Translation is fun at Key Stage 3

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Friday 22nd June 2018
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Northern Ireland Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research

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see our website for full details
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Traditional Approach

Pupils write a translation on their own
Pupils hand it in for marking by the teacher
Teacher marks and then spends most of the next class going over the translation
Little instruction given about how to translate

Like everything, Pupil Perception is key!
Why even worry about translation at KS3?

• Up until 2017, translation was viewed as the preserve of A-level teaching and above;

• Revision of CCEA GCSE specifications for first teaching September 2017 includes translation into and out of the TL at both foundation tier and higher tiers;

• This has led to changes in teaching at KS3 and we are in uncharted territory;

• Yes, a small part of new GCSE – but good translation could be the difference in a grade!

• Is form (grammar) more important than communication again?
Have you ever seen your pupils do this…?

I am called....
Je suis appelé....

I am doing my homework....
Je suis faire mes devoirs....
Key Stage 3 Translation:
The first step in a life-long career
Translation from French into English

• ‘Essentially a reading activity’ – but is it?
• XCS Literacy/Using Communication
• Avoidance of literal translation
• Promotion of linguistic agility
• As much a test of pupils’ English as their competence in the TL (access for newcomers?)
• Intercultural communication
• Professional translators usually only translate into their mother tongue
Translation from English into French

• Essentially a **writing** activity
• Test of **vocabulary** and **grammar**
• At **word** level, it is about long-term memory, retrieval and retention
• At **sentence** level, it is about active use of vocabulary and grammar
• Basically a **minefield** for all but the most gifted linguists!
Where do we need our KS3 pupils to be?

A-level French

Translate the following passage into French.

My grandfather often tells me about the events of May 68 in Paris. He was a student at the time.

“Young people nowadays are lucky. We changed the world for them. Everything was so different. Parents were strict, teachers even stricter and treated us like babies. We wanted our freedom and were ready to fight to get it.”

My grandmother is less enthusiastic: “We lost a year in our studies. They had to cancel the June exams. Don’t you remember?” she asked. “We were engaged and wanted to get married as soon as possible. Of course, my parents wanted me to finish my degree first and we had to wait until January.” “Well, it was worth it. Our children grew up in a better world.”

(CCEA Specimen Paper 2017, HT)
GCSE Translation into French

(a) The market costs 5 euros.

(b) The market is very close to the centre of Paris.

(c) The market is five minutes from the bus station.

(d) The market closes at midnight on the 24th of December.

(e) There are also toilets beside the market.

(CCEA Specimen Paper 2017, HT)
But good teachers have been teaching translation at Key Stage 3 for years?!

A vocab test is translation

My pupils translate words on Quizlet
KS3: Word Level, Sentence Level, Text Level

Current Practice

Next Practice
<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Normally <strong>I go</strong> on holiday <strong>to</strong> France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>We go</strong> by plane (because it’s cheap)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>I like going <strong>to</strong> France</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>because <strong>it’s hot and sunny</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Last summer <strong>we went to</strong> Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td><strong>We stayed</strong> in a hotel/apartment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Every day <strong>I sunbathed</strong> on the beach.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Next year <strong>I am going to go</strong> to Spain.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td><strong>We are going to</strong> travel by boat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td><strong>We are going to</strong> go sightseeing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
10 ideas for making translation fun at KS3
Où j’habite, il y a une super maison des jeunes où je vais tous les mercredis et tous les samedis.

 Là-bas, je retrouve mes copains et je joue au baby-foot – j’adore ça.

 Aussi, je bavarde avec mes copains ou je joue au billard parce que c’est marrant.

 De temps en temps je joue au football ou je joue de la batterie parce que c’est très sympa.

 Where __________, there is a super ______________ where __________ every __________ and every __________.

 There, I meet ________________ and I ________________ - ____________ that.

 Also, I ________________ or I ________________ because ________________

 From ________________ ________________ drums ________________ ________.
Où j’habite, il y a une super maison des jeunes où je vais tous les mercredis et tous les samedis.

 Là-bas, je retrouve mes copains et je joue au baby-foot – j’adore ça.

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Translation Bloopers

Effective Questioning
What has happened here?
Why does literal translation not work?
How should this have been translated?
One pen, one die

- Groups of two/three/four
- Each pupil has an individual translation task
- One pupil has the pen and begins task
- Other pupil(s) roll a die until they get a 6
- Once they have a 6 they are entitled to take pen
- Great for motivation!
Running Translation

• Select a translation and cut it up into parts
• Put pupils in groups of four
• Give pupils first part of the translation
• In a group, pupils translate and bring to you as the expert for approval
• Once approved, pupils move on to second translation
• Winning team gets a prize!
Primary School Poetry

J’ai perdu mon doudou
Je le cherche partout
À droite
À gauche
En haut
En bas
Ouf ! Il est là-dessous !
Mon doudou !
For me, my hero is my dad. He really impresses me. He worked very hard to become a soldier and I respect that. He is brave when faced with terrible dangers. I admire his courage. I would like to be like him.
A good old-fashioned translation!

Charles is introducing himself, what is he saying?

Salut ! Je suis Charles et j’ai quatorze ans. J’habite dans un appartement à deux kilomètres du collège. À la maison, j’ai un cochon d’Inde qui s’appelle Étienne et un lapin qui s’appelle Paco. Après les cours, je retrouve mes copains et nous jouons au baby-foot.

See the NICILT website for KS3 Translation Booklets in French, German and Spanish
Translation is fun (well as fun as it can be!)

Don’t turn translation into an overt assessment activity at KS3

Pupil perception is key

Integrate as part of your normal teaching and learning; don’t make translation seem ‘difficult’.

Une solide préparation à l’exercice de la profession de traducteur généraliste du français à l’anglais!