



10 ITALIAN TRANSLATION MISTAKES...

Here are the answers and some grammar information to explain why:

1. Please say ~~tell~~ me how works this machine ~~works~~.

We use the verb **tell** (not 'say) when we want to *inform* or *explain* something, as in this request for information. As this is not a *direct* question the 'how' part of the sentence is a statement not a question form – How + subject + verb.

2. I try ~~not to don't~~ make any noise when my colleague is speaking on the phone.

When we want to use the *negative form* of verbs like *try/attempt/intend/prefer/agree/promise/refuse* – which are followed by **to +** (infinitive) **verb** we use **not** before the 'to'. We use an *indefinite quantifier* or *article* before the noun **noise**. In the 'when' part of the sentence we prefer to use the **continuous/progressive form** to show an action that is in progress at the time of speaking.

3. I know it is a problem, but what do you want ~~that~~ me to do?

English sentence usually require a **subject** (it) before the verb. The second part of the sentence is a question, therefore we need to use the question form – **question word + auxiliary verb +** (infinitive) **verb**. This verb is **want 'to'**; here it is *split* by the object pronoun **me** as the question is directed refers back to the speaker.

4. They are good friends of me ~~mine~~. We stay together all the time ~~together~~ at the weekend.

Mine is the *possessive* pronoun. 'Me' is an *object* pronoun. The adverb **together** comes after the main verb 'stay' and the time expression comes at the end of the sentence.

5. I think ~~to~~ I'll go to Greece for my vacation this year.

We often use 'think' before the simple future form **will** when we are talking about possible future decisions.

6. I ~~am~~ have been here since Monday. I will leave tomorrow.

We use the **present perfect simple** to talk about the length of time that an action, or state, exists from the past *up to* the present time.

7. When you ~~listen~~ hear my history story you will laugh!

We prefer to use the verb **hear** when we are the *passive* receivers of what someone says. The verb form **listen TO** (something) is more *active*. The word **story** in English refers to a narrative about an event that happened in someone's past – usually it is true but it can also be something 'imagined' as in a book/novel. A **history** (or 'history' – uncountable) refers to a record or the study of events that happened in a period of time in the past.

8. If I ~~would speak~~ spoke English very well English, I would ~~search~~ look for a job in London.

This sentence is an example of the **second conditional (if) form**. The 'if' clause (part of the sentence) is formed **if + past tense form + infinitive verb**. Remember that *this does not mean the action happened in the past, but only that we are using the 'past tense form' to show an unreal or impossible 'condition' in the present*. In this case, the speaker cannot speak English very well at the time of speaking but can hypothesise about it! We also put the adverbs 'very well' at the end of the clause here. The verb to **search** is very formal in English. It is more natural to use the *phrasal verb* **look for**.

9. I don't understand ~~nothing~~ anything when you speak very quickly.

We use the indefinite quantifier **anything** when we have a negative sentence formed with 'not'. It is possible to say in the affirmative 'I understand nothing' but the negative form is more natural in English.

10. You must stop ~~to~~ working now, it's seven-and half ~~past~~ seven.

When we want to completely stop or cease an action that is in progress at the time of speaking we use the form **stop + verb-ing**. We use the form **stop to +** (infinitive) **verb** when we want to show that we are going to *interrupt* an action in order to do something. For example: "I'm tired from driving for so long. Let's stop to buy some coffee." When we talk about **clock time** we use the expressions **half past + hour** to indicate 30 minutes *past the hour* (7.30). Similarly we say **quarter past** for 15 minutes past the hour (7.15). However, we say **quarter to +** the *next* hour to indicate 45 minutes past the hour (7.45).