

CHES1002 Chinese Languages, Past and Present: Text and Translation
Spring 2021, CUHK

Time: Wed 11:30-12:15
Venue: CKB_LT3
Instructor: Prof. GAO Yunwen (yunwengao@cuhk.edu.hk)
Office Hours: Thu 10:30-12:00 @ Room 1107, 11/F, YIA or by appointment via email
Teaching Assistant: TBD
Office Hours: TBD

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is an introductory course to the history, theory, and practices of translation in China. The course prepares beginners of Chinese language with a sense of the historical development of translation theory and practices in China. Topics covered in the class include: 1) history of translation in China; 2) Chinese translation theories; 3) case study of important texts translated into Chinese from other languages; 4) case study of important texts translated from Chinese into other languages. This is not a translation skills course: you will not be tested on your ability to translate.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Demonstrate a basic familiarity with translation theory;
2. Understand the cultural and historical development of the translation in China;
3. Develop reading, writing, and presentation skills in a professional manner.

COURSE ASSESSMENT

- 1) **Participation (15%)** Students are required to come to class prepared, having completed the required readings and watched the films. Students are expected to critically engage with the course content and contribute to class discussion. Unexcused absences will result in loss of points, and students with more than **3 unexcused** absences will receive no points for participation. Extreme lateness will be counted as absence.
- 2) **Review Essay (20%)** Students are required to submit a review essay of one of the assigned weekly readings for this assignment on **Week 10**. The review essay should be 600- 800 words (12pt, Times New Roman, double-spaced), submitted to the **Blackboard** by **March 17**, together with a **PDF** file of the signed **Veriguide** receipt. No late submission will be accepted. Instructions and grading rubric will be posted on the **Blackboard**.
- 3) **Final Exam (35%)** Final exam schedule will be updated at the beginning of the term. The exam will cover the content of the entire course. There will be multiple choices questions, key term definition, short answer, and short essay questions. Instruction and study guide will be posted on **Blackboard** in **Week 12**.

4) **Creative Project (30%)** Students can form groups of no more than 6 members and investigate one case of translation in Chinese history, pre-modern or modern, analyze this case within its historical context. Alternatively, students can conduct a translation project of a selected piece of text (TV series, films, comics, essays, poems, or any other type of texts you could think of) using the tools learned from this class. During Week 14 and Week 15, each group will have the chance to present their project to the class in no more than 15 minutes. Each member will also be asked to fill out a form about their reflections on the project. Instructions and grading rubric will be posted on the **Blackboard**.

COURSE READINGS

Required Readings:

1. Leo Tak-hung. *Twentieth-Century Chinese Translation Theory: Modes, Issues and Debates*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2004. (**abbreviated as Theory**)

Recommended Reading:

1. Chan, Sin-wai, David E. Pollard. eds. *An Encyclopaedia of Translation: Chinese-English, English-Chinese*. Hong Kong: The Chinese University of Hong Kong Press, 1995. (**abbreviated as Encyclopedia**)

2. Lung, Rachel. *Interpreters in Early Imperial China*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2011. (**abbreviated as Interpreters**)

3. Chen, Weihong and Xiaojuan Cheng. "A Preliminary Probe into Lin Shu's Creative Translation." *Journal of Language Teaching and Research*. Vol. 6, No. 2 (March 2015): 416-422. (**PDF**)

(<http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.876.7422&rep=rep1&type=pdf>)

4. Suo, Xuxiang, "A Comparative Analysis of Two English Versions of Some Poems in *A Dream of Red Mansions*" *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 6 (June 2015): 1179-1184. (**PDF**)

5. Kung, Szu-Wen. "A sociological turn to research of Chinese translation practice: with reference to the translation production of Harry Potter" in *The Routledge Handbook of Chinese Translation*. (**PDF**)

Academic Honesty: Students should submit the papers to the Veriguide system and print out the Veriguide receipt and scan it into a PDF file before submitting to the Blackboard. See the website: https://services.veriguide.org/academic/login_CUHK.jsp. Any cases of plagiarism will be severely penalized and reported to the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, which could result in failure or expulsion from the University.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1 (Jan 13) Course Overview & The Task of a Translator

➤ Benjamin, Walter. "The Task of the Translator" in *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn.

(**WebLink**) http://www.ricorso.net/rx/library/criticism/guest/Benjamin_W/Benjamin_W1.htm

I. History of Translation in Pre-modern China

Week 2 (Jan 20) Historical Background

➤ “History of Translation in China” in Encyclopedia, 373-387. (PDF)

Week 3 (Jan 27) Translation and Trade in the Sixth Century

➤ “Bridging Language Barriers in Encounters with China in Sixth-century Asia” in *Interpreters*, 21-42. (PDF)

Week 4 (Feb 4) Translation and Religion in Tang China

➤ “Translation Officials in Tang China” in *Interpreters*, 59-76. (PDF)

II. Translation Theory in Modern China

Week 5 (Feb 11) Traditional Theories of Translation

➤ “The traditional approach: Impressionistic theories” and “Modern theories of the 1920s and 30s” in *Theory*, 1-28

Week 6 Lunar New Year, No Class

Week 7 (Feb 24) Modern and Contemporary Theories of Translation

➤ “Theories from a postcolonial perspective” and “End of the century: The impact of new theories” in *Theory*, 29-59.

Week 8 (Mar 3) Theoretical Debate: Yan Fu

➤ “Responses to Yan Fu” in *Theory*, 67-88.

Week 9 (Mar 10) Theoretical Debate: Lu Xun

➤ “Literal translation vs. sense-translation” in *Theory*, 179-198.

Week 10 (Mar 17) Theoretical Debate: Poetry

➤ “The Untranslatability of Poetry” in *Theory*, 201-220.

Review Essay Due this week

Week 11 (Mar 24) Case Studies Workshop

Week 12-13 Reading Week, No Class

III. Case Studies and Creative Projects

Week 14 (Apr 14) Creative Projects Presentation I

Group 1-3

Week 15 (Apr 21) Creative Projects Presentation II

Group 4-6

Final Exam!