

Einstein bad at English

Roger J Anderton

R.J.Anderton@btinternet.com

As follow up to my talks: I contend that Einstein was bad at English, so he didn't realise how badly what he had been saying in German had been translated into English; so that issues in relativity were never properly addressed and adequately clarified. That means his theory has been misrepresented. Many people have gone through the maths of what he wrote and think there are mistakes, but without a proper English translation clarifying the concepts and issues of relativity what he really meant has been distorted as to what he wanted the maths to be showing.

Einstein in 1921 was admitting [1]: "With regard to the language, I am afraid that I could not speak any English, either American or not. I will have to speak in German just as I do in my lectures in New York and in Princeton. - To Carl Beck On April 15 1921 From New York - In Volume 12: The Berlin Years: Correspondence January-December 1921 Page 163 (241 of 687)

Then in 1930s Einstein had trouble with English in Oxford 1930s, he was delivering talks in German, and struggling with English. [2]

His problems with English continued and in a letter of 7th September 1944 he admitted:

"I cannot write in English, because of the treacherous spelling. When I am reading, I only hear it and am unable to remember what the written word looks like." [3]

Then Wenkart notes: "from numerous reports of his American years we know that until the end of his life German was the only language he felt comfortable with." [4]

This ties into why his papers were mistranslated, he wasn't able to properly check them. See my talk Einstein mistranslated. [5]

So, it is fundamental problem: what did he mean obscured by difficulty in translation that clarification was needed.

For myself: I see no reason for discarding Newtonian physics and he was talking within that context of developing that, and anyone who interprets relativity differently just has it

wrong. (Bearing in mind such issues as there are difficulties with translation of Newton, and Newtonian physics was developed further by Boscovich etc.)

References

[1] - To Carl Beck On April 15 1921 From New York - In The Collected papers of Albert Einstein Volume 12: The Berlin Years (English) p. 93

[2] Einstein in Oxford, 17 Jun 2019

Taken from the June 2019 issue of *Physics World*.

<https://physicsworld.com/a/einstein-in-oxford/>

[3] The Born Einstein Letters, translated: Irene Born, MacMillan 1971 p148

[4] How to bring up a genius? Raising a "gifted" child, By Michael Wenkart, 2013, ISBN 9783735788832 p.40

[5] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YKD9kXrjQ00>

c.RJAnderton2August2019