

What's Involved in Translation? (In-class activity)

1. Translation of isolated words

Translate each word into English, using the English-German dictionary at <http://dict.leo.org>:

- (1) Kind
- (2) Mitte
- (3) Murrel
- (4) Straße
- (5) auf
- (6) der
- (7) die
- (8) ein
- (9) eine
- (10) es
- (11) ging
- (12) hob
- (13) in
- (14) lief
- (15) sah
- (16) sie
- (17) über
- (18) und

1. Which aspects make this a non-trivial task? Are there words you can't find? If so, why do you think that is the case?
2. Imagine you give the same task to a native speaker of German. Which of the problems would disappear and which would remain?

2. Word-by-word translation of sentences

Below are two sentences consisting of the words just translated. Try creating a word-by-word translation.

(19) Ein Kind lief über die Straße.

(20) In der Mitte der Straße sah es

eine Murmel und hob sie auf.

1. In what respects is this task different from the translation of isolated words in the previous task?
2. Is everything you need to translate the sentences into English provided by the German sentences?
3. In what sense is the translation of the words in
 - (a) the second sentence dependent on the first?
 - (b) the first sentence dependent on the second?

3. Real translation

Based on the word-by-word translations of the previous sentence and our discussion, try to provide a proper English translation of the two sentences. What is the relationship between your translation and the word-by-word translation?

(21) Ein Kind lief über die Straße. In der Mitte der Straße sah es eine Murmel und hob sie auf.