

LT6505: LEGAL TRANSLATION IN THE AI ERA

Effective Term

Semester A 2026/27

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Legal Translation in the AI Era

Subject Code

LT - Linguistics and Translation

Course Number

6505

Academic Unit

Linguistics and Translation (LT)

College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

P5, P6 - Postgraduate Degree

Medium of Instruction

Other Languages

Other Languages for Medium of Instruction

English is the primary medium of instruction and assessment, but where necessary, Chinese is used for discussing issues relating to legal translation.

Medium of Assessment

Other Languages

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Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

CTL6505 Legal Translation

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details**Abstract**

This course aims to engage students in exploring (1) the nature and problems of translation and some of the major approaches to translation; (2) the problems inherent in legal translation with a special emphasis on those in the context of Hong Kong; and (3) the principles and techniques of legal translation. It equips them with the linguistic and conceptual tools for analysing and translating various types of legal texts.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Give a clear account the nature of translation in general and the special features of legal translation in particular		x	x	
2	Apply the linguistic and conceptual tools for analyzing legal texts		x	x	
3	Evaluate functional translation principles and apply effective translation techniques when rendering various legal texts into the target language		x	x	x
4	Conduct critical evaluation of legal texts and legal translations		x	x	

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs		Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Lecture	Students will learn the features of Chinese/English language used in legal writing	1, 2, 3, 4	3 hours
2	Class activities	Students will engage in small-scale creative translating tasks during class.	1, 2, 3, 4	

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- " for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Class participation	1, 2, 3, 4	10	Students can use GenAI tools to brainstorm, gather information, and solve problems.	Yes
2	Translation assignment Students will work alone to creatively and effectively produce two pieces of legal translation (in Chinese & English, respectively) in an assignment	1, 2, 3, 4	25	1. Students can use GenAI tools to brainstorm, gather information, and solve problems. 2. Students should give proper acknowledgment to all the content from GenAI tools that they incorporated into the assignment and keep a journal of their GenAI conversations. 3. Students should not present texts generated or translated by GenAI tools as their own original work.	Yes
3	Legal research paper Each student will write a paper, to conduct critical evaluation of the effectiveness of a legal translation in its target language - English).	1, 2, 3, 4	25	1. Students can use GenAI tools to brainstorm, gather information, solve problems, format references, and edit language. 2. Students should give proper acknowledgment to all the content from GenAI tools that they incorporated into the assignment and keep a journal of their GenAI conversations. 3. Students should not present texts generated or translated by GenAI tools as their own original work.	Yes

4	In-class Test	1, 2, 3, 4	40	This is a summative assessment. The use of GenAI is not allowed.	No
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Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Additional Information for ATs

In-class Test: Two translation tasks (English/Chinese)

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

1. Class Participation

Criterion

Engage in class discussion enthusiastically

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Enthusiastic participation in class discussion

Good (B+, B, B-)

Active participation in class discussion

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Occasionally active participation in class discussion

Marginal (D)

Inadequate participation in class discussion

Failure (F)

Not reaching marginal level of participation

Assessment Task

2. Translation assignment

Criterion

Ability to critically apply skills and techniques for the completion of a translating assignment

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Highly readable and accurate translation

Good (B+, B, B-)

Largely readable and accurate translation

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Clumsy and/ or occasional inaccuracies

Marginal (D)

Clumsy and plenty of mistranslations

Failure (F)

Unreadable and inaccurate translation

Assessment Task

3. Legal Research Paper

Criterion

A research paper for students to understand how the two legal systems work and how to distinguish quality legal translations from poor renderings

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Excellent research and rich content with coherent writing

Good (B+, B, B-)

Good research and rich content with coherent writing

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Fair research and content with occasionally incoherent writing

Marginal (D)

Marginally adequate research and content with incoherent writing

Failure (F)

Inadequate research and content with incoherent writing

Assessment Task

4. In-class Test

Criterion

Ability to master skills and techniques to translating different legal texts; demonstrate subject matter knowledge

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Highly readable and accurate translation; demonstrate excellent command of subject matter

Good (B+, B, B-)

Largely readable and accurate translation; demonstrate good command of subject matter

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Clumsy and/ or occasional inaccuracies; demonstrate fair command of subject matter

Marginal (D)

Clumsy and plenty of mistranslations; demonstrate marginal command of subject matter

Failure (F)

Unreadable and inaccurate translation; demonstrate poor command of subject matter

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

The nature of translation; problems of legal translation; principles of legal translation; methods of legal translation; translation of legislation; translation of private legal documents

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	Cheung, Anne S. Y. (1997). Towards a Bilingual Legal System: The Development of Chinese Legal Language. HeinOnline: https://heinonline.org/HOL/Page?handle=hein.journals/loyint19&div=18&g_sent=1&casa_token=&collection=journals
2	Frandsberg, Ake (1998). Legal Concepts. In Routledge Encyclopaedia of Philosophy (Edward Craig Ed.). London/New York: Routledge.
3	Haas, W. (1968). The Theory of Translation. In G.H.R. (Ed.). The Theory of Meaning. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp.86-108.
4	Nida, Eugene A. (1971). Semantic components in translation theory. In Applications of Linguistics: Selected Papers of the Second International Congress of Applied Linguistics (G.E. Perren & J.L.M. Trun Eds.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp.341-348.
5	Nida, Eugene A. and Taber, Charles R. (1982). The Theory and Practice of Translation. Leiden: Brill.
6	Sarcevic, Susan (1997). New Approaches to Legal Translation. Hague: Kluwer Law.
7	Sin, King-kui (1989). Meaning, Translation and Bilingual Legislation. In Proceedings of First International Conference on Language and Law (Paul Puper and Jose Woehrling Eds.). Montreal: Wilson & Lafleur Ltd, pp. 509-515.
8	_____ (1992). The Translatability of Law. In Research on Chinese Linguistics in Hong Kong Thomas (H.T. Leed Ed.). Hong Kong: The Linguistic Society of Hong, pp.86-100.
9	_____ (1998). The Common Law in Uncommon Chinese: Linguistic Anomalies and Cultural Shock. Journal of Translation, No. 2, pp.127-140.
10	Sin, King-kui and Roebuck (1993). The Ego and I and Ngo: Theoretical Problems in the Translation of the Common Law into Chinese. In Hong Kong, China and 1997: Essays in Legal Theory (Raymond Wacks Ed.). Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, pp.185-209.
11	_____ (1996). Language Engineering for Legal Transplantation: Conceptual Problems in Creating Common Law Chinese. Language and Communication, Vol. 16, No.3, pp.235-254.
12	Smith, A.L. (1994). Foreign Law in Translation: Problems and Sources. In Introduction to Foreign Legal Systems (Richard A. Danner and Marie-Louise H. Bernal Eds.). New York: Oceana Publications, Inc., pp. 268-271.
13	Zhao, Yuhong. 2000. "Legal Translation in the Legislative Genre." Journal of Translation Studies. No. 4, March 2000. 19 – 44.
14	Chan, Clara Ho-yan (2014). 《法律翻譯系列：兩岸三地合約法主要詞彙》 (Legal Translation Series: Key Terms in Contract Law of Hong Kong, Mainland China and Taiwan). Hong Kong: City University of Hong Kong Press.
15	_____ (2015). 《法律翻譯系列：兩岸三地侵權法主要詞彙》 (Legal Translation Series: Key Terms in Tort Law of Hong Kong, Mainland China and Taiwan). Hong Kong: City University of Hong Kong Press.
16	陳忠誠 1992 法窗譯話 北京: 中國對外翻譯出版公司
17	季益廣、喬金祥 2000 「法律文本翻譯中詞語詞義的選擇和確立」 上海科技翻譯 2000 No.3. 34 – 37
18	李克興 1997 「論法律翻譯的基本原則」 載於香港翻譯學會翻譯季刊 第3&4期. 176 – 202
19	陸汶遜 1998 「法律詞彙翻譯切戒望文生義」 上海科技翻譯 1998 No. 2. 32 – 33
20	陸文慧 1991 「基本法的英譯問題」 載於劉靖之編翻譯新論集」 香港: 商務印書館 319 – 334
21	_____ (編) 2002 法律翻譯: 從實踐出發 香港: 中華書局
22	孫萬彪 2003 英漢法律翻譯教程 上海: 上海外語教育
23	蕭雲樞 2001 「英漢法律術語的特點、詞源及翻譯」 中國翻譯 第22卷 第3期. 44 – 47
24	王道庚 2006 《法律翻譯: 理論與實踐》, 香港, 香港城市大學出版社

25	Online Resources 雙語法例資料系統 (Bilingual Laws Information System) (http://www.justice.gov.hk) www.justice.gov.hk/homeglos www.qis.net/chinalaw/lawchinl.htm
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Additional Readings

	Title
1	Coode, George. 1852. Legislative Expression or The Language of the Written Law. In Appendix to Stanley Robinson, Drafting: its applications to conveyancing and commercial documents. London: Butterworths, 1980.
2	De Leo, David. 1998. "Pitfalls in Legal Translation." Translation Journal URL: http://accurapid.com/journal/09legal/1.htm .
3	Li, Zong E. (n.d.). Notes on Legal Translation. Unpublished lecture notes.
4	Madsen, Dorte. "A model for translation of legal texts." In Marry Snell-Hornby, Zuzana Jettmarova and Klaus Kaindl (Eds.), Translation As Intercultural Communication: Selected Papers from the EST Congress – Prague 1995. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. 291 – 299.
5	Meredith, R. Clive. 1970. "Some Notes on English Legal Translation." META XXIV, 1. 54 – 67.
6	Schulte, Rainer and Biguemet. Eds. 1992. Theories of Translation. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
7	李文陽 1994 「淺論法律英語的語言特點及翻譯」 中國翻譯 1994年第6期. 13 – 16
8	歐成威 1991 「雙語立法在香港的發展」 載於劉靖之編翻譯新論集. 香港: 商務印書
9	屈成熹 1968 「從語言學觀點看翻譯問題」 載於殷張蘭熙等著翻譯藝術. 台北: 國際文化事業有限公司 99 – 119
10	宋雷 1998 「涉外合同翻譯常見錯誤評析」 中國翻譯 1998年第6期 22 – 25
11	宋小莊 1997 「從‘和’、‘及’譯為‘or’看基本法英文本對中文本的解釋」 載於香港翻譯學會翻譯季刊 第3&4期 84 – 89