

ANS 361 Spring 2011
Lost in Translation:
History of Chinese Language and Translation
TTh 12:30-2:00 p.m.
Parlin 203

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[All lectures, discussion and readings in English.]

Office hours:* Tuesdays 12:30-1:30 p.m.; 3:30-4:30 p.m.
Thursdays 12:30-1:30 p.m.

***No appointment necessary (please see me about appointments outside of scheduled office hours)**

This course is open to all students and, while recommended, no background in Chinese language, culture or linguistics is required. Against the backdrop of China's prominent international status and increasing global interest in the Chinese language, this course will delve into an in-depth study of the Chinese language and culture, including discussion of Chinese regional cultures and dialects. Course emphasis will be given to the study of the modern Chinese language as spoken in China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. Cultural and political contexts of these geopolitical entities will be explored in order to understand emerging differences of all that falls under the common nomenclature of "Chinese."

Given China's increased foreign interaction, this course will also include a discussion of the history of translation of the Chinese language into different languages, with topics such as the imperial Qing dynasty's large-scale Manchu translations of the Confucian classics and Japanese *kanbun* studies. Discussion will also include early Chinese interactions with Buddhist missionaries and European Jesuit missionaries. In this context, translation theories and practices will be discussed.

Lectures and discussions will focus on the cultural, social, historical, and political background against which the Chinese language has evolved and continues to evolve. Of significance will be assessment of the increasing influence of usage of the English language and the Internet in China and Taiwan. Students will engage in a final project that will be either research-based in nature or, with instructor approval, a translation project (into English) with complementary analysis of translation theory or practice. **NOTE:** This is not a course for training in translation or interpretation.

Course Topic Sections:

- **Section I** – Introduction to the Chinese Language and Dialects, Pre-modern translation projects in Chinese history (including Japanese *kanbun* studies)
- **Section II** – Language Attitudes, Cultural Usage and Habits, Idiosyncrasies in Chinese Semantics, Grammar and Syntax (China, Hong Kong, Taiwan)
- **Section III** – Translation Theories and Approaches, Global Influence of English and the Internet

Course Grade based on:*

**There is no final exam in this course.*

- 15% Class discussion, participation, and preparation (Class Attendance Policy)
Informal in-class and Blackboard “brainstorming” writing
- 50% Reading and Discussion Questions (“quizzes” on lectures/readings/discussion)
- 10% One Oral Presentation on Section II or Section III
- 20% Final Project (8-page research report or translation of short work or excerpt into English, as approved by instructor)*
*If translation project, 5% will be for an analysis of translation theory or practice
- 5% Oral Presentation on Final Project

Required Texts:

Jerry Norman, *Chinese* (Cambridge 1988)

S. Robert Ramsey, *The Languages of China* (Princeton 1987)

Morry Sofer, *The Translator’s Handbook, 6th Revised Edition (Translator’s Handbook)*
(Schreiber Publishing, Inc.; 7th Revised edition, 2009)

Reading Selections on Blackboard include:

Susan Bassnett, *Translation Studies*

John DeFrancis, *The Chinese Language – Fact and Fantasy*

Edwin Gentzler, *Contemporary Translation Theories*. Revised 2nd Ed. (Topics in Translation, 21)

Lydia Liu, ed. *Tokens of Exchange: The Problem of Translation in Global Circulations (Post-Contemporary Interventions)*

Jeremy Munday, *Introducing Translation Studies: Theories and Applications*

Richard J. Smith, *China’s Cultural Heritage – The Qing Dynasty 1644-1912*

Jonathan Spence, *The Memory Palace of Matteo Ricci*

Lawrence Venuti, *The Translator’s Invisibility: A History of Translation*

Lawrence Venuti, *The Translation Studies Reader*

Recommended:

Doug Leshan, *A Handbook of English-Chinese Translation* (Commercial Press 2002)

Mona Baker, *In Other Words: A Coursebook on Translation*

The Chinese Language – A Brief Introduction

To understand what Chinese is all about, one must appreciate the diversity as well as the complexities of the language. There are marked differences between spoken and written Chinese, and between modern and classical Chinese, the latter of which is still employed in modern-day usage.

Chinese is a “tonal” language where a tonal level of pronunciation determines meaning. (There are four tones in standard Chinese, also known as Mandarin. Other dialects have different number of tones.) The grammatical structure of Chinese is

relatively simple, but with tones, Chinese has been acknowledged as one of the most difficult languages for an English speaker to learn. More of a challenge is to achieve native-level literacy of the writing system of “characters.” Each character is a graph that forms a word or part of a word; one character can be used to form different combinations that have varying degrees in meaning.

Even in China, only about a quarter of the population is functionally literate. A working familiarity of 14,000 characters (out of a system of 50,000) is claimed by the very educated, 7000 is considered educated; 2500-4000 characters are needed to read a newspaper. One year of college Chinese lays a foundation of anywhere between 400 and 800 characters. (Note – Using a Chinese dictionary requires practice in working with the classification system of “radicals.”)

The challenge of reading and writing Chinese for both native and non-native speakers lies with the non-alphabetic writing system. Visual recognition does not correspond with phonetic recognition – one cannot “sound out” a character by looking at it. In initially learning to read and write, pronunciation and semantic knowledge of a character are memorized in association with the visual form. Reading literacy requires recognition of a character by successfully *retrieving* from memory the discrete phonetic, semantic and visual components that all correlate with the character. Writing literacy requires reproduction of a character by the same retrieval process. [Note – The establishment of “simplified characters” by the PRC in the latter half of the 20th century has created a more diverse and complicated orthography that consists of both traditional and simplified forms. What was once a divisive geopolitical distinction between the PRC (simplified) and Taiwan (traditional), familiarity with both forms is necessary to true reading proficiency in Chinese.]

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

- **This course will be graded on the Plus/Minus system.**
- There is no written final exam for this course.
- *Late assignments will be deducted by half a grade for each day past the due date. No assignments will be accepted after the last day of classes (5/6/11). Your final course grade will be based on work completed up to this date.*
- **Laptop Use Policy** – Classroom Laptop use for taking notes related to this course only. Please see me for an agreement form if you are planning on using a laptop in class for “notetaking.” Laptop activities unrelated to this course will lead to dismissal from class (and marked as an absence for that day). **Repeat offenders will result in a filing of a report of academic problems.**
- **Other Electronic Devices (Cell phone, Blackberry, I-Phone, etc.) Use Policy** – **All devices must be turned off during class.** Any use of these devices, including texting, websurfing, etc. will lead to dismissal from class (and marked as an absence for that day). **Repeat offenders will result in a filing of a report of academic problems.**
- There is a class attendance policy for this course.

Attendance is vital for success in this course and I value your contribution to class discussion. As well, lectures will be vital for background on historical context and

schools of thought, and flesh out ideas and concepts for discussion, all of which cannot be replaced by reading lecture outlines online.

ATTENDANCE POLICY – More than 3 absences, final class participation grade deducted half a grade (e.g. A- to B+); additional half grades deducted for each additional 2 absences (e.g. 5 absences, A- to B; 7 absences A- to B-).

Religious Holidays – Religious holy days sometimes conflict with class and examination schedules. If you miss an examination, work assignment, or other project due to the observance of a religious holy day you will be given an opportunity to complete the work missed within a reasonable time **after** the absence. It is the policy of The University of Texas at Austin that **you must notify each of your instructors at least fourteen days prior to the classes scheduled on dates you will be absent** to observe a religious holy day.

- Class and online discussion, participation and “preparedness.” (15%)

Discussion is essential for an understanding of the materials. Both verbal and written forms of expression in-class (informal writing) and online on Blackboard are emphasized in this course. Be prepared to expand on discussion questions and/or observations for class discussion days, including discussion following panel presentations.

- *Informal Writing / Leading Discussion**

*There is no make-up for in-class informal writing.

Informal “free-writing” and “list-writing” will jumpstart many discussions. I strongly encourage you to be on time for class as some of the informal writing will take place at the beginning of class for only a few minutes; some informal writing inspired discussion will be online on Blackboard Discussion Board. These will be collected and read but not assigned a formal grade. However, these will be tabulated toward your overall informal writing grade.

Writing and Oral Presentation

Writing and oral presentations are two of the most effective ways to brainstorm about ideas and to communicate our ideas in an in-depth manner. In addition to informal and formal writing assignments, there will be oral presentation assignments.

On matters of research and exploration of topics, make use of the UT library, including resources tailored for undergraduate students. Website: <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/students/>

On matters of writing at any stage, I encourage you to consult with me and/or make liberal use of the University’s Writing Center. <http://www.utexas.edu/cola/centers/uwc>

- Reading and Discussion Questions (50%)

There is NO make-up of Discussion Questions – the lowest grade (including 0 for a missed DQ) will be dropped in the final average.

Each Reading/Discussion Question is worth 10 points. There is no make-up of Reading/Discussion Questions but your lowest score (including 0 for one missed) will be dropped in the final tabulation of your average. Formulated “Discussions Questions” based on the material covered in lectures, class discussion, and background reading will be handed out most Wednesdays. **At the start of class**, you will be expected to develop

these discussion questions into concise but thoughtful responses. You are not expected to be exhaustive or comprehensive in scope. Some of these topics will continue online on Blackboard.

Some questions will be factually based, some will be geared toward your response to the lecture and readings. These discussion question responses are exercises in developing your ideas and observations. I would like you to regard all informal writing as ongoing drafts, therefore you are NOT expected to focus on WRITTEN PRESENTATION (organization, clarity, usage of English) nor to have formal introductions or conclusions. Rather, the focus is on thinking, analysis, and brainstorming in written form, and evaluation will be based on CONTENT.

- Oral Presentation on Section II OR Section III Panels (10%)
- ONE Powerpoint Presentations on your selected Panel topic (5-10 minute presentations/discussion, depending on class size). Panel topic forums to be determined.
- Please sign up for one panel, Section II (Language Attitudes and Cultural Usage) OR Section III (Translation Theories and Approaches).

Sign-up sheets will be available in class after Week 2. The process of preparing an oral presentation of one's ideas is an integral part of developing ideas and refining observations. A prepared oral presentation is an excellent exercise in abstracting the essence of one's ideas, basically "getting to the point," and supporting one's point with meaningful examples. (See Oral Presentation Guidelines on Blackboard.)

Your presentation will be evaluated on **Content and Oral Presentation**. You will not be assessed on oratory skills but a well-spoken and well-timed presentation will greatly contribute to a communication of your ideas. As well, oral presentations are always good practice for something you will be called upon to do at some point in your life and career, long after you leave the classroom.

Content Discussion of topic (including assimilation of research, background reading, discussion, lectures), expression of ideas and opinions, observations, etc.

Oral Presentation Organization, clarity of expression of ideas and opinions; effective use of Powerpoint presentation

- Final Project (25%)
 - *Formal Academic Research Final Project – Paper/Translation (20%)***One 8-page (typed, double-space) Written Research Report or Translation Project Report – all projects must meet with instructor approval by Week 10**
Final project "reports" must be submitted by Friday 5/6/11 11:59 p.m. on Blackboard Assignments. No assignments will be accepted after 5/6/11.

- *Oral Presentation on Final Project – Weeks 15-16 (5%)*

Powerpoint Presentations on final projects will be between 5-10 minutes (depending on class size). (See guidelines on Blackboard.)

I. Written Research Report – proposal of topic due by Week 10

The written report is a research-based paper on a chosen topic that should be related to the course subject and may be based on your panel presentation. Additional reading may be recommended for panel topics. I look to your papers to reflect responsible research, thoughtful observations and clear analysis regarding your chosen topic; incorporate relevant ideas and works from background reading, in-class and online discussion, and lectures; and last but not least, to reflect something of your own inspired interest in the topic. Footnotes or endnotes are required. (Citation guidelines on Blackboard.) Plagiarism will not be tolerated and consequences will include failure of assignment and may lead to failure of the course.

I expect you to proof your work carefully and to hand in final drafts with minimal errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Your paper will be assessed two grades, equally evaluated on the following:

Content Discussion of topic (including assimilation of research, background reading, discussion, lectures), expression of ideas and opinions, observations, etc.

Written Presentation Organization, clarity of expression of ideas and opinions, proper usage of English (mechanics of spelling, punctuation, and grammar)

II. Translation project – proposal of project due by Week 10

1. The translation project is a translation of a short work or excerpt into English, preferably from Chinese, though other languages may be considered. If this translation project is selected, a brief analysis of translation theory or practice must be included in the introduction (5% of project evaluation).

2. The translation project may also be a comparison of two English translations of the same work (in any language). Included in this written report would be a technical discussion of the two translations in detail, with a brief overview of the different translation approaches.

Bibliography required (Citation Guidelines on Blackboard.) Plagiarism will not be tolerated and consequences will include failure of assignment and may lead to failure of the course.

I expect you to proof your work carefully and to hand in final drafts with minimal errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Your paper will be assessed two grades, equally evaluated on the following:

Content Discussion of topic (including assimilation of research, background reading, discussion, lectures), expression of ideas and opinions, observations, etc. In the case of a translation project, analysis of translation theory or practice.

Written Presentation Organization, clarity of expression of ideas and opinions, proper usage of English (mechanics of spelling, punctuation, and grammar)

*****Applies to Graduate Students Only*****

For Graduate-Level Credit:

- **Complete a Conference Course Form and turn in by the add/drop date.**
- **See me to discuss details on additional reading and assignments.**

SCHEDULE OUTLINE

*Detailed class and reading assignments will be posted/handed out for each section.
All sections will be supplemented by lecture outlines and notes by instructor.*

Weeks 1-6 (1/19) Section I – History of Chinese Language and Translation

- Introduction to the Chinese Language and Dialects, Pre-modern translation projects in Chinese history (including Japanese *kanbun* studies)
- Chinese Romanization/characters citation protocol (exercise)

Weeks 7-8 (2/28) Section II – Language Attitudes and Cultural Usage

- Language Use and Attitudes
- Cultural Usage and Habits

Week 9 (3/14) Spring Break – no classes

Weeks 10-11 Section II – Language Attitudes and Cultural Usage

- Case Study: American and Chinese “Refusal Strategies”
- (Week 11) Panel Forums – Idiosyncrasies in Chinese Semantics, Grammar and Syntax (China, Hong Kong, Taiwan)

(Week 10 – Approval of Final Project Proposal)

Weeks 12-14 Section III – Translation Theories and Approaches

- Translation Theories and Approaches
- Case Study: The *Harry Potter* series in Chinese Translation
- (Week 14) Panel Forums – Global Influence of English and the Internet

Weeks 15-16 Final Project Presentations

FINAL PROJECT DUE BY 11:59 P.M. FRIDAY 5/6/11 ON BLACKBOARD ASSIGNMENTS. No assignments will be accepted after 5/6/11.

NOTE – There is no written final exam for this course.

Use of Blackboard

This course uses Blackboard, a Web-based course management system in which a password-protected site is created for each course. Blackboard can be used to distribute course materials, to communicate and collaborate online, to post grades, to submit assignments, and to take online quizzes and surveys.

You will be responsible for checking the Blackboard course site regularly for class work and announcements. As with all computer systems, there are occasional scheduled downtimes as well as unanticipated disruptions. Notifications of these disruptions will be posted on the Blackboard login page. Scheduled downtimes are **not** an excuse for late work. However, if there is an unscheduled downtime for a significant period of time, I will make an adjustment if it occurs close to the due date.

Blackboard is available at <http://courses.utexas.edu>. Support is provided by the ITS Help Desk at 475-9400 Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., so plan accordingly.

The Undergraduate Writing Center

The Undergraduate Writing Center provides individual, professional advice on all aspects of writing to UT undergraduates on a drop-in basis or by appointment. Location: Flawn Academic Center 211, 471-6222.

Fall 2006 hours: Monday-Thursday 9 a.m.-8 p.m. (last appointments at 4 p.m.)
Fridays 9 a.m.-3 p.m. (last appointments at 2 p.m.)

*Last consultations begin 1 hour before closing. If your paper is due in two hours or less, you cannot meet with a consultant. You will not have enough time to revise after your consultation.

Writer's Advice Line: free and open to everyone.

Email your brief query or call at 475-VERB.

Website: <http://www.utexas.edu/cola/centers/uwc>

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ON UNIVERSITY POLICIES

The University of Texas Honor Code

The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the University is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

University Electronic Mail Notification Policy

(Use of E-mail for Official Correspondence to Students)

All students should become familiar with the University's official e-mail student notification policy. It is the student's responsibility to keep the University informed as to changes in his or her e-mail address. Students are expected to check e-mail on a frequent and regular basis in order to stay current with University-related communications, recognizing that certain communications may be time-critical. It is recommended that e-mail be checked daily, but at a minimum, twice per week. The complete text of this policy and instructions for updating your e-mail address are available at <http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify.html>.

In this course e-mail will be used as a means of communication with students. You will be responsible for checking your e-mail regularly for class work and announcements. Note: if you are an employee of the University, your e-mail address in Blackboard is your employee address.

Documented Disability Statement

Students who require special accommodations need to get a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Office of the Dean of Students (471-6259 – voice or 471-4641 – TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). This letter should be presented to the instructor in each course at the beginning of the semester and accommodations needed should be discussed at that time. Five business days before an exam the student should remind the instructor of any testing accommodations that will be needed.

See Website below for more information: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/ssd/providing.php>