

Troublesome Translations



For native German speakers, finding the right translation, from German to English or vice versa, can sometimes be a challenge. Here are some examples to help you figure out how to say certain words. And to make sure you keep yourself out of trouble.

Actually or currently?

What is the difference between *actually* and *currently*? English learners often confuse the two. If you want to talk about something happening now or at the present time, then you can use *currently*. For example, 'She is *currently* playing in a local hockey league, but soon she will change teams.'

Actually means 'in fact' or 'really' and is often used to make corrections: 'Actually, Portuguese is spoken in Brazil, not Spanish.'

1. She told me that the Eiffel Tower is 250 metres high but she's wrong. _____, it's 300 metres high. (Sie hat mir gesagt, dass der Eiffelturm 250 Meter hoch ist, aber sie hat sich geirrt. Eigentlich ist er 300 Meter hoch.)
2. John is a writer. He's _____ working on a new book. (John ist ein Schriftsteller. Er arbeitet derzeit an einem neuen Buch.)
3. Are all those rumours _____ true? (Sind all diese Gerüchte tatsächlich wahr?)
4. Although she failed all her exams, Joanna is _____ very smart. (Obwohl sie nicht alle Prüfungen bestanden hat, ist Joanna eigentlich sehr klug.)
5. He's _____ taking medication for his heart. (Er nimmt derzeit Medikamente für sein Herz.)

Eventually or possibly?

It can be difficult for English learners to distinguish between *eventually* and *possibly*. Firstly, *eventually* means 'finally', 'ultimately', or 'in the end'. Example: 'Eventually, when the noise died down, I got to sleep.'

Meanwhile, *possibly* means 'perhaps' or 'maybe'. For example, 'It may *possibly* rain today, so remember to pack a raincoat.'

1. Keep trying and you'll find a suitable job _____. (Versuchen Sie es weiter und Sie werden irgendwann einen passenden Job finden.)
2. After being stranded for hours, they were _____ rescued by helicopter. (Nachdem sie stundenlang gestrandet waren, wurden sie schließlich per Hubschrauber gerettet.)
3. There could _____ be life on Mars, but we don't know for sure. (Es könnte möglicherweise Leben auf dem Mars geben, aber wir wissen es nicht genau.)
4. Do you think that he could _____ be right? (Glaubst Du, dass er möglicherweise recht haben könnte?)
5. I looked everywhere for my keys and _____ found them in the dog's basket. (Ich habe überall nach meinen Schlüsseln gesucht und sie schließlich im Hundekorb gefunden.)

The solutions are on page 34.