

Program: Intensive Arabic Language in Amman; Middle East Studies & Internship in Amman

Course Title: Art of Translation

Course Code: AM/LANG 330

Total Hours: 45

Recommended Credits: 3

Primary Discipline / Suggested Cross Listings: Arabic Language / Linguistics

Language of Instruction: Arabic or English

Prerequisites/Requirements: One year of prior Arabic study.

Description

This class explores the art of translation as it seeks to bridge the gap with English as students are learning Arabic. The class simplifies grammar, exposes similarities between the two languages, identifies linguistically complex language patterns, and develops techniques for analysis of the English and Arabic languages. Students learn to distinguish the structure of a read, heard, and written text in Arabic and English, and to transition between languages with flexibility and fluency. By approaching translation as an art form, this course builds the basics of translation, so students can benefit from using English as they acquire a new language, at the same time deepening their linguistic understanding of English.

The course is designed for both Internship and Intensive Language students, with distinct requirements for each:

- Internship students gain experience creating written translations of material and reports from their internship; intensive language students create written translations based upon materials from language and content courses.
- Translation assignments for internship students consist of translation from Arabic into English, while assignments for intensive language students consist of translation from English into Arabic.
- Internship students give presentations in English, and intensive language students will give any required presentations in Arabic.

All students learn about and practice interpretation and written translation in a variety of contexts.

Objectives

In this course, students:

- Understand the science and art of translation in varied contexts
- Become familiar with how to practice translation correctly between Arabic and English despite the linguistic and stylistic differences between the languages
- Receive the key to understanding interpretation and written translation
- Build broad translation skills and apply knowledge of translation strategies to a specialization of their choice

Course Requirements

For intensive students: presentation of questions in clear, direct MSA and the preparation of questions at home. English is allowed for Internship students. Regular attendance and punctuality, performance of homework in a specified time, and active participation are required throughout the semester. Students are asked to maintain open lines of communication with the instructor

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regarding challenges they face, and the class utilizes these difficulties to promote shared learning.

Final project and Presentation

Students submit a final 5-page written translation project. The translation is about a topic chosen by the student with the input of the professor. The topic should be of interest to the student academically or professionally, and the professor should certify that the topic is at a level that the student is equipped to handle. The final element of the project is an in-class presentation summarizing the translation project.

Methods of Evaluation

The final grade is determined as follows:

- Active participation and on-time attendance 20%
- Daily homework 20%
- Midterm and final exams 20%
- Final project and presentation 20%
- In-class interpretation tasks 20%

Primary Texts

- Farghal, Mohammed. "Literary Translation: A Schema-Theoretic Model." *Al-'Arabiyya* 37 (2004): 21-35.
- Nafez A. Shammas & Abbass Naama, *Semantics and Syntax* (Damascus University Publications, 2004).
- Yahya Al-Aridi & Ramez Al-Bainy, *A Coursebook on Translation English-Arabic-English* (Damascus University Publications, 2005).
- Ramez Al-Bainy, *Political Terminology and Translation* (Damascus University Publications, 2004).
- Abdulrahman Merhi and Reem Ramadan, *Commercial Studies In English* (Damascus University Publications, 2005), 25-30; 58.
- Nafez A. Shammas, *Written Translation Theory And Practice* (Damascus University Publications, 2012)
- Salma J. Haddad, *Interpreting: Confidence-Building Strategies* (Damascus University Publications, 2005).
- Nafez A. Shammas, *Cultural Trends in Arab History* (Damascus University Publications, 2006).
- Maysoon Zahri, *A Workbook In Contrastive Analysis* (Damascus University Publications, 2013).
- Biguenet, John and Rainer Schulte. *Theories of Translation: An Anthology of Essays from Dryden to Derrida*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992). Chapter 14.
- Munday, Jeremy. *Introducing Translation Studies: Theories and Applications*. New York: Routledge, 2016. Chapters 2, 8, and 9.

Supplementary Texts

- Venuti, Lawrence. *The Translation Studies Reader* (Volume 2). New York: Routledge,

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2012. Chapters 7 and 15.

Outline of Course Content

Topic 1 – Understanding the practice of translation between Arabic and English (2 weeks)

- The science and art of translation
- The pragmatic alternative
- Introduction to the impact of culture on translation efforts

Topic 2 – Building a foundation for translation (2 weeks)

- The difference between the languages on a sentence's structural grammar level
- The keys to interpretation and written translation

Topic 3 – Understanding the different types of translation (2 weeks)

- The difference between slower, more nuanced translation (written translation) and simultaneous translation (interpretation).
- The difference between literal, word-for-word translation and the translation of an idea
- The difference between the two languages in paragraphs and texts on the level of meaning and how to arrive at the meaning (direct arrangement of ideas, and transition from causes to results, choosing of titles and their relationship with the text/logic of the text)

Topic 4 – Translating in a variety of contexts (2 weeks)

- Moving away from direct translation/dictionaries and towards the spirit of the text in a fluid and understood form; creating a harmony between the two texts on a level of language and meaning at the same time.
- Interpretation exercises in class

Topic 5 – Dealing with the varying styles of Arabic and English (2 weeks)

- Managing the extensive vocabulary and the decorative style of Arabic, e.g. linguistic and stylistic exaggerations and wordplay, metaphors, and metonymies.

Topic 6 – Application of translation in a variety of contexts (2 weeks)

- Translation according to the linguistic tasks (disagreements, agreements, criticism, sarcasm, expressions of opinion, support and critique of the opinion and enable them to translate compliments, praise, and laudatory speech).
- Written translation and interpretation exercises based upon translation tasks from students' internship placements. Students process these texts in class with their peers, facing the challenges presented, and listening to suggestions from other students and the instructor.

Topic 7 – Specialized translation according to students' preferences (1 week)

- Each student chooses a field (politics, news, economics, literature, poetry) and translates several texts.
- Students present about the way they used their understanding from the class to translate within their chosen field.