ENG2148 Translation into English – Bachelor level

Instructions to the co-examiner (Sensorveiledning)

This course is a joint course for both bachelor and master students. The syllabus is mainly the same; however, the master students also have articles to read from the course compendium.

Course requirements

As this course teaches translation from Norwegian into English, it requires good written and spoken English skills and a near native competence in Norwegian. However, the course can be taken by students with other mother tongues.

The course requires students to have successfully completed ENG1100 English Grammar.

Course Reading

ENG2158 Translation into English

Mona Baker (2018) *In Other Words: A Coursebook on Translation*. London & New York: Routledge

Any handouts distributed in class or posted in Canvas.

Course content

Because this is a joint-level course, the teaching is based on the course book and is the same for all students. The compulsory assignments are also the same for both groups. The exams are, however, different for the two groups, and we do expect more form the master students than from the bachelor students.

The course aims to increase awareness of some of the linguistic and social factors that play a part in interlingual communication. The focus is on equivalence at the word, phrase or clause levels, collocation, idiomaticity, and thematic structure, in addition to the pragmatic concepts of text cohesion, semantic reference and implicature.

The seminars also focus on elements of style, various practical exercises, and translation from Norwegian into English of texts from different genres and with different readerships in mind.

We use Larry Trask's guide to punctuation, available in Akademika bookstore or online: http://www.sussex.ac.uk/informatics/punctuation/. To complement Trask, the students are expected to use a style manual for AmE or BrE, depending on their chosen accent.

Learning outcome

After completing this course, students should be able to

- translate texts from Norwegian into English – choosing appropriate words and structures to capture different types of meaning
- translate various text types for specific target readers
- systematically check for equivalence and idiomatic usage
- identify translation problems at various levels and discuss possible solutions, applying relevant theories
- use bilingual and monolingual dictionaries, online parallel texts, and bilingual and monolingual corpora, and suitable websites (not Wikipedia) to find translation options, vocabulary and examples of good usage.

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Teaching

The teaching consists of one lecture (45 min) and one double group session (2x45 min) per week for fourteen weeks, 42 course hours in all.

Compulsory activities:

- Two written assignments must be submitted within specified deadlines during the term, and must be approved by the teacher.

Evaluation of the exam

The exam consists of two parts. *Each part* must have a mark higher than F in order for the candidate to pass the exam.

A - The translation   60%

1. What characterizes a good translation?

    - A good translation should ensure good correspondence between the intended meaning of the ST and that of the TT
    - A good translation should contain few mistakes pertaining to grammar, vocabulary, orthography, collocation, idioms, etc.
    - The style of the TT should reflect that of the ST in terms of vocabulary, thematic and information structure, syntax and grammar, whenever possible
    - Idiomaticity must be the main priority
    - The students should master the main style conventions and rules of punctuation
    - The translated text should read almost like an original

2. What constitutes a **poor** translation?

    - The TT contains several serious language mistakes – including S-V concord, faulty or loose pronominal reference and agreement, spelling mistakes, inappropriate word choice, and terminology – to the extent that the reader has difficulty understanding parts of or the whole text
    - The TT has inappropriate register
    - The TT fails to establish good correspondence between the intended meaning of the ST
    - The TT has not been tailored to the target readership
    - The student does not master the principles of punctuation and other style elements

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3. How closely should a translator follow the original?
   Very seldom will a verbatim translation give an idiomatic English text. In the real world, how close one should follow the ST depends on a number of factors, such as:

   - Who are the target readers?
   - What is the main purpose of the translation?
   - What is the subject of the ST?
   - What type of text is it (literary, technical, medical, legal…)
   - Others…

   An exam is not the real world. The exam is a four-day **take-home** type of exam, meaning that the students have access to internet, the course book and the compendium, reference books, thesauruses, grammars, and so on.

   At the exam, we test the students' *language skills* along with their *ability to actually translate* a piece of writing into idiomatic English, taking into consideration the theory that the students have been studying and working on over the course of the semester.

   Students are advised to stick fairly closely to the original, but not so closely as to compromise the linguistic or idiomatic quality of the final product. The mother tongue of the candidate should not tarnish the translation.

4. Students should not give the examiner or the reader translation choices. If students are uncertain as to the rendering of a given expression, it is better to make a choice than to leave a blank. They should not give alternative translations. A major part of the exercise is about making decisions when it comes to vocabulary, syntax, style elements, etc., and have a good reason for the choices taken.

5. The text submitted should be a *finished* product; i.e. "ready for the printer." Missing items, sloppy formatting and errors of style will therefore pull down the mark. The students should think of the examiner as their "client."

B – The Theory Part   40%

The theory part of the examination should be written in **complete sentences** and in an appropriate academic style; i.e., no contracted forms or other colloquialisms.

Sentences should have – as far as possible – a real subject, and not start with "I" or "we". Academic writing should be in the mainly active but impersonal voice. The students are expected to use a **style manual** when writing academic texts.

The students are given a specific **topic to discuss** (thematic structure, implicature, equivalence at various levels, grammatical equivalences, etc.) and this topic must be the main focus of the essay.

The essay part should have a proper **introduction** in which the students explain the theory asked for before they delve into the discussion of the example sentences given. This means explain the differences between NO and EN for the topic discussed.

If there are other translation challenges than the topic at hand which the students believe should be explained, they are told to do so in a short additional paragraph (not exceeding 200 words).

Students must ensure the appropriate level of language also in the theoretical part, and try to be as precise as possible, and avoid wordiness, repetitions and redundancies.

C – The Grades

A – **Excellent** – The candidate has shown a high degree of independent thinking and source text comprehension, demonstrated excellent judgment when transferring meaning into Norwegian, and delivered a coherent TT. The candidate has a very good understanding of the theory of translation and has made virtually no linguistic mistakes (terminology or grammar or other) and has used punctuation correctly. The text reads *almost* as an original English text. The candidate has an excellent understanding of the principles and conventions of academic writing in the essay.

B – **Very good** – The candidate has demonstrated good judgment and understanding of the ST and delivered a good performance with few linguistic mistakes or awkward word choices. The candidate has a good grip on the theory of translation and the conventions of academic writing. The text reads almost as an original English text.

C – **Good** – The candidate has delivered a fairly good translation and demonstrated a reasonably good degree of judgment in most areas. However, there have been some major grammar mistakes or awkward word choices or non-idiomatic structures. The conventions of punctuation have not been followed and the TT does not have the quality of an original piece of English writing.

D – **Satisfactory** – The candidate has demonstrated a fairly limited degree of autonomy and may have misunderstood parts of the ST. He or she has delivered a product with significant short-comings in terms of grammar, terminology, and idiomaticity. The candidate may have misunderstood certain segments of the TT or not been fully able to render the meaning of the ST. The TT does not read as an original piece of English writing and parts of it may be difficult to understand for a native English reader.

E – **Sufficient** – The candidate has demonstrated a limited degree of autonomy and not acquired more than the most basic notions of the principles applicable to translation or the conventions of academic writing. He or she has poor analytical skills. The candidate has demonstrated a limited understanding of the theory and made significant mistakes in terms of grammar, terminology, and idiomaticity. The TT is very awkward and may be very difficult to understand for a native English reader.

F – **Fail** – The candidate has understood very little of the theory and the many principles applicable to translation. The language is not at an appropriate level for academic writing. There is a total absence of judgment and critical thinking. The performance does not meet the minimum academic criteria.