

RUS 4905 Individual Work in Russian

(Section 06GA/Class # 27974)

Department of Languages, Literatures and Cultures

Syllabus

2024: Fall Semester M, W, F: Period 9 (4:05-4:55 PM) in Dauer Hall 233 Class format: Face-to face in the classroom; via Zoom as needed. Final take-home exam paper to be submitted by 7:30 PM on December 11 (Wednesday), 2024.	Dr Aleksandr L’vovich Burak Dauer Hall, room 254 E-mail: alburak@ufl.edu Tel: (352) 273-3798 Office hours: M, W (face-to-face in DAU 254) – period 8 (3:00-3:50 p.m.) or by appointment (face-to-face or via Zoom)
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Course Description:

The course provides a theoretical basis for and hands-on practice in resolving typical difficulties in conveying word, phrase, and sentence semantics in Russian-to-English and English-to-Russian translation. Prerequisites: RUS 3400 or the instructor’s permission (3 credits).

Translation is a complex and fundamental human activity involving transfer of meaning between languages, cultures and forms of expression. Many of the texts we encounter in our everyday life are interlingual translations. Every act of communication, even within one and the same language, can also be viewed as a kind of translation because it involves encoding, transferring, and decoding messages. This course focuses on the theory and practice of conveying word semantics (the denotative and connotative components of meaning of individual word senses), sentence and paragraph semantics, and the aesthetic and cultural features of complete texts in Russian-to-English and English-to-Russian translation. Put differently, the central objects of analysis in this course will be predominantly words and “non-predicative” phrases, i.e. groups of words that do not constitute independent clauses or sentences; the tension between the syntactic and the semantic structures of sentences constituting paragraphs (sentence and paragraph semantics); and the pragmatics (the overall aesthetic and cultural effect) of complete texts. Translation is not, of course, about translating separate words, phrases, or even sentences – it is always aimed at carrying out complete acts of communication, however short or long these may

be. We will therefore practice translating short but complete coherent and cohesive texts representing verbal discourse in all its linguistic and extralinguistic complexity.

Course Aims:

The central aim of the course is to teach you basic written translation skills (mostly from Russian into English), using literary and topical social commentary texts of average difficulty. You will also have some practice doing consecutive interpretation (oral translation of oral speech divided by the speaker into segments of different duration enabling the interpreter to translate the speech segment by segment). The other, concomitant, aims of the course are to enhance your knowledge of Russian and English grammar, expand your active and passive vocabulary, improve your writing skills in English and Russian, and deepen your understanding of Russian culture. Translation is an “exact art,” an “inexact science,” and a set of superior linguistic and interpretative skills, based on linguistic and cultural erudition, all rolled into one. As we translate different texts in this class, we will constantly experience firsthand the contingency and multiplicity of possible translation solutions, among which the translator has to make one definitive choice. To this end, we will examine:

- a sample of current Russian philosophical writings concerning Russia’s evolving self-identification through an in-depth analysis and translatorial cross-cultural synthesis of that high-abstraction discourse in the context of a rapidly changing world order;
- the discrepancies in defining the concepts “Russian civilization,” “Russian values,” and “national identity” between mainstream American perceptions and the understanding of those concepts by social scientists and philosophers such as Andrey Ivanov, Dmitry Likhachev and others;
- common mutual misperceptions in cross-cultural polemics;
- conceptual and cultural issues in rendering the translation-resistant, highly abstract Russian texts into English;
- possible solutions to the difficulties that arise in rendering those translation-resistant Russian texts into American English;
- approaches to writing a translator’s commentary on their translation version of the original.

Primary Course Texts (Required):

A course pack, **RUS 4503 (RUS3) Theory and Practice of Russian-English Translation 1** (to be bought at Target Copy, 1412 W. University Ave.)

Lynne Bowker. **De-mystifying Translation: Introducing Translation to Non-translators**. London and New York: Routledge, 2023. ISBN 978-1-003-21771-8 (ebk): [De-mystifying Translation: Introducing Translation to Non-translators - 9781000866483.pdf \(open.org\)](https://open.org/De-mystifying-Translation-Introducing-Translation-to-Non-translators-9781000866483.pdf)

Extracts from writings of contemporary Russian philosophers and social scientists, such as Andrey Ivanov, Dmitry Likhachev, and others. These will be supplied by the instructor.

Some useful websites concerning Russian culture:

1. Russian and English proverbs and sayings (http://masterrussian.com/proverbs/russian_proverbs.htm#b);
2. Russian “anekdoty” (jokes) (<http://anekdot.ru/>)
3. Russian “mat” (vulgar swearing vocabulary) (<http://www.russki-mat.net/page.php?!=RuEn&a=II> – Russian-English; http://www.russki-mat.net/e/mat_slovar.htm - Russian only) / Russian dirty words you shouldn't say in public (10:08): [\(12\) Russian dirty words you shouldn't say in public - YouTube](#)
4. Chastushki (humorous verses or ditties: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chastushka>) and other links.

Final Course Grade Components:

Description & Deadline	Percentage (%) of the Grade
4 oral reports in the form of translation analysis (attendance and participation in classroom work)	20%
4 written reports in the form of submitted translations	20%
2 tests (midterm and final)	20%
Final paper: December 4, 2024	40%

Regular attendance, homework preparation, and participation in class discussions – 20%

This means being present in class, having read the assigned pages of the theoretical material closely, and having done the assigned exercises and written translations by the set deadlines, as well as participating actively – and in an informed way – in the class discussions of theoretical issues and practical issues pertaining to the content of the course. I will closely monitor instances of absenteeism, unpreparedness, and unresponsiveness to class activities and factor them into

your final grade. (I will proceed on the understanding that there may be two unexcused missed 50-minute class periods; the rest will be taken into account pro rata.)

4 written reports and 2 tests – 40%.

The written reports will consist of 4 portions of your final translation paper. The tests will consist of written translations into English of 200-300-word texts.

Final take-home exam – 40%.

Your final exam paper will be your finally edited version of the written translations into English of the extracts on Russian culture that you will have worked on over the course of the semester, accompanied by your cultural and translation commentary on the difficulties you have had to overcome in doing the translation (3,000 words—translation; approx. 1,000 words—commentary). You will need to submit your final exam paper preferably on December 4 or by 11:59 p.m. on December 11, 2024, at the very latest.

As for your commentary, you will need to address the following questions:

- 1) How do you understand and/or sense the cultural-pragmatic impact of this original Russian text on Russian readers? In other words, what aesthetic, informational, entertaining, and persuasion value does the text have in the Russian culture from your perspective?
- 2) What audience do you think the original text speaks to and do you think your translation will speak to a comparable sociocultural constituency in America?
- 3) What difficulties (linguistic, cultural, and those involving knowledge of translation theory and strategies) have you encountered in translating the text? Describe 2-3 of those difficulties and the ways you have resolved them.
- 4) What overall translation strategy and “little strategies” have you used to make your translation produce on the prospective readers of your translation an effect similar to the effect that you assume the original Russian text has on Russian audiences?
- 5) How well do you think your implemented translation solutions take into account the expectations, educational background, and cultural awareness of the general American audience? Who are the American general audience, in your view?

Student Learning Outcomes

Students will acquire a basic understanding of historical, cultural, cross-cultural, linguo-stylistic and sociological analysis and learn to apply this knowledge and develop their own analytical and critical thinking skills.

Students will pursue these goals across the following three categories:

Content:

- Students will demonstrate competence in the concepts, terminology, methodologies and theories used in translation studies. They will identify, describe, explain, and learn to render in their translations the values, attitudes, and norms that shape the cultural differences between Russian and American people;
- Students will acquire basic translation skills/techniques for preserving the meaning of the Source Text (ST) in the Target Text (TT).

Assessment by exams, written assignments and in discussion.

Communication:

- Students will significantly expand their Russian and English active and passive vocabulary through extensive use of Russian-English, English-Russian, and Russian and English monolingual dictionaries as well as through intensive translation practice in class and at home;
- Students will enhance their lexical, grammatical and stylistic precision of self-expression in English and in Russian;
- Students will communicate knowledge, ideas, and reasoning clearly and more effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to intercultural (bilingual) communication. They will also clearly communicate knowledge, ideas, and reasoning stemming from their comparative analysis of Russian and American cultural traditions as reflected and refracted in the set of the Russian and English texts used in the course as translation material.

Assessment by written assignments and in discussion.

Critical Thinking:

- Students will analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using methods specific to translation studies and the humanities in general and developing reasoned solutions to interpretive problems. They will analyze and evaluate their own cultural norms and values by placing them in dialogue with those of the Russian people.
- Students will acquire skills in using Translation Variance Analysis (TVA) of stylistically different texts. TVA is an analysis-and-synthesis method involving comparing and critically interpreting discourse across cultures from the perspectives of linguostylistics, methods of translation, and cultural-pragmatic impact;
- Students will acquire a set of specific criteria for assessing the quality of any type of translation.

Assessment by written assignments and in discussion.

To sum up, by the conclusion of the course, students will have acquired new content knowledge, communication skills, critical thinking skills, and practical knowledge of translation strategies. They will be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge of key theories and strategies in Russian and American translation studies as well as knowledge of the translation variants of some universally known Russia and American texts.
- Produce original and effective translations from Russian into English and vice versa of different mass media, prose fiction, and cultural texts, using different methods of analysis, interpretation, and cross-cultural transfer of meaning.
- Draw connections, make comparisons, and define key differences between historical and cultural contexts of Russian and American translated texts.
- Critically assess the variety of ways that translation is molding the human experience.
- Effectively use key translation strategies in written and oral translation.

The following scale will be used in evaluating the quality of your work in class, grading your mid-term and final course papers, and calculating your overall grade for the course:

A = 93 – 100% (4 points)	B - = 82-80% (2.67 points)	D + = 69-67% (1.33 points)
A - = 92 – 90% (3.67 points)	C+ = 79 – 77% (2.33 points)	D = 63 – 66% (1.0 point)
B+ = 89 – 87% (3.33 points)	C = 76 – 73% (2.0 points)	D - = 62 – 60% (0.67 points)

B = 86 – 83% (3.0 points)	C - = 72-70% (1.67 points)	E = 59 – 0% (Failure)
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Students will need to earn a C or a higher grade for this course to count toward their major or minor and/or toward earning a General Education Credit. For more details visit <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx#grades>

Expected Class Demeanor:

Please, come to class on time. No cell phone use, tweeting, texting, instant messaging, or computer use unrelated to class work will be permitted. I would also appreciate it if you would refrain from eating, drinking or chewing gum while the class is in progress.

Make-Up Quizzes, Tests, or Home Assignments:

A student will only be allowed to make up a missed quiz, test, or assignment if s/he has a doctor's sickness note or other official documentation specifying valid reasons for missing the class. If any serious personal reasons preventing you from writing a test/quiz or attending a class should arise, please, let me know about them before you miss the test/quiz/class so that we can work out an accommodation. No unexplained absences will be excused. See also: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

COVID-19 Statement

In response to COVID-19, the following recommendations are in place to maintain your learning environment, to enhance the safety of our in-classroom interactions, and to further the health and safety of ourselves, our neighbors, and our loved ones.

- If you are not vaccinated, get vaccinated. Vaccines are readily available and have been demonstrated to be safe and effective against the COVID-19 virus. Visit one.uf.edu for screening / testing and vaccination opportunities.
- If you are sick, stay home. Please call your primary care provider if you are ill and need immediate care or the UF Student Health Care Center at 352-392-1161 to be evaluated.
- As with any excused absence, you will be given a reasonable amount of time to make up missed work.

Accommodations for Students

Students requesting classroom and/or test/exam accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who

must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation. Dean of Students Office: <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/>.

Schedule of classes, readings, topics for discussion, and translations:

Please note:

- **This schedule of topics, readings, and translations is not set in stone and may be modified as the semester progresses, depending on the progress of the class and, consequently, time availability.**
- **All the reading and translation assignments must be completed in full by the beginning of the class period indicated. Being unprepared in class will be noted by the instructor and factored into your final grade.**
- **All the details concerning daily assignments can be found in the course pack and on the Canvas platform in Assignments, Files, and Pages.**

PART ONE: WORD SEMANTICS

Week 1 (Aug 23)

Get the course pack from Target Copy, 1412 University Avenue. Read pp. 1-8 in *De-mystifying Translation* (DMT): [De-mystifying Translation: Introducing Translation to Non-translators - 9781000866483.pdf \(open.org\)](https://www.open.org/9781000866483.pdf)

Week 2 (Aug 26, 28, 30)

Course pack: Unit 1. Basic translation terminology. Prepare for class discussion the Unit 1 Practicum assignments. Unit 2. Dictionaries. Prepare for class discussion the Unit 2 Practicum assignments. DMT: Read closely Chapter 1. Basic concepts and terms in translation, pp. 9-24. Be prepared to talk in class on the 3 topics for discussion on p. 23.

Week 3 (Sept 2 – Labor Day/No class; Sept 4, 6)

Course pack: Unit 3. Basic transformations in the process of translation. Unit 4. What is a word sense, a seme, a sense core, and a sense periphery? Class work: Translation practicums in Units 3 & 4. DMT: Read Chapter 3. The translation profession today, pp. 39-58, and Chapter 4. Words, terms, and lexical resources, pp. 59-76. What is the difference between general language “words” and “special terms”?

Oral report 1.

Week 4 (Sept 9, 11, 13)

DMT: Chapter 3. The translation profession today, pp. 39-58, and Chapter 4. Words, terms, and lexical resources, pp. 59-76. What is the difference between general language “words” and “special terms”?

2. Unit 4: What is a Word Sense, a Seme, a Sense Core, and Sense Periphery? Be ready to do in class practicum assignments 1-2 in Unit 4.

1st portion of the final exam translation.

Week 5 (Sept 16, 18, 20)

Course pack: Unit 5. The semantic structure of a word. **Unit 6.** Translating by paraphrase. Translation practicums. **DMT: Chapter 5.** Other tools and resources, pp.77-91. What interesting/useful information did you find in DMT Chapter 5?

Week 6 (Sept 23, 25, 27)

Translation practicum

Oral report 2.

Week 7 (Sept 30; Oct 2, 4)

1. Study carefully the theoretical part in Unit 7: Denotative and Connotative Meaning.
2. Do assignments 1-4. Be prepared to discuss them in class.
3. Study the theoretical material in Unit 8: The Concept of Functional Style (Register)
4. Do assignments 1-2 following the text in Unit 8.

2nd portion of the final exam translation.

Week 8 (Oct 7, 9, 11)

Study the theory in unit 9 (The concept of dialect) and do assignments 1-6.

Bringing it all together: A review of the theoretical material covered during weeks 1-8.

Midterm test 1. You will need to write your midterm take-home exam at your convenience and email me your paper no later than 11:59 PM on October 13 (Sunday). My email: alburak@ufl.edu. Don't encrypt, please, and don't use any fancy file formats. Your work has to be sent to me as an attached Word file. The text for your midterm translation test 1 will be provided by your instructor.

Week 9 (Oct 14, 16, 18):

- Analysis of your midterm exam translations. (In class on Mon., Oct 14). 2.
 DMT: Chapter 7. Localization, pp. 109-126. In class on Mon., Oct 14: Be prepared to give 1-2 examples of localization used in your midterm exam translation.
 Unit 10. The Translator's "False Friends." Translation practicum. (In class on Wed., Oct 16). 4.
 Unit 11. Three Types of Relationship between Word Senses. Translation practicum. (In class on Fri., Oct. 18).

Oral report 3.**Week 10 (Oct. 21, 23, 25)**

- Read Unit 12. Defining Word Senses. Do assignments 1-3. 2.
 DMT: Chapter 6. Machine translation, pp. 92-110. 3.
 Be prepared to discuss in class the first topic for discussion, p. 107. 4.
 Unit 13 Specialist/Technical Terms and Translation for Specific Purposes.

3rd portion of the final exam translation.**Week 11 (Oct 28, 30; Nov. 1)**

- Unit 14. The Translator's Informational Capacity. Unit 15. "Semantic Engineering" and Levels of Translation. Translation practicums.

PART TWO**Syntax Semantics: Translating Phrases, Sentences, Paragraphs and Texts****Week 12 (Nov 4, 6, 8)**

- Course pack: Unit 16 Non-predicative and predicative word combinations (phrases). Unit 17. Free collocations, fixed expressions, and idioms. Translation practicums. DMT: Chapter 8. Adaptation and transcreation. Be prepared to talk on the first topic for discussion on p. 136. Provide instances/examples from your midterm exam translation in which you had "to adapt" and "transcreate."

Oral report 4.**Week 13 (Nov 11 /Veterans' Day—No class/ Nov 13, 15—regular classes)**

- Unit 18. Proverbs, popular sayings and "winged phrases."
 Translation practicum.

4th portion of the final exam translation.

Week 14 (Nov 18, 20, 22)

1. Unit 19. Syntactic and information/communicative structures of sentences. Theme and rheme. Translation practicum.
2. Unit 20. Means of Marking Theme and Rheme in English and Russian. Do assignments 1-4.
3. DMT: Chapter 9. Summarization and cross-modal communication, pp.139-151. Be prepared to talk in class on the two topics in the “Topics for discussion” section on p. 149. Practicum: Sight translation.
4. Study carefully Chapter 10. Audiovisual translation (DMT), pp. 152-167. Be prepared to talk in class on Friday, November 22, on topics 1 and 2 in the “Topics for discussion” section on p. 165.

Final test 2.

Week 15 (Dec. 2, 4)

Study closely Unit 21: Predicates expressing themes.

Before doing the final edit of and submitting your final exam translation, please, make sure that you have reviewed (thoroughly) the material covered during weeks 12-15 (course pack pp. 138-191). This material is summarized on pp. 191-197.

Final Exam

Your final take-home exam paper is to be emailed to me by 7:30 PM on December 11 (Wednesday) at the very latest (preferably on December 4). Your translation of 3,000 words needs to be followed by a translator’s commentary of 1,000 words. The commentary needs to describe one or two grammatical, lexical, syntactic, or cultural translation difficulties that you have encountered in the process of translating. Your commentary should also define the strategies that you have employed to resolve those difficulties.

Formatting your final exam:

The text of your final exam paper should be double-spaced, using a size 12 font. The paper should be presented as a two-column table with the Russian original in the left-hand column and your English translation in the opposite right-hand column. Your Russian text (excerpts from different sources) about 3,000 words long. Your translation should be accompanied by a translator’s commentary on the translation difficulties that you have had to overcome. The

commentary should be about 1,000 words. The final paper should be sent to me as an attached Microsoft Word file (!).

Referencing your final paper:

Your final paper should be properly referenced: All the sources that you have used in preparing and writing your final paper should be included as footnotes or endnotes. (You may need to look up some cultural, historical and other references to get a better understanding of the culture-specific terms and cultural/historical allusions in the text to be translated.) For books, include the name/s of the author/s, title, place of publication, publisher, total number of pages, and the pages you are specifically referring to. If the source is a translation, you also need to give the name of the translator and the year the translation first came out or the translation copyright was registered. Any references to texts, or visual, or audio-materials online should be supplied with the relevant Internet address (in a footnote or endnote) followed by the word “Accessed” and the date the source was accessed. Don’t forget to include your own first and last names followed by your email address in front of the title/topic of your final paper.

UF Student Honor Code

Please, refer to the following webpage: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.php>

Students with Disabilities:

Students with physical, learning, sensory or psychological disabilities will be accommodated in accordance with the relevant policies adopted at UF (for details, please, visit <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/>).

UF Counseling and Mental Health Services

Phone: 392-1575, <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>

Course Evaluation Process for Students

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.