English. These three qualities are not acquired by the light of nature. The first two are acquired by using not one but many methods. The third presupposes knowledge of certain guiding principles, constant practice, and the gradual acquisition of clear notions as to the relative force and values of French and English words and phrases.

Translation into English is thus one of the most complex processes in language-learning. It is also one of the most fascinating and most instructive. It opens in the foreign language vistas which would otherwise

Cambridge University Press
978-1-316-61257-6 — Junior Translation from French
R. L. Graeme Ritchie, James M. Moore
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

PREFACE

vii

remain closed. It forces us to clear up difficulties of interpretation which without it would simply have been ignored, and thus to learn necessary facts of language which nothing else can teach. Of the many roads which at one time or another we must follow in our approach to French, translation into English is perhaps the most obvious, and it has over all others this advantage that, while it takes us a long way towards mastery of French, it also takes us a long way towards mastery of English. But it is a road which has been too often avoided or misused.

The foreign teachers to whom the French classes were so long entrusted shunned it, because for them it was full of pitfalls subversive of discipline. The older school of British teachers misused it when in class-reading they translated every line, every word, however simple. The first exponents of the newer methods would not use it themselves and warned everyone else against it, maintaining that it perpetuated the bad habit of interposing English between the French word and the idea it expresses. Examining bodies, however, retained their faith in the value of translation into the mother-tongue as a test of linguistic knowledge. And well they might, for no one has yet devised a more satisfactory practical means of testing exact and full comprehension of a passage written in a foreign language. But by setting incredibly long passages, to be translated in an incredibly short time, they showed that they underestimated the difficulty of the exercise and mistook its nature.

Sounder views now prevail. It is being recognized that even if the exact sense of all French expressions could be taught by the exclusive use of French in the classroom, translation would still have its place in

Cambridge University Press
978-1-316-61257-6 — Junior Translation from French
R. L. Graeme Ritchie, James M. Moore
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

language study, that while rapid translation, done orally in class and necessarily very rough, is apt to result in waste of time, careful translation is highly instructive. Now that the teaching of French in this country is being steadily reduced to order and common-sense we make here our contribution to that process, as follows:

Since translation cannot begin at the very beginnings of French, we assume that those who use this book are able to understand roughly the meaning of simple French. The preliminary instruction which they require before they can profitably embark on translation is given in an Introduction embodying the experience acquired in examining many thousands of candidates at the School Certificate stage. In it we discuss the general principles and the special difficulties involved in translation from French, classify the errors most commonly made and draw attention to those points in French grammar with which translation is most concerned. The examples utilized for these purposes are as a rule drawn from the 120 passages in this book. The information supplied in the Introduction could of course be extended indefinitely. But these are not chance passages. They are the siftings of hundreds which we have ourselves tested and at least one-third of them have been actually set in School Certificate Examinations. We are confident that they contain the bulk of the language-material of which passages set at this stage must always be composed.

The necessary practice is provided in eighty passages accompanied by Vocabularies and Notes. What we try to teach here is not the meaning of individual words, but the process of translation. The Vocabularies give, in the order in which the words occur in the French text, the meanings unfamiliar to pupils at the stage

PREFACE

ix

concerned. The English terms suggested are not necessarily those which best translate the French. Others, better suited to the context, will often be found by the pupil himself. Frequently several possible variants are suggested in order to afford practice in the very essential art of selection. The Notes draw attention, interrogatively where possible, to important points which a translator might easily miss. All the French words translated or discussed are collected in an Index at the end of the book.

Systematic progress from the easier to the more difficult stages is ensured by exact grading of the passages within four Sections; I and II contain none beyond the standard of Matriculation and First School Certificate, III and IV lead up to that of the University Entrance, Scottish Leaving Certificate and the various Higher School Certificate Examinations. From Section to Section less and less elementary help is offered.

To show what the difficulties are, and how they are practically met, we have written six Model Lessons. Sections I and II are each introduced by two of these, Sections III and IV by one.

For Unseen Translation, i.e. translation considered as a test, material for practice is provided in the forty graded pieces of Section V. Here also the meaning of uncommon words is given, but the help of Notes is withheld. The Unseen is essentially a test. The general preparation for it is wide reading; the special preparation is that given in the Introduction and the four corresponding Sections.

We suggest that after pupils have translated a passage they should be examined in its vocabulary. This seems to us one of the best ways of learning words whether for composition or for translation purposes.

Cambridge University Press
978-1-316-61257-6 — Junior Translation from French
R. L. Graeme Ritchie , James M. Moore
Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

x

PREFACE

Attention has just been fixed on them, not as isolated units but in a context, and their precise sense has been ascertained. They should now be committed to memory, with their gender and spelling, more particularly the words given in the Vocabularies. All of these are not only words likely to recur in examination papers (since that is precisely where we found them), but words which anyone wishing to know French must learn, ammunition indispensable in the minor war with examiners and in the major war with French writers whose meaning must be extorted by force.

Translation, unlike Mathematics, has no final standard of truth. A passage means something slightly different to each reader. We cannot hope to have dealt with each and all of the points which will arise in the practical use of this book, and we should welcome comments or suggestions from teachers. That they appreciate our efforts we are now well aware, and we are very grateful. Henceforth we shall be even more grateful to those who will kindly point out to either of us the shortcomings in this or in any other of our books.

R. L. G. R.
J. M. M.

July 1928

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	page
1. Unseen translation	1
2. For those who, having eyes, see not .	4
3. For those who, having ears, hear not .	5
4. On acquiring the necessary stock of words	6
5. Everyday words: common words: rare words	7
6. How to ascertain the meaning of rare words	8
7. Spellings and gender	9
8. Intelligent guessing	10
9. Absurd mistakes	12
10. Etymology as an aid	14
11. The origin of words as a guide to their sense	15
12. Breaking up a word into its component parts	16
13. The prefix of verbs	17
14. French verb = English verb + adverb .	20
15. Some suffixes	21
16. French and English homonyms . .	22
17. The danger of attaching to a French word one meaning only	27
18. On avoiding hypnotism	29
19. Blank cheques	30
20. Word-for-word translation	31
21. Translation by a different part of speech	33
22. Misplaced 'accuracy'	33
23. Names of peculiarly French things . .	34
24. On omitting or supplying words . .	36
25. The uses of English synonym	37
26. On avoiding stilted language	39

27. Some difficult words	40
28. Some prepositional and other phrases	41
29. The construction of the sentence	43
30. The construction of the verb	45
31. On altering the French construction	46
32. On preserving the French order of words	46
33. The indefinite article	48
34. The definite article	48
35. The adjective	49
36. The plural of nouns	50
37. The relative pronoun	51
38. The relative adverb <i>où</i>	52
39. The personal pronoun	52
40. <i>En</i> and <i>y</i>	53
41. <i>On</i>	54
42. The possessive adjective	55
43. The verb: mood	55
44. The verb: tense	56
45. The participles	58
46. The gerund	59
47. <i>Devoir, pouvoir, savoir, vouloir</i>	59
48. The construction after verbs	60
49. Reflexives	61
50. Conjunctions	62
51. Adverbs	64
52. Negatives	65
53. <i>Plus</i>	66
54. On translating prepositions	66
55. The prepositions <i>à</i> and <i>de</i>	68
56. Other prepositions	70
57. On omitting prepositions	71
58. Style	72
59. On translating verse	74
60. Practical hints in the examination room	78

Cambridge University Press
 978-1-316-61257-6 — Junior Translation from French
 R. L. Graeme Ritchie , James M. Moore
 Frontmatter
[More Information](#)

CONTENTS	xiii
PASSAGES FOR TRANSLATION	
<i>Section I</i>	
Model Lesson I A	81
Model Lesson I B	91
Extracts 1–20	100–116
<i>Section II</i>	
Model Lesson II A	116
Model Lesson II B	125
Extracts 21–40	131–148
<i>Section III</i>	
Model Lesson III	149
Extracts 41–60	155–172
<i>Section IV</i>	
Model Lesson IV	173
Extracts 61–80	178–196
<i>Section V</i>	
Extracts 81–120	197–226
INDEX OF FRENCH WORDS TRANSLATED OR DISCUSSED	227
INDEX OF PASSAGES FOR TRANSLATION	247