

7 active **Translation** ideas for the classroom

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Translation relay (beginners to advanced)

Put a list of words or sentence fragments on the board that are to be translated into or from the target language. Put the same list next to it, but with the words or fragments in a different order. Split the class into two teams. Nominate a student per team to come to the board to start the relay off. Give both students a board pen. Count down to start: Auf die Plätze, fertig, los! The rules are: Only one person can be at the board at a time, one item only can be translated (or corrected if a mistake has been made) per journey to the board. Students can go more than once but they cannot go twice in a row. If one of the team is out of their seat at the wrong time, throws the pen, rather than handing it over or shouts, a point will be taken off the team's total score at the end.

Translation hunt (beginners to advanced)

Put phrases in the L1 or L2 on cards around the room. Give students a sheet each with the respective phrases in the L1 or L2 (a good hiding place is on the back of someone's chair). Give students a time limit to find as many phrases as possible. Allow time for proof reading using the text book or dictionary. This can be made into a competition by awarding a sticker or prize for the best three. There could also be some peer assessment using a check list.

Picture translation (intermediate to advanced)

Students sit with their back to each other, a textbook in their laps to lean on with a blank piece of paper. Each student has a set of up to five felt tips in different colours. One student has one minute to draw a simple picture using common vocabulary items or recently covered vocabulary. Once the picture is completed, the student describes their picture to the other student who has to try to recreate it. This could also be useful to practise picture description phrases and connectives in a meaningful way in preparation for the KS4 speaking exam picture tasks. Im Vordergrund ist/sieht man... Im Hintergrund ist/sieht man... Auf der rechten/linken Seite... Außerdem; Darüber hinaus; Ferner; sowohl...als auch... etc.

Pass the sheet (beginners to advanced)

Get the class to sit in a big circle (I have done this with classes up to 32 students, although that can become a bit messy). Give each person an A4 sheet with words or sentence fragments in the L1 or L2. Put an online countdown timer on the board and set it for between 7 and 10 seconds, depending on the length of the sentences. Count down to start: Auf die Plätze, fertig, los! When the time is up, students pass the sheet on clockwise to the person next to them, they translate the next phrase etc. until all phrases have been translated or students cannot do any more. Get students to compare answers with the person next to them and get them to fill in any gaps together, then check as a whole class.

Flugzeuge (beginners to advanced)

Only suitable for classes of up to 15. Get each student to make a paper aeroplane. Prepare a PowerPoint presentation with sentences in the L1 or L2 that you want the class to translate – longer sentences tend to be better here, as it reduces the number of times planes will be thrown (plane throwing is obviously not the point here, but it takes students' minds off the idea that translation is boring!). On every second slide, put a dart board or target. Give students time to translate the sentence on the board and to write it on one part of the plane. When the time is up, get students to throw their plane at the target (make sure you don't get hit!) Students get up, pick a random plane, sit down, translate the next phrase. Repeat the process until all sentences have been completed. Students then unfold their plane and peer assess the sentences, then check as a whole class.

Now you see it, now you don't. (beginners to advanced)

Put a text of about 40-50 words in the L1 or L2 on the board. Ask students to look at it for 30 seconds, trying to translate as much of it as possible in their heads. Using the remote control, turn the board off and get students to write down their translation from memory. Ask everyone to put their pen down and turn the board back on. Repeat the process until someone has completed the whole text. Check the text, point out ideas for improvement or announce the winner, if the translation is correct.

Quizlet

www.quizlet.com

- Great for setting interactive, self- marking and relevant homework tasks.
- Set up a class battle – who can do the best time on *Scatter*?
- Students can set up their own accounts and create their own study sets.