



Time to rethink translation?



Sue Wood

THIS WORK IS LICENSED UNDER A CREATIVE COMMONS ATTRIBUTION-NONCOMMERCIAL-SHAREALIKE 4.0 INTERNATIONAL LICENSE.

Overview

- **Personal experience of translation**
- **Why translation?**
- **Translation tools**
- **Bad examples**
- **Challenges**
- **Strategies**

Personal experience of translation



Work in groups and discuss your experience of translation:

- **at school**
- **as an adult learner**
- **as a teacher**

Agree or disagree??



- Translation is bad and should not be encouraged
- Students will inevitably use translation
- Beliefs about translation are cultural
- Translation is a good way of testing students
- Translation is easy
- Monolingual classrooms are the easiest environment to teach translation
- Mother-tongue English teachers are at a disadvantage

Expert opinion

There is a general feeling that first language translations should not be used in the teaching and testing of vocabulary. This attitude is quite wrong. Translation is one of a number of ways of conveying meaning....

I.S.P. Nation

Translation has the advantage of being the most direct route to a word's meaning.....

....over-reliance on translation may mean that learners fail to develop an independent L2 lexicon.

S. Thornbury

Disadvantages of translation

- L1 is the main language in the classroom
- Not enough emphasis on L2
- Assumption that translations are perfect
- Increased processing time delays communication
- Language acquisition is delayed

Various sources

Advantages of translation

- Strengthens understanding of both languages
- Learners can relate to similarities between the languages (but beware false friends!)
- Maintains linguistic and cultural identities (Guy Cook)
- Offers a different type of classroom task
- Enables students to question translation tools

Translation tools?

Google Translate

Are improving, but...

Original text:

Scientists found optimists who believe their life has a meaning **walk** faster, **suffer** less pain as they age and **have stronger grips**.

Translated to German and back to English :

Scientists have found optimists who believe their lives are meaningful, **run** faster, **have** less pain with age and **are more effective**.

www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-6565563/Is-key-happiness-married.html

When things go
wrong!



Please leave your values at the front desk (A Paris elevator)

Visitors are expected to complain at the office between the hours of 9 and 11 a.m. daily. (An Athens Hotel)

You are invited to take advantage of the chambermaid.(A Japanese hotel)

Our wines leave you nothing to hope for. (Swiss restaurant)

Drop your trousers here for best results. (Bangkok Dry cleaner's)

Dresses for street walking. (Paris dress shop)

Because of the impropriety of entertaining guests of the opposite sex in the bedroom, it is suggested that the lobby be used for this purpose. (Zürich hotel)

<http://www.jnweb.com/funny/translation.html>

Context is
everything

administer

stunt

row

try

run

just

present

Multiple meanings

179 run
 He was out there from before he was born about in the park run across an old friend a live in in a turn before he broke a turn for president run in huge shoals run through a fortune proper running
 the dog ran after the burglar ran a long busy run from a danger the project ran in difficult they're running a great business that's the only one that works with every other business

Words with Multiple Meanings

English is a language with a huge vocabulary.

To make matters even more confusing, many of these words have more than one meaning.

Here are the top ten words with the most definitions in the dictionary, and how they are used.

KEY

- verb
- noun
- verb phrase
- idiom
- adjective
- adverb
- preposition
- interjection

127 take
 He had been told to write a new take on an old idea the company took the decision to shut down the top whole pass again
 He took a long time to get the idea of the new take on an old idea he took a long time to get the idea of the new take on an old idea
 He took a long time to get the idea of the new take on an old idea he took a long time to get the idea of the new take on an old idea

123 break
 He broke his leg when he fell off the horse he broke his leg when he fell off the horse he broke his leg when he fell off the horse
 He broke his leg when he fell off the horse he broke his leg when he fell off the horse he broke his leg when he fell off the horse
 He broke his leg when he fell off the horse he broke his leg when he fell off the horse he broke his leg when he fell off the horse

122 turn
 He turned the handle and the door opened he turned the handle and the door opened he turned the handle and the door opened
 He turned the handle and the door opened he turned the handle and the door opened he turned the handle and the door opened
 He turned the handle and the door opened he turned the handle and the door opened he turned the handle and the door opened

119 set
 He set the table for the guests he set the table for the guests he set the table for the guests
 He set the table for the guests he set the table for the guests he set the table for the guests
 He set the table for the guests he set the table for the guests he set the table for the guests

98 go
 He goes to the gym every day he goes to the gym every day he goes to the gym every day
 He goes to the gym every day he goes to the gym every day he goes to the gym every day
 He goes to the gym every day he goes to the gym every day he goes to the gym every day

95 play
 He plays the piano every day he plays the piano every day he plays the piano every day
 He plays the piano every day he plays the piano every day he plays the piano every day
 He plays the piano every day he plays the piano every day he plays the piano every day

93 cut
 He cut his hair at the barber he cut his hair at the barber he cut his hair at the barber
 He cut his hair at the barber he cut his hair at the barber he cut his hair at the barber
 He cut his hair at the barber he cut his hair at the barber he cut his hair at the barber

93 up
 He went up to the top of the mountain he went up to the top of the mountain he went up to the top of the mountain
 He went up to the top of the mountain he went up to the top of the mountain he went up to the top of the mountain
 He went up to the top of the mountain he went up to the top of the mountain he went up to the top of the mountain

92 hand
 He held his hand out to help her he held his hand out to help her he held his hand out to help her
 He held his hand out to help her he held his hand out to help her he held his hand out to help her
 He held his hand out to help her he held his hand out to help her he held his hand out to help her




Useful websites


Just the word

administer


****administer** obj N**


cluster 1

administer questionnaire (16) 

administer test (20) 


cluster 2

administer scheme (25) 


administer system (18) 


cluster 3


administer aid (18) 


administer service (20) 


unclustered


administer affair (15) 


administer dose (12) 

administer drug (34) 

administer the fund (11) 

administer justice (15) 

administer the law (11) 

administer oath (11) 

****administer** PREP**



administer by (331) 

administer (sth.)  *verb* (administered, administered)

etw. ^{Adv} verwalten  

The new system can administer vast amounts of data.

Das neue System kann riesige Datenmengen verwalten.

verabreichen  

It is important to administer these drugs daily for four weeks.

Es ist wichtig, diese Medikamente über vier Wochen täglich zu verabreichen.

The drug is administered as an injection.

Das Medikament wird als Injektion verabreicht.

etw. ^{Adv} organisieren  

With the new system we can administer documents more efficiently.

Mit dem neuen System können wir Dokumente effizienter organisieren.

less common:

geben   · etw. ^{Adv} führen   · etw. ^{Adv} regeln   · etw. ^{Adv} spenden  

etw. ^{Adv} administrieren   · etw. ^{Adv} wahrnehmen *v (Rechte, Aufgaben)*  

etw. ^{Adv} anwenden   · etw. ^{Adv} regulieren  · handhaben   · bewirtschaften  

verabfolgen  · darreichen  · applizieren  · etw. ^{Adv} vollziehen  · gewähren 

etw. ^{Adv} erteilen  · etw. ^{Adv} vollstrecken  · etw. ^{Adv} verhängen 

Examples:

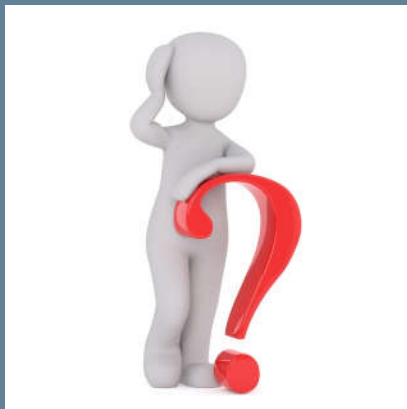
administer justice  — Recht sprechen  · judizieren 

administer an estate  — einen Nachlass verwalten 

administer accounts  — Konten führen 

⌂

Things to think about



Context is everything

Translate meaning not individual words

Awareness of grammar and multiple meanings

Teach dictionary skills

Be careful of idioms

Which direction is most helpful?

Which level makes most sense?

Be prepared!!

Use in the classroom

Some ideas:

- Groups work on different parts of a text
- Peer correction
- Learners translate a text, then give translation to another group. Compare with the original.
- What went wrong?
- Subtitles for films
- Compare versions of translated songs /poems
- Summarise a text
- Translate in different styles

References

<https://pixabay.com>

<https://www.kaplaninternational.com>

<http://www.jnweb.com/funny/translation.html>

Interview with Guy Cook

(<https://oupeltglobalblog.com/2011/10/20/translation-in-language-teaching-and-learning/>)

www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-6565563/Is-key-happiness-married.html

Nation, I.S.P (2001) Teaching Vocabulary in Another Language

Thornbury, T. (2002) How to Teach Vocabulary