Joint Language Training Center
Utah National Guard

Testing Guide For Applicants

Introduction

Thank you for your interest in testing for possible employment with the Joint Language Training Center (JLTC). Here is a brief summary of key points we will cover in this test guide:

- Instructions on what to expect on test day.

- The transcription style we want you to use is similar to that of a court recorder where every word or partial word spoken is written and all spelling and punctuation is accurate.

- The more words you transcribe accurately, and the fewer spelling, accent, or punctuation errors you make, the higher your score on the transcription test.

- Make sure you proofread your transcription test before you turn it in. Check for words you may have missed, spelling errors, omitted accent marks, and punctuation errors.

- Meaning-based translation involves making sure that **all** meaning is transferred from one language into another language in a way that appears totally natural.

- Critical errors are those which significantly alter meaning from the source.

- Major errors are those which result in odd-sounding, clumsy translations, with no **significant** change in meaning.

- Minor errors generally involve format or appearance with no change in meaning. Spelling and punctuation errors are examples of this type of error. They detract from the overall professional appearance of the document.

- To successfully pass the translation test, you must render a precise, meaning-based translation of the text you will be given. Do not add to or detract from the meaning in the original language. Pay attention to details. Proofread your test before you turn it in to make sure you haven't missed anything and to make sure it sounds like natural language, not a translation.

What to Expect on Test Day

The test is given in Testing Center in building 9052 on Camp Williams at 17800 Camp Williams Road/Redwood Road south of Bluffdale and north of Saratoga Springs. You can get a map and directions on any map site on the Internet such as Google Maps (http://maps.google.com), Map Quest (http://www.mapquest.com), Yahoo! Maps (http://maps.yahoo.com), or Rand McNally maps (http://randmcnally.com).

Here are directions from I-15 Northbound from Utah county and Southbound from Salt Lake county:

<u>NORTHBOUND</u> - Travel time is approximately 25 minutes from exit 279
Exit I-15 at exit 279, Lehi Main Street
Head west 1.3 miles on Lehi Main Street to the traffic circle
Continue west on Lehi Main Street after the traffic circle for another 3.1 miles
Turn right at 10800 West/Camp Williams Road/Redwood Road
Continue northbound on Camp Williams Road 3.5 miles to the main gate
Turn right onto Camp Williams and follow the winding road 100 feet to the guard shack
You will need to present a picture ID to enter Camp Williams.
Once past the guard shack, continue straight east to the stop sign.
Turn right at the stop sign and travel south to the end of the parking lot.
Go to building 9052 and go through the first door. The doors will be locked. Ring the doorbell or call 801-716-9186 and let them know you have arrived to take the test.

SOUTHBOUND - Travel time is approximately 20 minutes from exit 289
Exit I-15 at exit 289, Bangerter Highway.
Follow Bangerter Highway 2.7 miles to Redwood Road/Camp Williams Road.
Turn left at Redwood Road which becomes Camp Williams Road.
Continue Southbound on Redwood Road/Camp Williams Road for 4.6 miles to the main gate.
Turn left onto Camp Williams and follow the winding road 100 feet to the guard shack.
You will need to present a picture ID to enter Camp Williams.
Once past the guard shack, continue straight east to the stop sign.
Turn right at the stop sign and travel south to the end of the parking lot.
Go to building 9052 and go through the first door. The doors will be locked. Ring the doorbell or call 801-716-9186 and let them know you have arrived to take the test.

Once you arrive at building 9052 someone will meet you in the lobby and direct you to the Testing Center. Please arrive no later than 10 minutes before your scheduled test time.

The test will take approximately three hours to complete. First the test proctor will take a few minutes to introduce the test. Then you will take the transcription test to measure your ability to transcribe spoken language word-for-word. You will have one hour to complete this test consisting of four 30-second audio clips. The last clip is very difficult due to static and interference, but this is intentional. After a short break, the proctor will give a brief introduction to the translation test. Then you will take the translation test to measure your ability to transfer the meaning from one language into a different language in a way that sounds natural and captures all the meaning. This test will also take one hour.

Both tests are completed on computers. The word processing software we use is Word Perfect, and we use Express Scribe to play back digital audio. Some of the details of these programs are described in sections below. Any non-language questions such as computer troubleshooting or test procedures may be asked of the test proctor who will assist you to minimize distractions.

If for some reason you cannot attend your scheduled test, it is important that you reschedule in advance. We can reschedule your test with as little notice as 24 hours. If you simply miss your test without rescheduling, you will not be allowed to retest until all other current applicants have tested. This could result in a wait of up to six months before you could be rescheduled for testing.

Transcription Definitions

There are a variety of transcription styles to choose from depending on the needs of your customer:

- Closed captioning for television programs which is often a quick gist of what was said with less focus on spelling and punctuation than on speed.

- Medical transcriptions which are detailed, word-for-word transcripts with specialized vocabulary and an emphasis on correct spelling and punctuation.

- Court recorders transcripts in which every word spoken in a court room is transcribed rapidly in real time with accurate spelling and punctuation.

For the transcription test, the style you will use is closer to the court recorder style than to closed captioning. Every word and partial word spoken must be represented in the transcript and spelled correctly. The transcript must be punctuated correctly following standard punctuation rules to accurately reflect what is said.

Transcription Test Instructions

You will hear four short audio clips of Spanish-language conversations. Any reduction in audio quality is intentional and a normal part of the test. The clips total approximately two minutes. You may listen to each clip before transcribing it. You'll be expected to transcribe every word you hear, in Spanish, using correct spelling and punctuation. You may jump from one clip to another as many times as you like. You'll need to **PRIORITIZE YOUR TIME** so as to complete all four clips as thoroughly as possible within the one-hour time limit. You must do your best on **ALL FOUR CLIPS** for us to accurately assess your language ability.

You may use dictionaries, spell check and other reference materials available at the test site. **DO NOT** solicit aid from other test candidates. If you have a question regarding the procedures of the test (software, troubleshooting, spell check, etc.), please ask the test proctor for assistance.

You will use a program called Express Scribe® to play the audio which will be a digital file on the computer you use to take the test. This is available free on the Internet if you'd like to download it to your own home computer to familiarize yourself with it before the day of your test. You can control the playback of the audio in one of two ways.

The most convenient method to control the audio in Express Scribe® is with the keyboard. You'll need to have the number lock on to use the keyboard to control the audio. This table shows the key strokes to control the audio from your keyboard:

5 - Play Audio	0 - Stop Audio Playback
4 - Rewind	6 - Fast Forward

2 - Decrease Playback Speed   8 - Increase Playback Speed

7 - Return to Normal Playback Speed

Ctrl+Home - Beginning of Audio   Ctrl+End - End of Audio

You may also use the mouse to click on the audio controls (▶ ■, etc.) on your screen. This is not recommended as it will slow down your typing speed when you take your hands off the keyboard to use the mouse. You can control the speed and volume by right clicking on the slider controls in the Express Scribe program, and, while holding down the mouse button, move the slider up or down to where you want it.

Regardless of the method you choose to play the audio, you can slow down the playback speed with the 2 key on the number pad, speed it up with the 8 key, and return to normal speed with the 7 key. You can also control the speed and volume by right clicking on the slider controls in the Express Scribe program, and, while holding down the mouse button, move the slider up or down to where you want it.

You will use Word Perfect to transcribe the recordings. Use the following key strokes for diacritical marks:

Apostrophe (')   Apostrophe key followed by space bar or a consonant (b,c,d,f,g,h,j)
Quotes (")   Quotation mark (") followed by a space or consonant
Accent (ó)   Apostrophe key followed by a vowel, (a,e,i,o,u)
Dieresis (ü)   Quotation mark (") followed by the letter u
Ñ ñ   Tilde key is located in upper lefthand corner of keyboard
¿   Right Alt and "?" key **or** Ctrl+Left Alt and "?" key
¡   Right Alt and "!" key **or** Ctrl+Left Alt and "!" key (No shift key)
ñ   Tilde key (~) in upper left corner of keyboard
Ñ   Shift+tilde key (~) in upper left corner of keyboard

Represent unintelligible phrases (phrases you can't make out no matter how hard you try), regardless of how many words, like this: [I/I]. Use only one [I/I] for the whole phrase regardless of how many words you cannot hear. For your convenience we have programmed the key strokes **Right Alt+X** or **Ctrl+Left Alt+X** to type this for you automatically. Simply press one of the two above-mentioned key combinations to insert these characters into your transcription.

You'll want to **spell check** and **proofread** your document prior to completing the test. Once test time has expired, no further cleanup will be permitted.

Transcription Grading and Scoring

When we grade your transcription test, we are concerned with three things. First we want to see what abilities you possess to hear and type the words as spoken in a recording of spoken Spanish regardless of the quality of the recording. Second we want to see your ability to correctly spell the words you type. Third we want to see your ability to punctuate and accent your transcript according to correct punctuation and accentuation rules.

Each recording you will transcribe has a certain number of words spoken. The raw score for your transcription test will be determined by deducting one point for each word you do not transcribe, and ½ point for each spelling or punctuation error. The raw score will be converted into a standard score based on a 100-point scale.

Meaning-Based Translation Definitions

There are also a variety of translation styles that could be used when performing translation work. In this guide, we'll mention two to avoid and the one we want you to use.

On one side of the spectrum is a form-based, or literal, translation. Form-based translation is transferring the exact meaning of each word in the same word order and sentence structure as the source language (the language you are translating from) into the target language (the language translating into). This type of translation is often used in language classes to show how the language works or how native speakers of the source language may think as they communicate. A literal translation doesn't really communicate the meaning well. The humorous translations you see in instruction manuals are good examples of literal translations. This style of translation is unacceptable for our purposes.

On the other extreme is an unduly-free translation. This translation style is rarely useful. Simply put, an unduly-free translation is one that adds extra information which is not in the source language, leaves out information that was expressed in the source, or changes the meaning to the point that it is not an accurate translation of the source. This style of translation is also unacceptable for our purposes.

Meaning-based translation is the translation style you should use on your test. It is one of the most important things we look for when evaluating your test. It means we want you to transfer the *whole* meaning of a word, phrase, sentence, paragraph, page, or text into natural sounding English. This meaning comes from the whole context of the document, taking into account cultural, linguistic, regional or other differences between the two languages being dealt with. When the reader sees a meaning-based translation, they should not be able to tell it started out in another language. They should have no indication that it is a translation at all. It should not deliberately reproduce the form and syntax of the source language, but be written in the form and syntax of the target language. This is the most difficult, but most desirable translation style for most translation projects, including the Joint Language Training Center's (JLTC) employment test.

Translation Test Instructions

You will be given the written text of a newscast in Spanish to translate. In one hour, you are to provide your best meaning-based translation using correct spelling, punctuation and grammar. You may use dictionaries, spell check and other reference materials available at the test site. You **MAY NOT** solicit aid from other test candidates. Detailed instructions regarding the procedures of the test will be given on the day you test. Any questions regarding the test procedures or troubleshooting required on the day of your test (computer problems, spell check, etc.) may be addressed with the test proctor.

Translation Test Grading and Scoring

At JLTC we attempt to standardize the evaluation of translations as much as possible. We do this by defining the three types of errors we feel generally appear in a translation and scoring according to how many of these types of errors appear in your translated work.

The three error types are critical errors, major errors, and minor errors. Below we provide you with a description of these errors, along with examples to clarify the description.

By being aware of the types of errors we look for, you will hopefully be able to focus your efforts on a good, meaning-based translation, and minimize the types of errors that may cause you to get a lower score. If your own abilities are sufficient to make you successful at JLTC, then this information will help you to get the best score possible on the translation test.

Your test will be corrected within two weeks. You will be notified of your results at that time. If you have not heard back after two weeks, please feel free to call to get your results. If you pass the test, you may be contacted shortly thereafter to set up a personal interview and continue the application process, depending on our employee needs. Whether you pass or not, you may retake the test again after a period of six months from the original test date to improve your score.

Critical Error Defined

A critical error is one which could cause a translation to be rejected or discredited as wrong. Each critical error in a test document will lower your score by approximately 4½ points.

An error that changes the meaning of the translation to the degree that it is an incorrect depiction of the meaning in the source language is a critical error. There are generally four common situations that produce these types of errors:

1. Words were spoken or written, or meaning was implied in the source language, yet the *meaning* was *not translated* into the target language. This does not mean that there is a word-for-word correspondence between the two languages with every word in the source language represented by a word in the target language. It does mean that there is a meaning-for-meaning correspondence where the translation may be shorter or longer than the source language passage, but precisely the same meaning in the source language is reconstructed in the target language.

2. Meaning is added in the target-language translation that was not *spoken* or implied in the source language. This results in an unduly free translation.

3. The meaning is simply incorrect.

4. Format or punctuation errors that *significantly* alter meaning.

Discrepancies in Meaning

The first three situations mentioned above are where obvious discrepancies in the meaning between the two

languages produce critical errors. The emphasis on these types of critical errors is the overall meaning.

1. Meaning is left out.

Nos gusta el carro, pero *no lo compramos porque* es muy caro.	We like the car, but it's very expensive.

2. Extra meaning is added.

Pasamos por tu casa el miércoles, pero no estabas.	We went to your house Wednesday, but *your mother said* you weren't home.

3. A translation is produced, but the meaning is totally wrong. This doesn't mean it just sounds odd, it means it is 100% wrong.

Nosotros decidimos que no era para nosotros.	They told us we couldn't have it.
Ese hombre me da mala espina.	That man gave me a bad poke.

Critical Punctuation Errors

Sometimes, the misplacement of a single comma, period, or question mark can cause a critical error.

¿Dónde está Juan?	Where's Juan?
¿Dónde está, Juan?	Where are you, Juan?

In the first example, the absence of a comma before Juan makes it look as if the speaker is referring to a third person. In the second example, the presence of the comma makes it clear that Juan is the one being spoken to. Note that Juan is not translated as John in the above example. Proper names are not translated.

To avoid making critical errors, you must check both the literal and the implied meaning in the source language, and transfer all of it into the target language in a natural-sounding translation using the form, structure, and syntax of the target language.

Major Error Defined

A major error is an error which could cast doubt on the overall quality of a translation due to reasons other than meaning errors. One major error in a test document will lower the score by approximately 1 point.

These are usually errors in the accuracy of the translation which do not alter the meaning, but are awkward or sound unnatural in the target language.

Major Error Examples

The following are examples of major errors.

1. A "correct" but overly-literal translation.

La contaminación de los ríos en nuestra época tiene vieja datación.	The contamination of the rivers in our epoch has an ancient date.

Should be something like:
    Contamination of rivers during our times has been going on for a very long time.

2. A correct but odd-sounding or cumbersome translation.

Héctor estaba embebido como una esponja.	Héctor was imbibed like a sponge.

Should be something like:
    Héctor was drunk as a skunk.

These types of errors can best be detected by reading a finished translation with the intent to determine whether it really sounds like the target language (English, in this case).

Minor Error Defined

A minor error is an error which, while possibly unimportant to our clients, detracts from the degree of professionalism we seek to attain. One minor error in a test document will lower your score by approximately .2 (two tenths) points.

Minor errors may be termed "cosmetic errors," such as format or punctuation errors that do not alter the meaning nor drastically affect the appearance of the document. A seemingly minor error may be considered a major error if it drastically affects the appearance of the document, or creates a conspicuous error that could cast doubt on the overall quality of the translation. A normally minor error that alters the meaning may be considered a critical error if the alteration is significant. A multitude of minor errors shows that a translator may not be paying attention to detail or lacks knowledge of punctuation or grammar rules. Most minor errors can be caught by proofreading your own work. Many of these types of errors will never be caught by running spell-check or using other word-processing functions.

Minor Error Examples

In the example below, the missed accent mark on the words *qué* and *sólo*, the missing hyphen in *thirty-six*, the space in the middle of the word *there*, the missing apostrophe in the word *don't* and the switch between *your* and *you're* are all minor errors.

Yo no sé *que* hacer. Necesito treinta y seis, y *solo* hay treinta. A ti también te faltan algunos.	I *don't* know what to do. I need *thirty six*, and *the re* are only thirty. *Your* missing some too.

Should be:

Yo no sé *qué* hacer. Necesito treinta y seis, y *sólo* hay treinta. A ti también te faltan algunos.	I *don't* know what to do. I need *thirty-six*, and *there* are only thirty. *You're* missing some too.

Summary

Thanks again for your interest in testing for possible employment with JLTC. Here is a brief summary of a few of the key points mentioned above:

- Meaning-based translation involves making sure that all meaning is transferred from the source language into the target language in such a way as to appear totally natural in the target language.

- Critical errors are those which significantly alter meaning from that of the source language.

- Major errors are those which result in odd-sounding, clumsy translations, with no significant change in meaning.

- Minor errors generally involve format or appearance with no change in meaning. They detract from the overall professional appearance of the document.

- To successfully pass the translation test, you must render a precise, meaning-based translation of the text you will be given. Do not add to or detract from the original meaning spoken in the source language. Pay attention to details. Proofread your test before you turn it in to make sure you haven't missed anything and to make sure it sounds like natural language, not a translation.

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