Translation & Transcreation: A Hybrid Approach in the Language Classroom

Almost every ancient language program has struggled with declining enrollments over the past several decades; one challenge faced by educators of the ancient world has thus been how to address the perennial problem of "butts in seats." This presentation offers a language-culture approach for smaller programs based on my experience teaching two hybrid English-Latin & English-ancient Greek courses in spring 2024 at a large public school, "Ancient Greek and Roman Theater" and "Catullus and Literary Translation."

In the first section I will briefly discuss the makeup and structure of the two classes, both team-taught with colleagues and drawing on different research and teaching specialties. Both were essentially courses taught in translation and cross-listed with ancient language courses, in which some class meetings involved the full roster and others divided the students into groups for work in translation and grammar; in both classes, we strove to provide a broadly similar workload and set of expectations for all students. Each class borrowed terminology from translation studies (using Dryden's 1680 schema of metaphrase, paraphrase, and imitation, as well as trot and transcreation) and took inspiration from Chrol (2017), Hanink (2019), Godwin (2023), Greenwood (2023), and Vennarucci & Reeber (2023) in the readings and creation of assignments. Final projects in both classes grouped language and in-translation students to create and present (and, for the drama class, perform) translations and adaptations of an ancient text for their classmates.

In the second section, I will discuss some positive and negative aspects of this approach, and present some preliminary thoughts on the practicality of similar course offerings elsewhere (including the possibility of a similar course with a single instructor). Among the positives are

the objective fact that both courses made (rather than being cancelled for low enrollment, as sometimes happens with ancient language courses), and the subjective observation (from experience, as well as comments in student evaluations) that even students from outside Classics enjoyed the courses and expressed interest in learning the languages based on their experience in the classes. There were, however, also some substantial problems with both courses, foremost among them the unfortunate point that neither course offered students of the languages anywhere near as much material covered as a 'traditional' course offering listed under Greek or Latin. This was, to some extent, a predictable issue; some other problems in the courses were not, and ideally other presenters or participants in the session will be able to offer solutions (or other issues) during discussion.

Bibliography

Chrol, E. D. 2019. "When in Rome: A Multi-Genre Writing Exercise for Classics." *NECJ* 44:3.

Dryden, J. 1680. *Ovid's epistles translated by several hands*. London.

Godwin, J. Review of Jane Goldman, *Catullus 64*. *BMCR* 2023.11.29, accessed 9/30/2024.

Greenwood, E. 2023. "Classical Philology, Otherhow." *AJP* 143:2.

Hanink, J. 2019. "The Twists and Turns of Translation." *Eidolon*, accessed 9/30/2024.

Vennarucci, R. & Reeber, J. 2023. "Voices from Below: A Multivocal Approach to Teaching
    Petronius' *Satyrica*." *TCL* 13.1.