

Prof. Kirsten Silva Gruesz
 Summer Session II, 2017
Office hours: Wednesdays, 12-1 in Humanities I, 636
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LIT 102
 TTh 9-12:30, Social Sciences II, 179
****Revised syllabus**

TRANSLATION THEORY

Underlying every interpretive act--whether you realize it or not--is a theory of language. How does communication work, whether within the same language system or across different systems? How do we accommodate ambiguity, multiplicity of meanings, and uncertainty when we read and discuss texts? These are basic, but often under-explored, questions that undergird literary analysis. LIT 102 is meant to augment the other upper-level required course for Literature majors, LIT 101/Literary Theory, by linking *interpretation* to philosophy, to theoretical and applied linguistics, and to cultural studies. Major topics will include the oral/performance/writing continuum; the politics of language, including social attitudes toward bilingualism and code-switching; and the contemporary global translation industry, and what its existence may tell us about future of reading and writing as human activities. Although this is not primarily a “technique” course, we will explore the practical side of translation through frequent in-class activities and individual final projects.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

There are no books to buy. You must have access to UCSC’s learning management system, Canvas, to access the materials for this course. Go to canvas.ucsc.edu to log in. All the articles assigned will be available either in PDF format on the Canvas page (look under “Modules” or “Syllabus” for the date given on the syllabus), or in electronic versions that can be viewed with your UCSC library card credential. If you are using Cruznet/Eduroam on campus, follow the link on the electronic syllabus. If you are off campus, first log in to “Off-campus resources” link at the bottom of the UCSC Library webpage, then look up the given title or author of the assigned work.

PREREQUISITES: In order to enroll in LIT 102, you need to have completed one year or more of college-level work in a language other than English, or to have passed the Department’s language exam in your chosen language. I do not expect you to be fluent in the other language—simply to have a basic grasp of the syntactic differences between it and English. However, at many points along the way, and especially in the final project, you will be called on your own knowledge to think about how language difference is related to cultural difference. You are encouraged to use dictionaries, online help forums, and consultations with more knowledgeable or fluent friends.

DAILY SCHEDULE AND ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS:

The three-and-a-half hour class meetings will mix lecture, discussion, and individual and group activities. We will take brief breaks approximately on the hour, and a longer (15-minute) break in the middle. There will be a sign-in and sign-out sheet each day. If you have to miss a class due to illness, commuting or family emergency, etc., please check the Canvas page afterward to see if links or slides were posted. I do not post lecture notes or outlines. You are encouraged to attend the workshop/consultation times held weekly by one of the TAs to catch up on what you missed.

The attendance/participation portion of your grade will begin at a baseline of B, and drop by half a grade per half-class missed. It will go up in accordance with your participation in class, and with section/workshop attendance. If you miss more than one-quarter of the total class time, you will not pass the course, or will need to request permission from me to take an incomplete.

There are two TAs assigned to this course: Maxim Dobrushin (mdobrush@ucsc.edu) and Kenan Sharpe (kmsharpe@ucsc.edu). In addition to working with groups during class periods and evaluating response papers, they will hold weekly office hours/workshops on days and times that will be posted on Canvas. Meetings will take place in a campus cafe or other convenient location, and we will try to rotate time slots so that everyone has a chance to attend. Please sign up on Canvas, or tell the TA in advance that you plan to attend. These sessions are optional, but will be especially useful in the last three weeks of class when you will be expected to begin original research. Your participation grade will improve with extra-session attendance.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING:

- Attendance/participation: 10%
- Four response papers on specific readings (2 double-spaced typed pages – a prompt will be given): 10% each=40%
- Individual final project: a literary translation with annotations and a 5-page commentary incorporating ideas from class. This project will be due in stages that include an MLA Bibliography search for critical work on translation into that language, and a list you generate of available translation resources for it (detailed prompt will be given): 40%
- Final reflection on returned diagnostic pre-test: 10%

ACCOMMODATION: If you require accommodation from the Disability Resource Center for any reason, please consult with me as soon as possible for assistance. There are no timed tests per se.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

(PDF) indicates files available on Canvas. (ProQuest) indicates electronic copy available through library.

Tu 8/1 **Introduction and diagnostic pre-test**

Thu 8/3 **Interpretation as Translation**

1. George Steiner, selection from *After Babel* (PDF)
2. Jorge Luis Borges, "Pierre Menard, Author of the *Quijote*" (PDF)

Tu 8/8 **A Brief History of Western Translation Theory**

1. Arstradur Eyesteinsson and Daniel Weissbort, "General Introduction" and "Babel" pp. 1-14 in [*Translation, Theory and Practice: A Historical Reader*](#), eds. Eyesteinsson and Weissbort
2. Andrew Chesterman, "Survival Machines for Memes," pp. 1-15 in [*Mememes of Translation, rev. ed*](#) (ProQuest) [CONTINUED]

3. Walter Benjamin, “The Task of the Translator”

****Response Paper #1, mainly on Benjamin, due in class**

Thu 8/10 **When is a Translation “Right and Wrong”? What Is a Linguistic “Fact”?**

1. Ferdinand de Saussure, “The Nature of the Linguistic Sign” (PDF)
2. Roman Jakobson, “On the Linguistic Aspects of Translation” (PDF)
3. Jacques Derrida, “Des Tours de Babel” (PDF)

****Response paper #2, mainly on Derrida, due in class**

Tu 8/15 **The Political and Social Contexts of Translation**

1. Antonia Castañeda, “Language and Other Lethal Weapons” (PDF)
2. Luise von Flutow, “Tracing the Context of Translation: The Example of Gender,” pp. 39-51 in Jose Santaemilia, ed., [*Gender, Sex and Translation : The Manipulation of Identities*](#) (ProQuest)
3. Walter Mignolo, “Bilanguaging Love: Thinking In Between Languages” (PDF)

****Response paper #3, mainly on Mignolo, due in class**

Thu 8/17 **Identity and Belonging in Language**

1. Jacques Derrida, *Monolingualism of the Other* (PDF) (warning: this is long)

****Response paper #4, on Derrida, due in class**

Tu 8/22 **The Poetics of the ‘Untranslatable’**

1. Tino Villanueva, “A Brief History of Bilingualism in Poetry” (PDF)
2. John Felstiner, selection from *Translating Neruda* (PDF)
3. John Felstiner, “So You Are Turned” (PDF)

Thu 8/24 **The Poetics of the ‘Untranslatable,’ continued**

1. Mark Twain, “The Awful German Language” (PDF)
2. Umberto Eco, “Losses and Gains” (PDF)
3. Vladimir Nabokov, “Problems of Translation: *Onegin* in English” (PDF)

→ **Friday 8/25:** First stage of final project—brief summary of an MLA article on a work in your language—due by 5 pm via Canvas

Tu 8/29 **The Ethics of Translation in the Global Marketplace**

1. Gayatri Spivak, “The Politics of Translation” (PDF)
2. Lawrence Venuti, from *The Scandals of Translation* (PDF)

Description of final project: due in class

Thu 8/31 **Human-Machine Translation Futures**

Readings TBA

Course evaluations

Friday, September 1: Final projects due on Canvas by 5 pm