



A young man has his first assignment as a translator. He is eager to do well, but makes many mistakes. The two people he is translating for are two criminals who want to negotiate a business transaction.



The World's Worst Translator – Alternatino

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=foT9rsHmS24&pbjreload=101>

Possible vocabulary to pre-teach:

to make a deal to/a cough weapons



Teaching English

TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

There is a mix of Spanish and English in this video, but the spoken Spanish has English subtitles so this won't interfere if your students don't speak Spanish.



- Pre-video: Students speak in pairs: Imagine it's your first day as a translator. How would you feel just before you start? What would you be worried about?
- Explain that the video starts with two brothers who are together in a big space which appears to be an empty warehouse. The older brother is 'connected' (to organized crime) and is helping his younger brother with his first job as translator. The older brother leaves him to it. Students watch the first part of the video to see how well he does.

0:00 – 1:57

- After viewing, ask the students how they think the new translator is making out on his first job. What is he doing wrong?

●Tell the students that soon they'll be placed into groups of three and they will be asked to do a role-play taking on the roles of the translator and the two criminals. So they can watch for ideas & to see how things develop. They can imitate what is shown on the video, or improvise and do a different version if they like. Play the video until the end.

1:58 – 3:44

- After the video, have them work out how to do the role-play, and practice it a bit. If you don't have many students, have each group play it out, and if there are many groups, choose one or two to do it.

NOTE: The idea of this lesson plan is to get the students having fun with English, translation, and making mistakes and misinterpretations. However, some classes may not be so open to this approach. If most students are very shy or if role-playing in this way won't appeal to them, then you could think of a different task (such as answering some questions) and later go straight to the discussion questions. Another possibility is to watch again and tell the students if they see any signs that one of the actors is about to smile. Or you could replay 2:28 – 2:34 and 2:49 – 2:53 directly and ask their opinion about this.



POSSIBLE DISCUSSION THEMES:

- Is it better that the translator translates the words accurately or the essential idea, but maybe changing the examples or some details? What other factors play a part in good translation?
- Is it possible to translate all kinds of books and films?
- You and the others in your group are writers for this comedy sketch. You are thinking of what other things could be said or done, either in a new and completely different version, or making some adjustments to the video you have just seen. Brainstorm and explore some ideas that might work and discuss them together.
- This comedy sketch was with criminals. Think of two or three other situations / professions such as a person confessing to a priest or two boxers expressing themselves but they need a translator. Work out a little of what could be said or done in a new comedy sketch.



Check Max's English Corner for more videos and ideas. New Cool Clips will continue to be added on the website.

