

Translation of Political Texts

Instructor

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"What difficulties and misunderstandings might not be avoided, and how much time saved, by leaving matters trustfully in the translator's hands!"

FRIEDRICH VON GENTZ,

Diary,

September 1814

Class Hours

Sunday

16:00-17:45

Room

125

Office Hours

Saturday 14:45-15:45 or
by appointment

Introduction: Translations Studies and Politics

Thus far translation studies has developed principally as a Western and Eurocentric discipline, largely because the two most important historical events that motivated the development of the field as an academic discipline both involved Europe and North America in a central way. First was the Second World War which initiated the early investigations of translation in terms of linguistics, stressing codes and code switching, and in terms of function, focusing on the ways that translation can influence the reception context and shape the receiving culture itself. The early schools of translation studies reflect the preoccupations of translators during the Second World War, namely the use of translation for cracking codes in intelligence operations on the one hand and for cultural production related to propaganda on the other. Translation was seen as an important element in the victory of the Allies, raising the value of translation as an academic and theoretical concern. The second important historical development that gave translation studies an impetus was the emergence of the European Union and the decision of the EU to retain all its major languages as official ones, rather than to adopt a melting-pot model of political affiliation or even to choose to transact business in a restricted group of dominant languages. The result has arguably been the most extensive translational activity in the history of the world, with a consequent demand for translators and translator training that has required the emergence of an academic field to support the political context. (Bielsa and Hughes 2009)

Course Objectives

- ◆ To realize the scope, the significance, and the influence of this translation sphere within and without Translation Studies.
- ◆ To improve translation skills and habits.
- ◆ To practice and discuss both translation and evaluation of political translations and translation strategies.
- ◆ To improve the ability to revise translated texts.
- ◆ To improve independent as well as group work professional skills.

Course Materials

Gagnon, C. (2010). Political translation. In Y. Gambier and L. V. Doorslaer, (Eds.), *Handbook of translation studies. Vol. 1* (pp. 252-256). Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company. [Reading 1]

Gambier, Y. (2006). Transformation in international news. In K. Conway & S. Bassnett. (Eds.), *Translation in global news: Proceedings of the conference held at the University of Warwick 23 June 2006* (pp. 9-21). Coventry: University of Warwick, Center for Translation and Comparative Cultural Studies. [Reading 2]

Schäffner, C. (2007). Politics and translation. In P. Kuhiwczak & K. Littau. (Eds.), *A Companion to translation studies* (pp. 134-147). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters. [Reading 3]

Selected Recommended Materials

- Scammell, C. (2018). *Translation strategies in global news: What Sarkozy said in the suburbs*. Gham: Palgrave McMillan.
- Schäffner, C. (1997a). Strategies of translating political texts. In A. Trosborg. (Ed.), *Text typology and translation* (pp. 119-143). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Schäffner, C. (1997b). Political texts as sensitive texts. In K. Simms. (Ed.), *Translating sensitive texts: Linguistic aspects* (pp. 131-138). Leiden and Amsterdam: Brill/Rodopi.
- Schäffner, C. (2004). Political discourse analysis from the point of view of translation studies. *Journal of Language and Politics*, 3(1), 117–50.
- Schäffner, C., & Bassnett, S. (2010). Introduction: Politics, media and translation – exploring synergies. In C. Schäffner & S. Bassnett (Eds.), *Political discourse, media and translation* (pp. 1-21). Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Tymoczko, M. (2000). Translation and political engagement: Activism, social change and the role of translation in geopolitical shifts. *The Translator*, 6(1), 23-47.

Requirements

- Reading the course readings attentively.
- Doing tasks, assignments and projects consisting of:
 - Those determined by the instructor.
 - Group projects. You will translate a piece of current news story/report from a quality journal and present your translation for discussion in class. (For more information, please see the steps outlined at the end of this syllabus.)
 - Individual/ group evaluation of peer translation projects.
- Handing over a translation and/or revision project, the details of which will be disclosed early in the semester.
- Presenting a translation analysis
- Taking the final exam comprised of theoretical and practical parts.

Resources

آقابخشی، علی و افشاری راد، مینو. (۱۳۷۴). فرهنگ علوم سیاسی. تهران: مرکز اطلاعات و مدارک علمی ایران.

بیرجندی، پرویز، گرجیان، بهمن و مولونیا، شیوا. (۱۳۸۵). ترجمه متون سیاسی: ویژه دانشجویان مترجمی زبان انگلیسی. تهران: رهنما.

تجویدی، غلامرضا. (۱۳۷۹). ترجمه متون سیاسی. تهران: دانشگاه پیام نور.

مهاجری، عباسعلی. (۱۳۸۹). فرهنگ دو سویه علوم سیاسی: انگلیسی-فارسی، فارسی-انگلیسی. تهران: دانشیار.

نوروزی خیابانی، مهدی. (۱۳۷۴). فرهنگ لغات و اصطلاحات سیاسی: انگلیسی-فارسی. تهران: نشر نی.

Course Schedule

Session	Subject/Activity
1	Introduction to the Course In-Class Task 1
2	Reading 1 In-Class Task 2
3	Assignment 1 Group 1's First Project

4	Reading 2	Group 2's First Project
5	In-Class Task 3	Group 3's First Project
6	Reading 3	Group 4's First Project
7	Translation Analysis	Assignment 2
8	Translation Analysis	In-Class Task 4
9	Translation Analysis	Assignment 3
10	Translation Analysis	In-Class Task 5
11	Translation Analysis	Assignment 4
12	Translation Analysis	In-Class Task 6
13	Translation Analysis	Assignment 5
14	Final Project Review	Group 4's Third Project

Homework Policy

Please note it is important to deliver your tasks, assignments and projects on time, otherwise you will lose marks. It is also essential that you include your full name, and the task/assignment number at the top of your task/assignment sheets, whether electronic or not. In case you are sending your assignment online, you need to have a copy of it with you on the due session. Assignments have to be done individually while you can choose to work on a translation task in pair.

Grading

▣ Presentation (of Translation Analysis)	5%	
▣ Tasks, Assignments, Projects & Evaluations	40%	
▣ Final Project	20%	
▣ Final Exam		35% (theoretical 15%+practical 20%)
<hr style="width: 50%; margin: 0 auto;"/> $5\% + 60\% + 35\% = 100\%$		

Your grades, in our class, indicate the sum of your overall abilities, your class performance and compliance with instructions and deadlines as well as the quality of your projects and exam performance.

Additional Information

Missing more than 3 sessions means losing marks per each extra session. Also, be careful not to miss your group presentations, or your mark for that group project will be lower than your group-mates. *If you manage to miss no sessions or up to two sessions only, will get some bonus marks depending on your presence pattern.*

Steps for Doing Group Projects Successfully

- 1- **Choose-Check-Receive Approval--Receive the approval of your proposed news story from the instructor via email at least six days in advance. Please note you should start checking your news stories early enough as you cannot be sure of their outright approval.**
- 2- **Role Assignment-Role Play--Assign roles to group members e.g. manager, translator, editor, reviser, terminologist, etc. And include in your work each members' roles and the time (in hours) you will overall spend**

for each translation project. The roles each group member assumes need to change from one project to the next. Do your best to translate and finalize your project using the group's collaborative capacity only.

- 3- *Presentation*--Present your work using copies of your project for review in class on the due session.
- 4- *Feedback Reception*--Receive others' feedback within one week from your presentation. Each peer group needs to submit their evaluations (using the special evaluation sheets) to the instructor within one week. Failing to do so shall result in mark loss because punctuality is extremely important for the ultimate success of this group activity and because it is an essential skill in the translation profession as a whole.
- 5- *Revision*--Revise your work using the feedback received and then share the revised file with the instructor.

Notes:

- ✓ You will be provided with templates for your group translations and evaluations.
- ✓ The required length of your texts and some recommended journals will be announced early in the semester.
- ✓ The class is divided into two major parts. Forming 4 groups of at most four students is possible in each part.
- ✓ The third group project will be from Persian into English.

Thank you for your attention and cooperation.