

When translating into Spanish:

1. Beware of false friends! There are words that may look similar between two languages and may even have a common root, but may also have a completely different meaning.

embarrassed = avergonzado; embarazado = pregnant (making the masculine form impossible as we understand nature at present!)  
 carpet = alfombra, moqueta; carpeta = folder

2. Remember that the conventions for the use of uppercase letters is different in English and Spanish; often what is written with an uppercase letter in English is written with a lowercase letter in Spanish.

	English (Uppercase)	Spanish (Lowercase)
Names of months	September	septiembre
Names of days of the week	Thursday	jueves
Names of languages	English	inglés
Names of nationalities	Canadian	canadiense

3. Make proper use of written accents.

- a. Accents are not written on uppercase letters  
 Índice, ECONOMÍA
- b. If the stress is on the final syllable of a word of two or more syllables (una palabra aguda) and the word ends in a vowel, “-n,” or “-s,” the word must have a written accent.  
 Papá (as opposed to papa), hablé (as opposed to hable), así (as contrasted with casi), pintó (as opposed to pinto), hindú, canción, cortés (as opposed to cortes)
- c. If the stress is on the next to the last syllable of a word (una palabra grave) and the word ends in any consonant other than “-n” or “-s,” the word must have a written accent.  
 árbol, álbum, césped, Cádiz
- d. If the stress is on any syllable before the next to the last syllable of a word, (una palabra esdrújula, una palabra sobreesdrújula), the vowel of that syllable must have a written accent. This includes certain verb forms that are written as a single word with the pronouns that follow.  
 británico, índice, dígaselo, preguntándose, lérselo
- e. When the vowels i and u occur next to an a, e or u and are stressed, they must have a written accent.  
 continúo (as opposed to continuo or continuó), economÍA, oír, día, búho (The fact that the “h” is silent requires the accent, although one sees a letter between the u and the o.)
- f. Certain words are always written with an accent to distinguish them from words with otherwise identical spellings. (The following examples do not constitute an exhaustive list.)

Written accent	No written accent
aún (still, nevertheless)	aun (also, including)
dé (give)	de (of, from)
él (he)	el (the)
éste (this, pronoun)	este (this, adjective)
ésta (this, pronoun)	esta (this, adjective)
éstos (these, pronoun)	estos (these, adjective)
éstas (these, pronoun)	estas (these, adjective)
(Similarly, “ese,” and “aquel; ” the neuter forms, “esto,” “eso,” “aquello,” never have a written accent; the other pronouns MAY be written without an accent if there is no possibility of ambiguity in the meaning of the sentence)	
más (more)	mas (but)
sí (yes, reflexive pronoun)	si (if)
sé (I know, be)	se (reflexive pronoun)

4. Make proper use of contractions. Spanish has only two contractions “a” + “el” becomes “al” and “de” + “el” becomes “del”. They should always be used; they are not optional.
5. The convention in MCPS is not to translate directory information that is anything one might have to look up to contact someone or research something. An explanation may be given in parentheses after the English, along with any acronym, but the English should be used in the text. Directory information includes people’s titles, school names, office names, program names, the names of laws, etc.
6. ALT Codes are special characters such as accents. Because your keyboard doesn't have all the keys it needs, you use the ALT key and your number pad.  
(Don't use your numbers on top, this only works with keypad off the right, and make sure "NUM LOCK" is on.)  
EXAMPLE: to make this symbol: á  
CODE: ALT-160  
Hold ALT KEY down and press 160 on the Number Pad at the same time.

The chart below shows all the alt codes for the accent letter symbols:

ALT 160	á		
ALT 130	é		
ALT 161	í		
ALT 162	ó		
ALT 163	ú		
ALT 164	ñ	ALT 165	Ñ