

**Understanding Translation Studies:  
Theory, Literature, and Their Implications**  
理解翻譯研究：理論、文獻與衍生現象

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Hours: 36 (6hrs/w)

**Course Description:**

How do we theorize the practice of translation? This course is designed to engage translation studies in the context of English and Chinese literature. By conceptualizing translation as a practice of re-reading and re-writing and by reading and comparing literature in the original text and in translation, we will explore many nuances and idioms in both of our focal languages. Further, we will engage with and problematize the objectives, processes, and outcomes associated with translation.

We will begin by familiarizing ourselves with important theories and critical issues in contemporary translation studies. We will discuss various approaches that translators take in order to overcome the problems that are part and parcel of translating a text including in regard to considering disparate cultural contexts. Although this course focuses on literature, students are encouraged to explore and interrogate other textual genres. Students will learn through close readings of target and source texts and turn theory into practice in their own translation projects. The ultimate goal of this course is for students to develop a critical awareness of what it means to read a text in translation and what can be lost or interpolated, politically, aesthetically, and culturally, regardless how skilled the practitioner may be. Through their own practice, too, students will gain opportunities to better understand the broad decisions and multiple word-by-word decisions translators must make and to develop some skills of their own in this respect.

課程說明：

本課程理論與實務並重。理論方面將著重介紹西方「翻譯研究」的理論內涵，透過觀察實例、精讀文本來引導學員從文學作品與譯文，以及日常生活中的文化現象，思考翻譯實踐的意涵指涉，並鼓勵同學從自身文學專業和文化背景出發，對於翻譯活動提出個人觀察。實務方面，學員將選擇自己感興趣的中文文學作品，在教師的指導下譯為英文，且透過翻譯研究理論進行實踐的分析與反思，揭示語言與文化轉譯過程的挑戰，作為期末評分依據。

**Course Objectives:**

- Understand the basic theoretical and ethical issues of translation
- Identify dynamics embedded translation practice including linguistic, cultural, sociopolitical, and economic factors
- Compare cultural and linguistic differences between languages usages
- Practice the literary translation and recognize its challenges

**Mode of instruction**

Two to Three two-hour lectures together with an hour-long discussion per week. In-class discussions include assigned readings and the works of translation practice.

**Required Texts:**

- Readings will be available online.

**Assignments:**

- Participation: 15%  
You should finish readings before coming to class and be prepared with your own questions and responses. In addition to class discussions, you are expected to participate in the activities of translation reviews, discussing your translation practice during the semester.
- Presentation: 15%  
You will make a 15- to 20-minute presentation to the class. Please choose an assigned topic from the schedule. Please remember that you are expected to read the texts associated with your topic in its entirety before you present. In your presentation, you will first introduce key ideas discussed in your focal theoretical texts and share your findings relevant to the problems of translation from the reading excerpts. In other words, your job is to explain how the language used in the texts and translations are connected to the theoretical materials we have read in this course. Also, please prepare at least two questions to guide the class discussion. Presentations that are creative in nature are welcome. Audio-visual resources are strongly encouraged.
- Translation Practice: 20%  
Short translation practices are due on day 4. Details will be given on day 1. You will prepare a Chinese to English translation of a short excerpt from a text of your choice, no longer than one page. In addition, you will write a short essay, 300 words at least, describing one problem you encountered in translating your excerpt and the strategy you used to overcome it.
- Midterm Paper: 20%  
During the day of midterm exams (i.e., day 7), you are required to make a 15-minute presentation and turn in a 3-page description in which you describe your proposed final project. You should offer a rationale for your choice and what you expect to achieve in this project. Extending your work from the translation practice (above) is highly recommended.
- Final Paper: 30%  
A 20-page term paper in English is due at the end of the final day. You should include your translation text (original text should be included, but will not count in the length of the paper) and 3-4 pages of theoretical and conceptual analysis, incorporating ideas discussed in the course.

**Evaluation:**

Participation	15%
Presentation	15%
Translation Practice	20%
Midterm Paper	20%

Final Paper

30%

**Policy:**

Students are expected to come to every class. You may be absent two times without penalty to your attendance grade, but your final grade will be reduced by one point for each unexcused absence beyond three. Please notify your instructor in advance if you cannot be in class. Three late arrivals/early departures will count as one absence. It is your responsibility to find out what has been missed if you miss class. You should prepare the readings and related materials BEFORE coming to class.

**Plagiarism and academic honesty:**

If you use someone else's ideas, whether through direct quotation or paraphrase, you need to say so. You are not required to use published secondary sources (online or in print) in your discussion postings or response papers, but if you do so, you must document them through parenthetical references and a Works Cited list (as explained in the MLA Style Guide, available in the library or at the bookstore) to show your reader where your ideas are coming from.

Dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, fabricating information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students.

**Class Schedule:**

The following schedule might be subjected to change, depending on the progress of our interests and discussions in classroom.

1.                   **Introduction**  
                       Venuti, "Translation Studies: an emerging discipline" (1-9)  
                       Allen and Bernofsky, "Introduction: A Culture of Translation" (xiii-xx, *In Translation*)
  
2.                   **The Ethics of Translation**  
                       Cole, "Making Sense in Translation: Towards an Ethics of the Art" (3-16, *In Translation*)  
                       Bellos, "Fictions of the Foreign: The Paradox of 'Foreign-Soundingness'" (31-43, *In Translation*)
  
3.                   **Case Study**  
                       Murakami, "As Translator, as Novelist: The Translator's Afterword" (169-182, *In Translation*)  
                       Goossen, "Haruki Murakami and the Culture of Translation" (183-186, *In Translation*)
  
4.                   **Case Study (cont.)**  
                       〈為甚麼村上春樹的小說英譯比中譯自然？也許跟他寫作早期的難題有

關〉

<https://www.thenewslens.com/article/32545>

張明敏，〈《挪威的森林》在臺灣的翻譯與文化翻譯〉

張明敏，〈閱讀村上春樹的多種方法：以《發條鳥年代記》的中、英譯本為例〉

**5. The Role of a Translator**

Walter Benjamin, “The Task of a Translator” (15-25, *The Translation Studies Reader*)

**6. Historical Context (1)**

Bassnett, “History of translation theory” (47-62, *Translation Studies*)

Douglas Robinson, *Western Translation Theory: from Herodotus to Nietzsche*

**7. Historical Context (2)**

Bassnett, “History of translation theory” (62-81)

Douglas Robinson, *Western Translation Theory: from Herodotus to Nietzsche*

**8. Translation as a Method**

Itamar Even-Zohar, “The position of translated literature within the literary polysystem” (199–204, *The Translation Studies Reader*)

Venuti, “Translation, Community, Utopia” (468–488, *The Translation Studies Reader*)

**9. Translating Modernity**

陳碩文，〈「現代」：翻譯與想像〉

邱漢平，〈翻譯與文學生產：全球化時代的東亞案例〉

**10. The Politics of Translation**

Spivak, “The politics of translation” (397-416, *The Translation Studies Reader*)

單德興，〈理論之旅行／翻譯：以中文再現Edward W. Said—以Orientalism的四種中譯為例〉

**11. Cultural Negotiation in Translation**

Eoyang, “Speaking in Tongues: Translating Chinese Literature in a Post-Babelian Age” (292-304, *Translating Chinese Literature*)

Birch, “Reflections of a Working Translator” (3-14, *Translating Chinese Literature*)

Hwang, “Allusions” (14-21, *An Encyclopedia of Translation: Chinese-English, English-Chinese*, available at Google Scholar)

**12.**

**Field Trip**

汪民安，〈家樂福：語法、物品及娛樂的經濟學〉

Sakai, “Introduction,” *Translation and Subjectivity* (1-17)

**Selected References:**

Bassnett, Susan. *Translation Studies*. 4 edition, Routledge, 2013.

Bellos, David. *Is That a Fish in Your Ear?: Translation and the Meaning of Everything*.

Reprint edition, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2012.

Biguenet, John, and Rainer Schulte, editors. *Theories of Translation: An Anthology of Essays from Dryden to Derrida*. 1 edition, University Of Chicago Press, 1992.

Deutscher, Guy. *Through the Language Glass: Why the World Looks Different in Other Languages*. Picador, 2011.

Kelly, Nataly, and Jost Zetsche. *Found in Translation: How Language Shapes Our Lives and Transforms the World*. 1 edition, TarcherPerigee, 2012.

Lefevere, André. *Translating Literature: Practice and Theory in a Comparative Literature Context*. The Modern Language Association of America, 1992.

McWhorter, John. *The Power of Babel: A Natural History of Language*. Softcover Edition edition, Harper Perennial, 2003.

Sanders, Ella Frances. *Lost in Translation: An Illustrated Compendium of Untranslatable Words from Around the World*. Ten Speed Press, 2014.

Steiner, George. *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation*. 3 edition, Oxford University Press, 1998.

Venuti, Lawrence, editor. *The Translation Studies Reader*. 3 edition, Routledge, 2012.

Weinberger, Eliot, and Octavio Paz. *Nineteen Ways of Looking at Wang Wei*. 1 edition, New Directions, 2016.