

STRATEGY GROUP: Cognitive

STRATEGY SET: Analyzing and reasoning

STRATEGY: Translating

Translating can be a helpful strategy early in language learning, as long as it is used with care. It allows learners to use their own language as the basis for understanding what they read in the new language. However, word-for-word translation, though a frequent occurrence among beginners, can become a crutch or provide the wrong interpretation of target language material.

Elton reads the words *beau-frère* and *belle-soeur* in French. He tries to understand them through literal translation, but they just come out as "handsome brother" and "beautiful sister"! Later he discovers that they mean *brother-in-law* and *sister-in-law*.