

## Einstein difficult to understand

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Einstein was difficult to understand hence this could have contributed as to why he has been mistranslated.

As follow on to my article “Einstein has been mistranslated” [1] it turns out that Einstein was difficult to understand and hence this might have contributed to why there were translation problems from his German into English.

Alice Calaprice,[2] says [3] of Einstein’s writing: “Translators have difficulty reproducing his sentences faithfully because they inevitably need to move the words around, causing them to lose their rhythm. Moreover, some of Einstein's words have been so miserably mistranslated that one can't recognise the original. Different versions can also lead to confusion about what he actually said. Einstein, as is the case with most writers, is best read in his mother tongue..”

Goes on to explain: “Einstein never became fluent in English, either written or spoken. In his day, the language of science was German, and there was no need for English until he went to the United States at the age of 54. If he was asked to speak formally or to write a letter or an article, he would first write a draft in German and then a colleague or secretary would translate it. Indeed, sometimes a colleague would write a letter in toto, and Einstein would simply add his signature at the end. The most famous example is his letter to Franklin D Roosevelt, warning the American president about the possibility of Germany's production of atomic weaponry at the dawn of the second world war; it was actually written by physicist and inventor Leo Szilard.”

So, Einstein had problems with English, and when he passed on his papers to be translated into English, he wasn't able to properly check.

### References

[1] <http://gsjournal.net/Science-Journals/Research%20Papers-Relativity%20Theory/Download/7671>

[2] Alice Calaprice, author of "The Ultimate Quotable Einstein"

[3] Alice Calaprice, The Guardian 2 Apr 2005 00.38 BST  
<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2005/apr/02/featuresreviews.guardianreview36>