

THÈME

En 2002, l'évaluation des compétences en anglais chez les élèves de 15 à 16 ans dans sept pays européens nous a classés bons derniers. Le fait n'est pas nouveau. On déplore notre retard depuis des années, mais jusqu'ici aucune mesure n'a été efficace.

Aujourd'hui l'Europe ne nous laisse plus le choix. Depuis 2000, les pays membres de l'Union ont adopté un cadre commun afin que tous les petits Européens apprennent à « se débrouiller » dans au moins une langue étrangère. La France se met enfin en conformité avec ces exigences.

La situation n'en est pas moins dramatique, car le marché du travail est déjà largement bilingue. Du haut en bas de la pyramide, et dans tous les métiers, l'anglais est devenu indispensable. Ne pas le maîtriser devient un facteur d'exclusion. La mondialisation galope, et l'anglais gagne tous les jours un peu plus de terrain. Dernier exemple en date : les brevets déposés (1) ne seront plus traduits de leur langue d'origine.

D'après C. Brizard et V. Radier, *Le Nouvel Observateur*, le 25 octobre 2007

Aide à la traduction

(1) brevets déposés = *registered patents*

EXPRESSION ÉCRITE

Rappel

| Ceci n'est pas un exercice de contraction.

There are now an estimated 9 million BlackBerry users worldwide and the number in the UK is rising daily. They'll readily confess their addiction.

I understand these addicts because, briefly, I was one of them. For a few months I became transfixed by the portable email device, my eye returning constantly to it to see if the red light was winking. If it was, the curiosity was unbearable.

Eventually my BlackBerry hit technical trouble and that gave me my chance to escape. And like any reformed addict, I've come to see the full menace of the habit that had me in its grip.

Users boast that once you have a BlackBerry no time is dead time. Ten minutes waiting for a train are no longer lost, but used to plough through the email backlog. I asked one how he would spend those minutes in the past, before he was hooked. "Watching the crowd go by", he said. Moments like that are never wasted; they can be a rare chance to step off the hamster wheel and see the world.

Those are also the moments, I suspect, when an idea comes, when inspiration strikes. Yet now we are living in what the New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman calls the “age of interruption”, in which we “interrupt each other or ourselves with instant messages, email, spam or cellphone rings. Who can think or write or innovate under such conditions?”

“Ah, but my BlackBerry is actually liberating,” says the addict. “It allows me to reduce the mountain of work waiting for me at the office.” Except notice how there’s still plenty for them to do when they get there; if anything, the mountain only seems to get bigger.

A more truthful explanation is that the BlackBerry began as a status symbol. The device suggests indispensability and this is the sensation that hooks the user. Of course I have to be contactable: people need me!

The line you almost never hear is “my employer makes me carry this thing”. The truth is, we’re doing it to ourselves and this is surely the BlackBerry’s most pernicious feature.

Jonathan Friedland, *The Guardian Weekly*, 31 August 2007.

1. Why does the journalist call the portable email device a menace? (70 words minimum)
2. Do you think that modern technologies really facilitate communication? Give examples to illustrate your answer. (110 words minimum)

Proposition de correction

THÈME

Proposition de traduction

In 2002, when the English-language skills of 15-to-16 year-old pupils (1) in seven European countries were tested, France ranked last. This is nothing new. For years, we have been aware (2) that we have fallen far behind but none of the measures taken so far (3) has proved effective.

Today, Europe is no longer leaving us any choice. Since 2000, EU member states have ratified a common framework so that all European schoolchildren learn to get by in at least one (4) foreign language. France is finally complying with these requirements.

However, considering that the job market is already essentially bilingual, the situation is no less cause for concern. From the top to the bottom of the pyramid, and in all lines of work, English has become vital and not being able to speak it means you risk being left out.

Globalisation is advancing ever faster and English is gaining more ground by the day. Consider the latest (5) example: registered patents will no longer be translated from their original language.

Notes de traduction

- (1) Tout ce qui est placé avant le nom fait partie du groupe adjectival, donc est invariant.
- (2) Action commencée dans le passé et poursuivie au moment d'énonciation, donc present perfect, *have* + participe passé.
- (3) Variantes: *hitherto*, *up to now*.
- (4) On insiste sur l'unicité, d'où le choix de « one » au lieu de « a », moins précis.
- (5) Différenciez « the last » (le dernier d'une série) de « the latest » (le dernier en date).

EXPRESSION ÉCRITE

1. **Why does the journalist call the portable email device a menace? (80 words ± 10%)**

Proposition A

The journalist muses on the nefarious habits tied to portable email technology. He writes that, under the pretence that we can catch up with our emails anytime, anywhere, and supposedly reduce office work, we have come to forget that down time was a unique opportunity to see the world and think on our own. Portable email devices lull us into thinking we are vital to those who contact us, whereas in reality the device proves detrimental to our freedom which we have sacrificed on the altar of efficient time-consumption.

(89 words)

Proposition B

The portable email device represents a threat for essentially three reasons. First, it creates the illusion of helping us cope with the huge amount of work that awaits us at the office. It does help us work faster but it also endlessly increases the burden of tasks. Moreover, being available and contactable round-the-clock leads to a constant disruption of the user in his or her activities. Instead of staying focused, and therefore creative and efficient, office workers are interrupted all the time. Lastly, the smartphone traps its users in a virtual world which cuts them off from the real world which was previously a source of inspiration and novelty.

(110 words)

2. **Do you think that modern technologies really facilitate communication? Give examples to illustrate you answer. (180 words ± 10%)**

Analyse du sujet

Le libellé du sujet sous-entend une remise en question de la capacité réelle des technologies modernes à améliorer la communication. On s'attend à un plan bipartite soulignant dans quelle mesure la communication semble plus facile. Afin de répondre à la question implicite de l'adverbe « really », nuancez cette première approche.

L'écueil principal consisterait à dresser un catalogue des moyens technologiques à disposition sans se poser la question de ce qu'est une vraie communication, ou encore de rédiger une seconde partie en totale contradiction avec le point de vue initial, et fondée sur un contrepied systématique. Il est plus intéressant de réfléchir à ce qui, dans le mode de communication, a changé avec les nouvelles technologies. Temps et distance ont été abolis, mais entretient-on le même type de rapports par écrans interposés ?

Proposition A

Changes in how we communicate and technology have always gone hand in hand. Today's ubiquitous hand-held devices are a game-changer but does technology truly foster communication?

Never before has mankind had so many tools for connecting with each other. Ground-breaking inventions have vastly accelerated the speed of communications while simultaneously reducing their cost. Our time frame has been condensed when compared to the severe limitations of sending a letter. So much is instantly accessible that we forget how people used to get in touch. They had to experience the passage of time, they had to be patient.

Mobile gadgets have an impact on the nature of communication: there has been a steady decline in face-to-face communications and an increased reliance on verbal and written communication through electronic media. The constant threat of interruptions has consequences on how we interact with each other physiologically and psychologically. What happens to communication when face-to-face encounters are rarefied and when real attention of someone in front of you is dwindling? No wonder the term "phubbing" was coined to describe the act of choosing a mobile phone over a person.

Communication is easier, but so is talking at cross purposes.

(197 words)

Proposition B

The means of communication at our disposal have significantly evolved and improved a lot over the last two decades, allowing instant exchanges, visual conversations and conference calls. Yet, communicating more and faster does not necessarily mean communicating better.

Obviously, it has never been easier to keep in touch with friends or relatives, whether they live far away or just round the corner. The mobile phone has made everyone accessible anywhere at any time. This freedom has been heightened by the various means and ways of exchanging at our disposal: giving a call, sending a text message, using emoticons to share our feelings, posting the latest news on social networks or making a quick post on a forum.

However, modern technologies also make it harder to communicate in real life. By dint of getting used to exchanging virtually, people no longer know how to really communicate with each other. Young people are so engrossed in their mobile phones that they are

unable to hold a proper conversation with an adult. Their language is getting poorer and their spelling is deteriorating. Talking behind a screen helps them lose their inhibitions and feel empowered to share their minds, but they can be inarticulate in a formal or professional context.

All in all, even if virtual means of communication help to communicate both more often and more easily, they do not foster rich, authentic and sincere exchanges.

(233 words)

THÈME

Le programme de Barack Obama pour l'environnement est le plus audacieux qu'un candidat à la Maison Blanche ait jamais défendu, mais la situation économique va rendre sa mise en œuvre difficile. Un des premiers tests sera la part faite à la création d'emplois « verts » dans le plan de soutien à l'économie qui pourrait être adopté dès ce mois-ci.

[...]

Au soir de son élection, M. Obama a confirmé la priorité que représente pour lui l'environnement quand il a cité, dans cet ordre, les défis de sa présidence : « Deux guerres, une planète en péril, la pire crise financière depuis un siècle ».

[...]

Le président élu considère son projet de développement d'une économie sobre en énergie, qui émettrait, en 2050, 20 % seulement des gaz à effet de serre produits en 1999, comme comparable au projet Apollo d'exploration de la Lune, lancé par John Kennedy au début des années 1960. Ambitieux, il a chiffré à 150 milliards sur dix ans son programme d'investissement sur les énergies renouvelables.

Adapté du *Monde*, novembre 2008

EXPRESSION ÉCRITE

Running dry

Most people may drink only two litres of water a day, but they consume about 3,000 if the water that goes into their food is taken into account. The rich gulp down far more, since they tend to eat more meat, which takes far more water to produce than grain. So as the world's population grows and incomes rise, farmers will – if they use today's methods – need a quarter more water than today to keep everyone fed, according to the International Water Management Institute (IWMI). Yet in many farming regions, water is scarce and likely to get scarcer as global warming worsens. The world is facing not so much a food crisis as a water crisis, argues Colin Chartres, IWMI's director-general.

The solution is more efficient use of water or, as the sloganeers put it, “more crop per drop.” Some 1.2 billion people live in places that are short of water. Farming accounts for roughly 70% of human water consumption. So when water starts to run out, as is happening in northern China, southern Spain and the western United States, farming tends to offer the best potential for thrift. But governments, whether to win votes or to protect the poor, rarely charge farmers a market price for water. So they are usually more wasteful than other consumers – even though the value they create from the water is often less than households or industry would be willing to pay for it.

The pressing need is to make water go further. Antoine Frérot, the head of Veolia Environment, a French firm, promotes recycling, whereby wastewater is treated until it can be used in industry or agriculture. This costs about a third less than desalination, and cuts pollution. Yet, as he concedes, there are even cheaper ways. As much as 70% of water used by farmers never gets to crops, perhaps lost through leaky irrigation channels or by draining into rivers or groundwater. Investment in drip irrigation, or simply repairing the worst leaks, could bring huge savings. Farmers in poor countries can usually afford such things only if they are growing cash crops. Even basic kit such as small rainwater tanks can be lacking. Yet modest water storage can hugely improve yields in rain-fed agriculture, by smoothing over short dry spells.

The Economist dated 20 September 2008

1. **Why, according to the journalist, is there a “pressing need to make water go further”?** Answer in your own words.
2. **In your opinion, what solutions – individual and collective – can help the world face the growing water crisis?**

Proposition de correction

THÈME

Proposition de traduction

Barack Obama’s program (1) for the environment is the boldest (2) any presidential candidate to the White House has ever supported (3), but the economic (4) situation is going to make its implementation difficult (5).

One of the first challenges will be the role of the “green” jobs created by the plan to boost (6) the economy which could be adopted as early as this month.

On the evening of his election, Mr Obama reasserted that the environment was a priority for him when he enumerated the challenges of his presidency (7) in the following order: “Two wars, a planet in peril, the worst (8) financial crisis in a century.”

The president-elect (9) considers that his program for the development of a low-energy economy, which, by 2050 would emit only 20% of the greenhouse gases produced in 1999, can be compared to the Apollo project to explore the moon, launched by John Kennedy at the beginning of the 1960s (10). As ambitious as he is, he has estimated that his investment in renewable energies will cost \$150 billion over the next ten years.

Notes de traduction

- (1) *Programme* (GB), *program* (US).
- (2) Variante: *audacious*.
- (3) Choix du *present perfect* car idée de bilan ici. Variante: *advocated*.
- (4) Attention à ne pas utiliser **economical*: idée de faire des économies, contrairement à *economic*: lié aux sciences économiques.
- (5) Variante: *make it difficult to implement*.
- (6) Variante: *to bolster*.
- (7) Ne pas séparer le verbe de son complément d'objet direct.
- (8) Ne pas confondre **worse* (comparatif de deux éléments) et *the worst* (superlatif).
- (9) Au moment de la date de parution de l'article, Obama n'a pas encore officiellement pris ses fonctions, d'où le terme *president-elect*.
- (10) Variante: *in the early 1960s*.

EXPRESSION ÉCRITE

1. **Why, according to the journalist, is there a “pressing need to make water go further”? Answer in your own words.**

Proposition de corrigé

Saving water is becoming a matter of urgency as global warming proves to be more threatening and as the worldwide population keeps on growing. As the number of people increases, the need for meat follows suit, triggering an even higher need for water in the process. Water is therefore becoming scarce in some parts of the globe, essentially because farming requires huge amounts of water, which is all too often wasted through leaks and inefficient drainage. The issue could however be addressed thanks to recycling, which could also curb pollution in its wake.

(91 words)

2. **In your opinion, what solutions – individual and collective – can help the world face the growing water crisis?**

Analyse du sujet

La question vous invite à partager votre opinion personnelle, il faudra donc vous éloigner des informations données dans le texte pour proposer vos propres connaissances sur le sujet. Il s'agit ici d'évoquer le problème mondial de la crise de l'eau, accentuée par les changements climatiques et l'augmentation démographique. Le sujet précise que le monde doit faire face à ce danger, il faudra donc proposer une réponse qui comprenne des solutions à l'échelle planétaire, autour de deux axes: individuel et collectif.