

“La Cuisine Anglaise” - Translation of French transcript

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1 AIRPORT

HARRY BOWLES arrives at the airport and practises some French phrases.

2 MEETING ROOM AT *CHEZ PIERRE* :

MICHEL

Is Jean-Pierre coming?

CHRISTOPHE

No, he is still on holiday.

SYLVIE

What time does our English visitor arrive?

CHRISTOPHE

11:30.

SYLVIE

And what do we know about him?

CHRISTOPHE

His name is Henri Bowles. His family has been in catering for more than fifty years. He also works in security.

MICHEL

Security?

CHRISTOPHE

Yes, he also owns another company named...Bowles Bouncers, a company specialising in security. He sent an e-mail to Jean-Pierre.

He reads email: “My family has been working in the security and catering sectors for more than fifty years. We have been named the best motorway service-station restaurant in 2005 by the United Road Transport Union, the URTU. The company is very successful...”

SYLVIE

Of course he will say that.

CHRISTOPHE

Of course. Furthermore, motorway service-station restaurants are for all travellers, not just lorry drivers. They are also used by families, tourists, commercial travellers, retired couples...

MICHEL

On the other hand, lorry drivers use the roads all the time. They know what is good.

SYLVIE

Have you found any other candidates?

CHRISTOPHE

No, Jean-Pierre was dealing with this.

MICHEL

Have we advertised the position?

3 AIRPORT

HARRY is still practising his French at the airport.

4 MEETING ROOM AT CHEZ PIERRE :

CHRISTOPHE

Here is the project. We have purchased the licence in three motorway restaurants and we intend to sign a contract for five more in November. Jean-Pierre has found Mr Bowles, who is a candidate for the position of UK manager.

MICHEL

We need to know whether he is the right candidate for this position.

CHRISTOPHE

Exactly. We need a manager in the UK to supervise the administration, buildings upkeep, health and safety, tax and employment.

SYLVIE

How much experience does Mr Bowles have in these areas?

CHRISTOPHE

I've no idea You'll have to ask Jean-Pierre. Or Lucille, she organized his visit.

SYLVIE

Then call Lucille, and ask her to join us.

Christophe makes a call.

MICHEL

You believe that Monsieur Boules has a lot of experience in catering?

CHRISTOPHE

Bowles.

MICHEL
What?

CHRISTOPHE
His name is Henry Bowles.

MICHEL
What is his expertise? Finance? Administration? Marketing?

CHRISTOPHE
Security? (*On phone*) Lucille, it's Christophe. Can you come and join us? See you in a bit. (*Rings off*)

5 MEETING ROOM AT CHEZ PIERRE :

MICHEL
I assume that we will be responsible for the design of the restaurants and the recruitment of chefs?

CHRISTOPHE
That's right.

MICHEL
As well as the menus and supply of food?

CHRISTOPHE
Yes, we will look after all this.

MICHEL
For the food to be French the ingredients must come from France, yes?

CHRISTOPHE
Not necessarily. To be French the ingredients must have quality – and be fresh. Our menus are above all about quality. In England they use cheap ingredients cooked by chefs with little training and who take little joy in their work. There are perfectly good ingredients in the UK. Some of course will be imported from France.

SYLVIE
I think there was some publicity, yes? An article in an English newspaper?

CHRISTOPHE
Yes, I have it here. (*Puts a copy of The Sun on the table*)

MICHEL (*reading the paper*)
"Is French food our cup of tea?" I think it is an English joke

6 MEETING ROOM AT CHEZ PIERRE :

CHRISTOPHE

They really want us to serve English tea!

MICHEL

Why not? We serve tea in France.

CHRISTOPHE

The English drink it differently. They add milk.

MICHEL

We must learn how to make English tea.

CHRISTOPHE

What do you mean? You want French ingredients, and English tea ? No, no, no... A French restaurant is a French restaurant. If they want to drink English tea they can drink it at home.

MICHEL

I think we should offer the choice.

SYLVIE

I agree, it should not be a problem to include English tea.

MICHEL

There is nothing more English than tea. And we will be in England after all.

CHRISTOPHE

You're wrong. Tea isn't English. It comes from China or India or Africa.

7 MEETING ROOM AT CHEZ PIERRE :

SYLVIE

The CEO will want the turnover forecasts. Where is Lucille? Does she have them?

CHRISTOPHE

She's on her way. We expect to double the turnover after five years.

MICHEL

We'll have to review the prices.

CHRISTOPHE

Increase them?

MICHEL
Maybe...

CHRISTOPHE
No, no, no... I disagree; I would rather propose to provide better quality at a better price. I have seen a lot of restaurants in England that were only half full. Many young people would meet there to have a drink and nibble something. Only 25% of the customers were taking a full meal. However, there were a lot of people eating sandwiches in the car park.

MICHEL
Their own food?

CHRISTOPHE
Exactly. A picnic.

MICHEL
It will take time to change their expectations and encourage them to eat our food.

8 RECEPTION AT *CHEZ PIERRE* :

HARRY
Chez Pierre?

RECEPTIONNISTE
Yes, good morning.

HARRY
Good morning.

RECEPTIONNISTE
What is your name?

HARRY
My name is Harry Bowles.

RECEPTIONNISTE
And what is the name of your company?

HARRY
I work for Hot Dish Ltd. I have an appointment with Mme Rochebeaucourt at 11:30.

RECEPTIONNISTE
I'm sorry, could you repeat the name of your company?

HARRY

I work for Hot Dish Ltd... Hot Dish Ltd. I am the MD.

RECEPTIONNISTE

One moment, I call her.... Sylvie, Mr Bowles from 'Hot Dish' is at reception....
You're welcome. (*To Harry*) Please sit down Mr Bowles.

HARRY

Thank you... Uhm, where is the gents?

RECEPTIONNISTE

Through this door, 2nd on your left.

HARRY

Thanks.

RECEPTIONNISTE

Chez Pierre Good morning, ... What is the name of your company?
(*She tries a number*) I am sorry Michel Thomas is not available at the
moment, he is in a meeting. Shall I ask him to ring you back? Could you tell
me your name again? ... Vermot-Laurent. Could you spell it? V E R M O T-
LAURENT. If you prefer you can leave a message on his phone. Yes sir, I will
give him that message. You are welcome. Good bye.

9 MEETING ROOM AT CHEZ PIERRE :

SYLVIE

So... All the turnover forecasts and budgets should be submitted by Friday. I
have to present them at the next Senior Management meeting on Monday
morning.

CHRISTOPHE

OK.

.....

RECEPTION

SYLVIE

Mr Bowles ?

HARRY

Good Morning.

SYLVIE

Sylvie Rochebeaucourt, how do you do.

HARRY

My name is Harry, delighted to meet you.

SYLVIE
You had a good journey?

HARRY
First class!

SYLVIE
Of course.

HARRY
It's a pleasure to be here.

SYLVIE
Follow me, this way.

10 MEETING ROOM AT CHEZ PIERRE :

CHRISTOPHE (*on his mobile*)
Whatever. I don't care. I'm bored but it could be worse.

MICHEL (*now on his mobile too*)
Lucille? yes it's Michel.... Right away, Mr Bowles has arrived.

CHRISTOPHE (*mobile*)
Go to Leclerc this evening? You're joking? Oh, back to work, See you. (*rings off*).

MICHEL
Will the chefs be French?

CHRISTOPHE
It depends what you mean by 'French'. They will be French trained.

MICHEL
Good. I have been told that English cuisine has greatly improved these past years.

CHRISTOPHE
Yes, there are a lot of French chefs in England. But eating well is very expensive over there.

MICHEL
In any case, motorway service station restaurants aren't that good...

CHRISTOPHE
And it is not cheap!

Enter Sylvie Rochebeaucourt and Harry Bowles.

SYLVIE

I would like you to meet my team. This is Michel, our Deputy Director.

HARRY

Pleased to meet you.

MICHEL

Pleased to meet you.

SYLVIE

And this is Christophe, our sales manager.

HARRY

Pleased to meet you. We spoke on the phone.

CHRISTOPHE

No, I believe it was Jean-Pierre. He's on holiday.

HARRY

Oh, I am sorry!

CHRISTOPHE

Not at all.

SYLVIE

Have a seat.... Let's get started, M. Bowles. Will you tell us about yourself and your company, Hot Dish.

HARRY

A pleasure, Let me just plug in my laptop.

SYLVIE

Of course.

HARRY

Er, do you have an adaptor for my plug?

CHRISTOPHE

Is there a problem?

HARRY

No, no, no problem, I'll work with the battery... It's taking a long time...
(*Stands*) Good morning everyone and thank you for inviting me here today. I am from England and my name is Harry Bowles.

Lucille enters the room.

LUCILLE
Michel, good morning.

MICHEL
Good morning Lucille.

LUCILLE
How are you?

MICHEL
Good and you?

LUCILLE
Sylvie, good morning.

SYLVIE
Good morning Lucille.

CHRISTOPHE
Hi Lucille.

LUCILLE
All right?

CHRISTOPHE
Yeah.

HARRY
My name is Harry.

LUCILLE
Mr Bowles. We spoke on the phone

HARRY
Indeed, I remember.

11 MEETING ROOM AT *CHEZ PIERRE* :

HARRY
My father started the business many years ago with a roadside cafeteria in Essex. Here it is (*points to his screen*) ... I took over the business eight years ago when my father was in hospital, and a year later I opened two more cafés on the same business model... here they are... And now I have a total of eight roadside cafés across the east of England. So how did we develop this business. The secret? Simple but tasty foods, served quick.

MICHEL
No fuss?

HARRY
Uhm? And at a very reasonable price.

Lucille checks her emails.

Here is a typical menu. (*Points to screen*) You can have Eggs, beans, chips and mushrooms ... Eggs beans chips tomatoes with mushrooms, Eggs beans and chips tomatoes with mushroom with no egg. Eggs beans and chips and bacon, with mushroom.

12 MEETING ROOM AT CHEZ PIERRE :

You can have Eggs beans and sausage.
Eggs, beans, sausage and toast.
Eggs beans sausage with mushrooms.
Now, you don't even have to have an egg. Our main ingredient is choice.
That's it. Do you have questions?

CHRISTOPHE
Are you suggesting that you should manage the provision of food?

HARRY
Yes, my restaurants are successful because the food is fresh, beautifully cooked and served with humour. Respect the customer and you won't go far wrong.

MICHEL
With 'mood' did you say?

CHRISTOPHE
Humour is a typically British ingredient. Mr Bowles, we prefer to serve French food in these restaurants. That is why we bought them.

HARRY
My customers, believe me, are always coming back.

MICHEL
We believe that the success of this project is founded on French-sourced food.

HARRY
Sorry, didn't quite follow that...

CHRISTOPHE
What we mean is that we serve French food in our restaurants.

MICHEL
Exactly so.

HARRY
Ah? I see, I didn't know. A moment please (*leaves the room*).

SYLVIE
When is Jean-Pierre coming back?

LUCILLE
Monday.

.....

HARRY (*on his mobile outside*)
Hello Brian, it's me, Harry. You still at the restaurant? Excellent. Can you put your hand on a menu? What's on it? Starters? Main course?

13 MEETING ROOM AT CHEZ PIERRE :

SYLVIE
Have you found a few leads regarding our advertising?

LUCILLE
Yes, I have sent a website address by e-mail to Michel.

MICHEL
I'll attend to it this afternoon.

SYLVIE
Let me be clear about this. We require a manager on site in the UK to supervise the administration of the restaurants, not to design the menus.

LUCILLE
Jean-Pierre wasn't very clear about this.

CHRISTOPHE
You're right.

SYLVIE
And managing the staff?

LUCILLE
Right.

SYLVIE
And supervision of the property and equipment?

CHRISTOPHE
Absolutely.

SYLVIE
As well as the salaries and tax matters?

LUCILLE
Yes.

14 MEETING ROOM AT CHEZ PIERRE :

HARRY
Thank you for your patience. I think there may have been a misunderstanding.
Let me start again. We can provide the following menu. We can do...

Soupe du jour
Assiette de charcuterie
Quiche lorraine
Gratin dauphinois
Moules marinières
Crêpes Suzette
Soufflé au fromage
Coq au vin
Croque-Monsieur
Profiteroles au chocolat
Gâteau au chocolat
Tarte aux pommes ...

SYLVIE
Mr Bowles, Mr Bowles, we do not need anyone to provide the food or even a menu.

HARRY
Eh ? Then who are you looking for?

MICHEL
Do you have any experience of financial management? Do you understand UK tax law?

HARRY
Yes of course, no question about that. In my business a lot of my customers pay in cash so we have to be very careful with our records if you follow. I myself do the books. It is very important to get that right.

CHRISTOPHE
And Health & Safety management?

HARRY
Security? Yes I have a lot of experience there...

CHRISTOPHE
No, no, no. Health and Safety is... how do you say... Health and Safety.

HARRY

Ah, up to a certain point. In England we call that 'common sense'.

MICHEL

'Common sense'?

CHRISTOPHE

Common sense.

HARRY

And there are a few forms to fill in.

SYLVIE

Well, thank you for all the information Mr Bowles. And thank you for coming. That meeting was... interesting.

HARRY

Very good.

SYLVIE

Here's what we are going to do: I invite you for lunch.

HARRY

Ah ... with pleasure! What is on the menu?

End