Some set phrases can’t be translated word for word – they don’t make sense.

Don’t just look up the first word of a set phrase. Look up what looks like the most important word in the phrase. If the phrase isn’t there, look up another word.

For example, if a Spanish person asks if you want a “café cortado”, he isn’t offering you a coffee that’s gone off! Can you see what “café cortado” does mean?

A Spanish pupil has translated word for word

Find the underlined Spanish expressions in your dictionary and write what they really mean in English.

1. Por otro lado, es muy barato.
   For the other side, it’s very cheap.

2. Me puso al día.
   He put me to the day.

3. Me da igual.
   It gives equal to me.

4. Te está tomando el pelo.
   He’s taking your hair.

Adapt the phrases given in the dictionary

Look up the underlined phrases, and write the sentences in English.

1. Su mujer es de buen carácter.

2. Me hice un lio con los nombres.

3. Pedro acaba de salir.

4. ¿Qué tal estuvieron las vacaciones?