

for **Erasmus students** who attended only one term¹ or both

Lingua e traduzione – lingua inglese I

Codice univoco Corso: ez1akgt

Corso di Laurea: Lingue, culture e letterature moderne (L-11)

Prof.ssa Anna Vita Bianco

annavita.bianco@uniba.it

Preparation for the written and oral exam

The aim of my course is to "stop" to reflect on the degree of awareness we have of the language we use (sounds, single words or entire sentences) both in our mother tongue and in English. By "language" I also mean thoughts (the silent ones or the ones that we say to ourselves) or "beliefs", that is, ideas that we have about us as people and about what happens around us. They cross our mind, often without realizing it, because we have them habitually (because we have heard them from others or because we have thought them, or both).

In order to be aware of our thoughts it is important to stop and notice the emotions we feel when we think and to write them down. Emotions and thoughts predispose us to certain moods and actions which, in turn, affect what we are doing and the results we will achieve (doing an exercise, being happy, being sad, etc.). Emotions and thoughts also predispose us to say certain words or sentences in Italian and English that can hurt or not our addressee, without often realizing it.

"Culture" means "welcoming": it is taking into account others and ourselves without offending others. "Culture" means being aware of the impact of our words and thoughts on others and, consequently, on ourselves.

The fact that we are not aware of all or a part (remember the exercise of parked cars) of the emotions we feel and the thoughts that cross our minds at every moment ("I'm thirsty. I'll get the bottle of water") followed by actions (holding the bottle, unscrewing it, etc. This was one of the exercises I suggested in class) does not mean that we did not feel emotions or that those thoughts never crossed our minds, much less that those actions (taking the bottle, unscrewing the cap, taking the glass or drinking directly from the bottle...) did not happen.

Emotions and thoughts, decisions and actions are connected (see my mindmap "Credenze, mente ed emozioni" in the "dispensa" and Daniel Goleman's pages on Emotional intelligence): the more we are aware of the emotions and thoughts we have before and as we carry out an exercise of English (any other action / goal), the more we can change our mood and thoughts and direct them on what we are doing to achieve our goals. Saying to yourself "I'm not good at English" or "This sentence is easy" predisposes us to certain (unpleasant) emotions and to act in a non-vigilant, careful way (it is like saying "If this sentence is

¹ The syllabus for the Erasmus students who attended the whole year (I e II term) is the same as the one for LCLM students.

easy, I won't waste my time on underlining the grammatical categories with colours and I won't find all the words in the monolingual or bilingual dictionary, etc.) and easily predisposes us to errors/mistakes.

Remember, however, that errors/mistakes are opportunities for learning. And, therefore, they are useful. These are not moments to judge ourselves negatively, nor are they moments a teacher (I) judges each of you negatively. The quantity or the quality of errors you make has nothing to do with my personal judgment of each of you as a person.

Stopping to notice our emotions and thoughts, that is to increase our awareness of the emotions we feel and the thoughts we have before an English exercise (an exam to prepare, speaking in English aloud alone or at home, going to speak with someone, etc.), prepares us to accept small changes in our habits and solutions to achieve our goals that until that moment we had not noticed or had discarded.

With a view to preparing and taking the written and oral exams, therefore, write down on a sheet of paper the emotions and thoughts (or "beliefs") that crossed your mind before doing an exercise or while you are doing it (thoughts about yourself, about the exercise itself, etc.) and the emotions you are feeling-felt before-during-after an exercise (any exercise in the written test).

The minimum time frame required for annotations of thoughts and emotions is 3 weeks. Sharing thoughts that you had only one day for few minutes or the emotions you felt for few seconds/a few minutes/ one day before the oral exam have no value or sense for me. In other words, you will not pass the exam if you share that thoughts you had and emotions you felt only one day.

Before an exercise (and during it), stop and ask yourself the questions listed on the sheet of paper "Awareness: Emotions + Beliefs" that you find in the "dispensa" and write down the answers in a notebook, also reporting the day and time.

Write down the date and thoughts / emotions, as a logbook, all the time up to the day of your exam to see whether there are any changes in your mood and thoughts and goals achieved (translation or exercise done well, according to your expectations): in other words, any change on your level of awareness. If you do not write them down, you will forget them and they will be limited to 2 or 3.

Remember that the thoughts we have are "contradictory" and are all present in our mind (see my mindmap "Credenze, mente, emozioni"): that is, if we say to ourselves "I'm good at English!" or "It's easy/That sentence is easy to translate!", stop and think about the real reason why you are thinking/saying that. Am I asking that because I really think I am good at English? Am I feeling I'm having a race, in my head, with others? Or am I hoping, in front of a magic ball or with a magic wand, that "this time" I will prove to myself and to others around me that I am 100% good / good (fast, etc.) at English?

To understand the real reason(s) why we think certain thoughts before an English exercise (or any goal we want to achieve) and, that is, to understand if they are really useful, stop and think if, after a few seconds, you feel depressed, mortified, discouraged, tired, in front of the exercise / the same sentence you are translating. If you feel discouraged, bored, etc., that is, if you are experiencing unpleasant emotions, which do not give you energy, it means that those thoughts you had a moment before are limiting you: they are not useful because they do not give the right energy to do what you are doing and to reach your aims.

At first, it will seem to you that these stops in reflecting on your thoughts or looking up words in the various dictionaries, including the English monolingual one, are the real 'culprits' (the pigeons in the story we read in class) of your unpleasant emotions and of your unwillingness to use the tools we shared during

the Course. This is a sabotaging belief: it is resistance to change, that is the resistance of your old habit to learn a new one that will lead you to think so.

Written and oral exam: to prepare for the written and oral exam, read carefully the pages by Giorgio Nardone, Susan David, and Guy Deutscher to understand how thoughts influence the way we see the world around us (the exercises we want to do, an object, a person, etc.) and how to avoid acting or reacting on impulse. If in front of a sentence to be translated you have the impulse to translate it and write the translation on the sheet / file with the pen, without looking up the words in the monolingual, bilingual dictionary, etc., be careful if you have that impulse: take note of what you did and of the thoughts that (had) crossed your mind before doing what you did. Or notice if you feel like typing the sentence on the automatic machine/translator. When you act on impulse it means that thoughts passed and are passing through your mind and you experienced and are experiencing certain emotions. Stopping before acting on impulse is the key to understand how we can plan/change to solve a problem (translation, etc.) and to understand if we are choosing the right strategy, the most suitable and effective solution.

If up to that point that method you have always used has not worked it is because the method needs to be revised/changed a little bit. But if you are not aware of your method, it will be difficult for you to make changes and achieve different results than you have achieved so far.

Preparation for the written exam (or "partial test"/"prova parziale") To practice in view of the written test, at the bottom of my personal page in the "Didattica" section (and on Microsoft Teams, 2020-2021) you will find the file with all the written tests of the previous exams (from September 2020 backwards to June 2012). You can find the same file in the paper version at the VistoSiStampi photocopy shop, Fornari street n. 3, Bari. To contact the owner and to arrange any delivery (in this particular period – covid), send an email to her to mariamariani@libero.it.

Remember that errors/mistakes are opportunities for learning. And, therefore, they are useful. These are no moments to judge ourselves negatively.

I will correct your potential errors (both of the exercises that you will send me to correct them and in the written tests) by underlining them with a **green colour**. My choice is based on a word play in Italian and a psychological association. In Italian "to go through to a green light (at the traffic light)" is translated as "passare col verde", literally "to pass with the green colour". If you see the green colour in your exercise, then, it is more likely that you will associate those green lines as ways to pass your exam and not as something bad you have done (usually "errors"/"mistakes" are felt as bad things and unpleasant emotions rather than useful emotions and moments). If you then associate the green colour with the mistake(s), you will potentially get the idea that it is useful to make them and, over time, they will seem less 'unpleasant' than they seem now and you will accustom your mind and eyes to see them as opportunities to learn and to "pass" the exam and not to be misjudged. In fact, if you are aware of the (useful) mistakes you make in English and Italian (when you translate), you will start to make fewer and fewer. This will allow you, indeed, to pass the exam.

Marks: I will not put marks on the exercises during your preparation for the written exam, because seeing them will frighten and demoralize you. I will write a colour in place of the marks: either pale blue, light blue or blue. These 3 colours, in this sequence (pale blue-light blue-blue) comprise the marks from the lowest to the highest. And I will put them on your sheet/file that you will eventually send me to correct. The marks will be shown in the shape of a star, because that will "guide" you to carry out the next exercises (my suggestion is to learn and listen and be guided by what a little voice in your head said/is saying).

In order to translate, my suggestion is to underline with different colours the various grammatical categories (noun, verb, adjective, preposition, conjunction, adverb) and elements such as punctuation and capital letters in the English and Italian text (if any, especially not at the beginning of the sentence) (you can find the chart/file with all the grammatical categories in the Course group on Microsoft Teams). After having identified the grammatical categories (grammatical analysis), try to understand the subjects of the sentences and the related direct object or indirect complements. Use the English monolingual dictionary to understand the grammatical category and the English grammar book to understand how a sentence can be structured.

Take your time to translate. Use all the tools I suggested in class (monolingual and bilingual dictionaries, automatic translators, etc. There is a file containing all the tools on the platform), and take note of what you do step by step (awareness of thoughts and emotions). Write down how long it takes you to translate a sentence and then gradually two sentences, three, and so on.

The goal of the exercises is not to evaluate how fast you were to complete a translation or how many rules-non-rules of grammar or syntax you know. Quite the opposite: my aim is to see how slow you are/were in translating because finding all the details hidden among the words, i.e. the clues on the text and then in the dictionary, etc., takes time. Moreover, it is annoying for those who have never done it before (because there is the belief or habit of thinking that it is a waste of time and that it is counterproductive). Usually, you would be tempted to type the sentence on the automatic translator/machine and leave it as it is and copy it (the habit of going fast).

To find out if your translation is correct or not, you can send it to me by email and assess it together during my receiving hours (I can also send it back to you corrected by email).

During my receiving hours you can also share your emotions and thoughts on any topic of my Course or about yourself to understand how to proceed in preparation for the written and oral exam.

To take part in my receiving hours, follow the instructions on the Pdf file at the bottom of my personal academic page under the section "Didattica".

The written exam lasts 3 hours.

Remember that, during the written exam, Erasmus students are allowed to use an English monolingual dictionary and an English thesaurus.

Erasmus students who do not master Italian very well can also use a bilingual Dictionary (Italian-Polish/Polish-Italian, Italian-Greek/Greek Italian, and so on) during their written exam.

Erasmus students who do not master Italian very well are allowed not to translate the text from English into Italian contained in the written test and their written exam will always last 3 hours.

Oral exam. The oral exam consists of two parts: the first part is called "Emotions & Thoughts and Awareness". This first part consists in sharing your thoughts (or beliefs) and emotions about yourself or while studying the material or while doing any English exercise (be it a translation or composition, etc.) that you had written down over 3 weeks. You can also write only the symptoms or physiological responses if you cannot identify the 'names' of the emotions you felt (see the pages by Daniel Goleman in Italian or in English in the "dispensa").

To prepare the first part of the oral exam, read the theory, i.e. the texts by Giorgio Nardone, Daniel Goleman, Susan David, and Guy Deutscher (of the last 3 writers you will find the same pages both in the English and in the Italian version). The theoretical part will help you to understand how emotions and thoughts affect your actions. Therefore, write down your emotions and thoughts before translating a text/studying, etc.

During the oral exam, I will not ask you questions on the topics covered in the 4 texts mentioned before because, in order to share your thoughts and emotions during the first part of the oral exam, I assume you read them. If any of you want to mention the topics or examples reported by one or more of the 4 writers, I will be happy to hear your impressions/emotions: those texts are above all functional to carry out that exercise of your awareness and annotation of thoughts/emotions.

The first part can be held in English or Italian (it is your choice). Talking about your emotions and thoughts may be embarrassing for many of you: that is why I decided that you can choose the language to express them. Those who choose to share their emotions and thought in Italian during the first part of the oral exam will not be penalized. I allow them to speak in Italian.

It is not an 'English' exam as you have been used to.

The aim of the exam is, in fact, to start doing, one step at a time, what you are not used to doing, that is: to do the opposite of what you would be tempted to do and what you generally used to do.

If you are ashamed or afraid to share this part in front of others for fear of judgment, you can request to take the exam only with me.

The first part of the exam is not optional. Those who do not share their emotions and thoughts cannot pass the oral exam.

The second part of the oral exam, "Sounds & Words, Culture and Awareness" is held entirely in English.

Erasmus students who attend only one term (whether the first or the second): you will be asked 2 questions (on morphology, namely abbreviations, clipping, blending, non-sense, and theory and practice of translation, namely the article by Umberto Eco) contained in the "dispensa").

Erasmus students who attend both terms, namely the whole year: you will be asked 2 questions on the topics contained in the "dispensa".

To study for your written/oral exams, you can create your own Mind Maps.

You are allowed to bring and use your Mind Maps during your oral exam.

Remember that mind maps must contain keywords and images and/or examples if you need them (not all words/definitions contained in the original texts).

To draw and create your own mind maps, read the English slides in the *dispensa*. You can also find the slides in the English and Italian version on the group of the Course on Microsoft Teams (Codice univoco Corso: ez1akgt).

Also watch the following two videos on the Internet about Mind Maps:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u5Y4plsXTV0>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=76Roy4E4ZbE&t=5s>

If and when you want to change a habit, it is important to proceed small steps at a time and not to expect (either from yourself or from others) radical changes, that is actions that have been considered unnatural until then.

So remember what Napoleon said: "Since I am in a hurry, I will go very slowly ..."

That is why, in the meantime, I wish you lots of slowness and awareness of your thoughts and emotions 😊!