

**GERMAN COMPOSITION: A
THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL
GUIDE TO THE ART OF
TRANSLATING ENGLISH PROSE
INTO GERMAN**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649127160

German composition: a theoretical and practical guide to the art of translating English prose into German by Hermann Lange

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HERMANN LANGE

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535.5413
Clarendon Press Series

GERMAN COMPOSITION

*A THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL GUIDE
TO THE ART OF TRANSLATING ENGLISH PROSE
INTO GERMAN*

BY

HERMANN LANGE

LECTURER ON FRENCH AND GERMAN AT THE MANCHESTER TECHNICAL SCHOOL
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THIRD EDITION

*With the German Spelling revised to meet the requirements of the
Government Regulations of 1880*

Oxford

AT THE CLARENDON PRESS

M DCCC

PF3-125
L35
1596

Oxford

PRINTED AT THE CLARENDON PRESS
BY HORACE HART, M.A.
PRINTED TO THE UNIVERSITY

P R E F A C E.

'GERMAN COMPOSITION' is intended to be a Theoretical and Practical Guide to the Art of Translating English Prose into good and idiomatic German. It is arranged in such a manner that students who have reached the fiftieth Lesson of the 'German Manual' may commence and advantageously use it conjointly with that book. Being complete in itself, it is likewise adapted for the use of any other students who, possessing a knowledge of German Accidence and having had some practice in reading German Prose, wish to acquire the Art of Translating English Prose into German.

The book is calculated to serve the requirements of the B.A. Examinations of the London and Victoria Universities, the Competitive Examinations for the Civil and Military Service, the Oxford and Cambridge Local Examinations for Senior Students, the Examination of the College of Preceptors for First Class Candidates, and of similar Public Examinations—all of which require the candidates to translate English Prose into German.

I may conscientiously say that I have done all I could to make the book attractive and useful. The selection of the Extracts has been made with the greatest care directly from the works of the various authors, and is the result of many years' attentive reading and research. The pieces have been almost exclusively chosen from the works of the best modern English and American writers, and, it is hoped, will be found as interesting and instructive as they are well adapted for translation into German. They represent all the various styles of English Prose Composition, and contain a great variety of subjects, as a glance at the various pages will show; whilst the fact that the specimens, with only one or two exceptions, are no mere fragments, but complete pieces in themselves, must necessarily add to their value.

The Biographical Sketches of famous men and women, which at intervals appear in the Notes and are always given in German, form a special feature of the book. (Comp. S. 127, N. 1; S. 138, N. 12; and

S. 156, N. 1.) They are of various lengths, according to their importance, and have been written to add to the interest of the work and at the same time to offer the student some useful material for reading German.

With respect to the help given in the Notes, I may state that I have proceeded with the utmost consideration and care. The great object I placed before me was to show, by precept and example, that a good translation cannot be produced by the mere mechanical process of joining together a number of words, as the dictionary may offer them at first sight: but that it requires great thought and analytic power; that every sentence, nay, almost every word, has to be weighed and considered with respect to its true bearing upon the text; and that a good rendering is only possible when the translator has grasped the true meaning of the passage before him.

I have endeavoured to give neither too little nor too much help, but whenever I found a difficulty which a student of average ability could not fairly be expected to overcome, I have stepped in to solve it. For this purpose I have made use of English equivalents and periphrases and of Rules and Examples, and in cases where neither of these helps was considered practicable I have not hesitated to give the German rendering of the word or passage to be translated. The last mode of procedure, however, I have adopted only when I found that the dictionaries in ordinary use were insufficient, as is so frequently the case, and more especially with respect to idiomatic passages, which it is impossible to render successfully unless the translator is well versed in both languages, and at the same time has undergone a thorough training in the Art of Translating English into German, which the present volume professes to teach. The plan of indicating the rendering of words and phrases by means of English equivalents and periphrases must be of evident advantage to the learner, for it teaches him how to think and analyse, whilst it leads him to render the word or phrase correctly without giving him the translation itself.

The Notes of Sections 1 to 150 and the Appendix contain in a concise and lucid form almost all the rules relating to the German Syntax, and in most instances these rules have been illustrated by practical examples and models. The Appendix gives in thirty-seven paragraphs the Rules referring to the Construction, the use of the Indicative, Subjunctive (or Conjunctive), and Conditional Moods, which for convenient reference have been reprinted from my 'German Grammar,' and to facilitate the student's work I have added an Index to the Grammatical Rules and Idiomatic Renderings.

In a work containing such a great number of Extracts as the present, there are, of course, many idioms and passages which may be correctly translated in various ways, and I can therefore scarcely hope that all my renderings will meet with the approval of every German scholar. I may, however, confidently affirm here that I have devoted much thought and labour to this publication, and that I have tried with all my heart to make it acceptable to teachers and students alike.

In conclusion I respectfully tender my best thanks to the publishers—

Messrs. W. and R. Chambers, Edinburgh,

„ Chapman and Hall,

„ Longmans and Co.,

„ Sampson Low and Co.,

„ Macmillan and Co.,

Mr. Murray,

Messrs. T. Nelson and Sons,

„ Smith, Elder, and Co., and

„ Stanford and Co.,

} London,

} „

and to the Editors of—

The Daily News,

„ Daily Telegraph,

„ Globe,

„ Standard, and

„ Times,

} London.

for their very kind permission to make use of the Copyright Extracts in this publication, and for the cordial manner in which they granted my request.

Page ix contains a few Hints and Directions for using the Book which I consider of great importance, and to which I beg to draw attention.

HERMANN LANGE.

HEATHFIELD HOUSE, LLOYD STREET,

GREENHEYS, MANCHESTER,

September, 1883.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

A second edition of this volume having been called for, I wish to express my cordial thanks to the numerous colleagues and friends who adopted it as a text-book for their classes.

As I am engaged in preparing, besides this book, a third edition of two other volumes of my 'German Course,' and, at the request of the Delegates of the University Press, also a Key to this volume, 'German Composition,' I think the present moment opportune for introducing the reformed German spelling which, by Government regulations, has been taught in German schools for the last five or six years, and is becoming more generally used from year to year in friendly intercourse, papers, periodicals, literature, and commercial correspondence. It is but fair that the students of German in this country should be taught to spell in the simplified way now universally practised by their German contemporaries. They will at least have nothing to unlearn then; and, although the present spelling-reform may be considered but a compromise between the older and the younger schools, there being a tendency in the younger men to go even further than their older colleagues in the simplification of our orthography and to make it still more phonetic and uniform in principle, it will take a long time before the Government will be moved to make modifications of any importance in their regulations. I confidently trust that the great trouble I have bestowed upon the revision of the present edition will be appreciated by teachers and students alike. It will easily be seen that the alterations of the orthography in the various books forming this 'German Course' must have necessarily entailed a very considerable additional expense; but the publication having met with much approval on the part of the public, I was anxious to leave nothing undone in order to adapt it in every respect to the requirements of the times and to make it still more useful.

On examination it will be seen that the changes made are not so many as may be supposed, and that the principles underlying the German spelling-reform are simple and easy to understand.

At the end of the Appendix will be found a Synopsis of the principal changes the German spelling has undergone, accompanied by Examples and a few Exceptions to the general rules.

HERMANN LANGE.

HEATHFIELD HOUSE, LLOYD STREET, GREENHEYS, MANCHESTER,
December, 1886.

DIRECTIONS FOR USING THE BOOK.

Each Section should first be prepared for *viva voce* translation, *with* the assistance of the Notes in class; then translated in writing; carefully corrected; and finally practised, by comparing the English text with the corrected German version, FOR A SECOND *viva voce* TRANSLATION until the student is able to translate the English text, *without* the assistance of the Notes in class, just as readily into correct German as if he were reading from a German book.

The Grammatical Rules given in the Notes should always be carefully studied, and the reading of previously given Rules and the various paragraphs of the Appendix referred to in the text should never be omitted.

The strict and conscientious observance of these directions is earnestly requested.

THE SECOND *viva voce* TRANSLATION *without* the assistance of the Notes in class, as explained above, is especially of the greatest importance to the student's progress in the Art of Translating English into German, and is the only way of mastering all the idiomatic and syntactic difficulties contained in the Lessons and explained in the foot-notes. It commends itself likewise as the best way of committing to memory the great number of words and the various forms of construction occurring in the text, and will gradually, but surely, lead to the acquisition of a good and thorough German style of writing.

To be quite clear the Author ventures to propose the following

PLAN OF WORKING.

FIRST LESSON.

Prepare for *viva voce* translation Sections 1 and 2, WITH the assistance of the Notes in class.

SECOND LESSON.

Translate in Writing Sections 1 and 2; and prepare for *viva voce* translation Sections 3 and 4, WITH the assistance of the Notes in class.

THIRD LESSON.

PREPARE FOR FLUENT AND CORRECT *viva voce* TRANSLATION Sections 1 and 2, WITHOUT the assistance of the Notes in class, by comparing the English