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**Federal State Autonomous Educational Institution of Higher Education
PEOPLES' FRIENDSHIP UNIVERSITY OF RUSSIA NAMED AFTER
PATRICE LUMUMBA**

LAW INSTITUTE

Department of Foreign Languages

COURSE SYLLABUS

**Legal Documents Translation (English-Russian/ Other Foreign
Language)**

**Recommended by the Didactic Council for the Education Field of
45.04.02 Linguistics**

**The course instruction is implemented within the professional education programme
of higher education:**

Legal Translation and Interpreting

higher education programme profile/specialisation title

2025

1 COURSE GOALS

The key objective of the course is to develop professional communicative foreign language skills by mastering translation of legal documents from English into Russian and from Russian into English.

This objective can be reached by the solution of a number of tasks:

- building up linguistic skills by learning grammar and lexis of the target language and applying this knowledge to legal documentation at work
- building up sociolinguistic skills to be able to choose adequate language forms and use them in specific contexts of legal English
- building up pragmatic skills to be able to formalize legal documents in accordance with the traditions of genre, type of communication and language etiquette of the target language
- building up discourse communicative skills to be able to choose the right strategy and tactics to gain inter-text coherence, logic and communicative structure of a legal document in accordance with language traditions of legal writing
- building up sociocultural skills to be able to identify the national and cultural components in specific legal information and to adequately interpret them by means of the native language and *vice versa*
- building up translating skills to be able to translate legal documents from English into Russian and from Russian into English in accordance with the norms of native and target languages within the extent determined by the course.

2 Requirements for learning outcome

Mastering the course is aimed at the development of the translation competences in legal documents translation. The course contributes to the following general professional competences (GPC) and professional competences (PC) as required by the Russian Higher Education Standard for Training in Linguistics and Translation. On completing the course, a student must demonstrate the following competences:

Table 2.1. List of competences that students acquire through the course study

Competence code	Competence descriptor	Competence formation indicators (within this course)
GPC-5	Can carry out interlingual and intercultural interaction in accordance with the conventions of speech communication in a foreign language community, in line with the rules and traditions of intercultural professional communication with native speakers	Indicator 1 Knows the conventions of foreign community communication in diverse situational contexts
		Indicator 2 Masters comprehensive tools for interlingual and intercultural interaction in line with the rules and traditions of intercultural professional communication with native speaker
GPC-7	Can work with the major search engines, expert systems and other knowledge systems as	Indicator 1 Knows major search engines, expert systems for knowledge representation and verbal information processing

Competence code	Competence descriptor	Competence formation indicators (within this course)
	well as systems of verbal information processing	Indicator 2 Masters comprehensive digital tools for knowledge representation and verbal information processing.
PC-3	Can conduct legal translation in compliance with the norms of the target text, as well as preserving the meaning and functional purpose of the source text	Indicator 1. Knows the general standards and specifics of various genres of legal documents (with reference to the working language pair) for legal translation
		Indicator 2. Masters the strategy and tactics of translating standard genres of legal texts

On completion of the Course the student

- knows most common types of documents in legal practice in the country of target language
- knows the basic linguistic phenomena of legal translation process, understands interdisciplinary nature of legal translation process
- knows the basic strategies and tactics of legal translation process, the techniques of pre-translation text analysis
- knows grammar, lexical and stylistic features of legal documents in English
- knows adequate techniques of translation to reach texts equivalence
- can translate standard types of legal documents from English into Russian and *visa versa*
- can post-edit legal documents
- can use various internet resources to optimize the work with legal documents in Russian and English.

3 COURSE IN HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

The course refers to the variable component of (B1) block of the higher educational programme curriculum. It is taught in English and is based on the Theory of Legal Translation.

The startup level of IT and communicative skills to master the course

To master the course the students need to demonstrate knowledge and skills in the following:

- B2/C1 level of English
- computer skills in text processing
- abilities to work with electronic documents and search engines
- basic skills of translating.

Table 3.1. The list of the higher education programme components/disciplines that contribute to the achievement of the expected learning outcomes

Competence code	Competence descriptor	Previous courses/modules	Subsequent courses/modules
GPC-5	Can carry out interlingual and intercultural interaction in accordance with the conventions of speech communication in a foreign language community, in line with the rules and traditions of intercultural professional communication with native speakers	Cross Cultural Communication and Mediation (in English) / Межкультурная коммуникация и медиация (на английском языке) / Legal English Course / Юридический английский	Legal Translation Studies (in English) / Юридический перевод (на английском языке) / Court Interpreting (in English) / Судебный перевод (на английском языке)
GPC-7	Can work with the major search engines, expert systems and other knowledge systems as well as systems of verbal information processing	Quantitative Linguistics and IT (in English) / Квантитативная лингвистика и ИКТ (на английском языке)	Computer-Assisted Tools for Legal Translation / Юридический перевод с использованием ИКТ
PC-3	Can conduct legal translation in compliance with the norms of the target text, as well as preserving the meaning and functional purpose of the source text	Translation Studies (in English) / Переводоведение (на английском языке) / Legal Translation Studies (in English) / Юридический перевод (на английском языке)	Translation and International Law / Перевод и международное право / Translation and Civil Law / Перевод и гражданское право / Translation and Criminal Law / Перевод и уголовное право

4 COURSE WORKLOAD AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

The course total workload is equal to 12 credits (432 academic hours).

Type of academic activities	Total academic hours	Semesters/training modules					
		1	2	3	4	5	6
<i>Contact academic hours, including</i>	<i>102</i>						
Lectures (LC)							
Seminars (workshops/tutorials) (S)	102	18	16	18	16	18	16
<i>Self-studies</i>	<i>252</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>38</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>38</i>	<i>81</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Evaluation and assessment (exam/passing/failing grade)</i>	<i>78</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>15</i>

Course workload	academic hours	432						
	credits	12	2	2	2	2	3	1

5 COURSE CONTENTS

Table 5.1. Course contents and academic activities types

Course module title	Course module contents	Academic activities types
1 Identifying Legal English	Function, general characteristics. Variants of Legal English: officialese, legalese, plain English. Historical development. Distinguishing features of Legal English. Practice. Case study.	Self-study S
2 Company formation documents	Company formation. Types of company. Structure and distinguishing features of Memorandum and Articles of association of different types of companies. Practice: glossary and translation of relevant documents.	Self-study S
3 Agreement	Definition, elements and structure of Agreement. Distinguishing features of Agreement. Types of Agreement. Boilerplate. Practice: glossary and translation of relevant documents.	Self-study S
4 Common law court decision	Case law in common law systems. Legal rationale and obiter dicta. Binding precedent. Structure and distinguishing features of common law court decision. Practice: glossary and translation of relevant documents.	Self-study S
5 Power of attorney (POA) and Agency Agreement	Definition of Power of Attorney. Structure and requirements. POA Types. Agency agreement. Distinguishing features of power of attorney and agency agreement. Practice: glossary and translation of relevant documents.	Self-study S
6 Legal correspondence	Structure of a business letter (letterhead, reference, subject title, address, salutation, body of the letter, complimentary close, signature, copies, enclosures). Types of business communication (letter, e-mail, fax). Classification of business letters (agencies, international trade, home and international banking, transport, insurance). Distinguishing features of a business letter. Criticism of legalese in business correspondence. Practice: exercises and translation of relevant materials.	Self-study S
7 Arbitration and Mediation	Pre-action procedure, alternative dispute resolution, international agreements and enforcement. Structure and distinguishing features of arbitral awards. Practice: glossary and translation of relevant documents.	Self-study S
8 Translation of personal documents	Passport, birth certificate, academic certificate, marriage license, divorce certificate, CV, covering letter. Practice: glossary and translation of relevant documents.	Self-study S

6. CLASSROOM EQUIPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS

Table 6.1. Classroom equipment and technology support requirements

Type of academic activities	Classroom equipment	Specialised educational / laboratory equipment, software, and materials for course study (if necessary)
Seminar	A classroom for conducting seminars, group and individual consultations, current and mid-term assessment; equipped with a set of specialised furniture and technical means for multimedia presentations.	Portable multimedia projector Benq MP610, notebook Acer Aspire 5315-301G08, screen, access to Internet. Software: Microsoft (OC, MS Office/ Office 365, Teams, Skype)
Self-studies	A classroom for independent work of students (can be used for seminars and consultations), equipped with a set of specialised furniture and computers with access to the electronic information and educational environment.	System block IRBIS, monitor VIEW SONIC 19, multimedia projector VIEW SONIC PGD 5254, screen IPROJECTAL, access to Internet

* Classroom 326

6.2 Seminar activities

The study aims at developing professional translation skills on the material of the most common types of documents. The course is based on the theory of translation and contributes to general practices of translation within the legal domain.

Sessions take place once a week and last for two academic hours. A lecture looks at legal procedure, format, structure and distinguishing linguistic features of a certain type of legal writing. Theoretical part contains legal background and definitions along with the structure and elements of a certain document. Text fragments are studied to identify the linguistic peculiarities of the instrument under study. A number of questions are suggested for testing and self-control; a quiz as a final testing material following lecture allows to check understanding of the topic under study. It is a multiple choice test of 8 – 12 questions.

Self-study contributes to better understanding of theory and gaining translation skills. The students are expected to complete certain activities and tasks in preparation to the session. They are required to prepare for seminars and come to class ready to participate.

Seminars are focused on developing translation skills of legal writing from English into Russian and *visa versa*. They suggest discussing variants of translation and address common errors and language misuse in terms of grammar/structure, syntax, lexis/phrases, legal context and legal culture. They are focused on developing translation skills of legal writing from English into Russian and *visa versa*. Also, the students practice in drafting, rephrasing, restructuring, condensing, and post-editing legal instruments.

The course meets the market requirements and can contribute to shaping a specialist in Legal Translation and Interpreting.

7. RESOURCES RECOMMENDED FOR COURSE STUDY

Main readings:

- 1 Bryan Garner's *Dictionary of Modern Legal Usage* (Oxford University Press).
- 2 The Oxford Handbook of Legal Correspondence (2006) by Rupert Haigh, published by Oxford University Press.
- 3 Model Business Letters, E-mails and Other Business Documents by Shirley Taylor. FT Prentice Hall, 2004.
- 4 Mayoral Asensio, Roberto. Translating Official Documents. St. Jerome Publishing, 2003. – 165 pp.
- 5 Elena M. de Jongh. From the Classroom to the Courtroom. American Translators Association Scholarly Monograph Series, XVII. Benjamins Publishing Company, 2012. – 213 pp.
- 6 Translation and the Law. Edited by Marchall Morris. American Translators Association Scholarly Monograph Series, VIII. Benjamins Publishing Company, 1995. – 332 pp.
- 7 Catherine Elliott and Frances Quinn. English Legal System. Third Edition. Pearson Education Limited, 2000.
- 8 Brian Mossop. Editing and Revising for Translators. 2nd edition. St. Jerome Publishing. 2010. – 218 pp.
- 9 Rupert Haigh. Legal English. Second edition. Routledge-Cavendish. 2009. – 343

Additional readings:

- 1 Valentina Stepanova, Lilia Kiseleva. Challenges in Translating Commercial Agreements. М.: Вестник РУДН. Серия: Русский и иностранные языки и методика их преподавания, №3, 2014. Pp. 87-95.
- 2 Valentina Stepanova. О некоторых аспектах юридического дискурса релевантных в переводе (английский-русский) / On Some Aspects of Legal Discourse Relevant in Translation (English-Russian). Перспективы науки, №12, 2015. Pp.91-94.
- 3 Valentina Stepanova. Translation Strategies of Legal Texts (English – Russian). Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences 237 (2017). Netherlands, Amsterdam, Elsevier. Pp. 1329-1336.
- 4 Valentina V. Stepanova, Lilia Kiseleva. Agreement Text Contrastive Analysis: English vs Russian. М.: Вестник РУДН. серия Юридические науки, № 2, 2014. Pp. 393-400.

Internet sources

ЭБС РУДН и сторонние ЭБС, к которым студенты университета имеют доступ на основании заключенных договоров:

- Электронно-библиотечная система РУДН – ЭБС РУДН <http://lib.rudn.ru/MegaPro/Web>
- ЭБС «Университетская библиотека онлайн» <http://www.biblioclub.ru>
- ЭБС Юрайт <http://www.biblio-online.ru>
- ЭБС «Консультант студента» www.studentlibrary.ru
- ЭБС «Лань» <http://e.lanbook.com/>
- ЭБС «Троицкий мост»
- Compact Law (UK): <http://www.compactlaw.co.uk>

UK Legal (UK): <http://www.uklegal.com>
English for Law Blog: <http://englishforlaw.blogspot.com/>
Forum Legal (free legal English materials): <http://www.forum-legal.com/>

Encyclopedia articles

Legal English: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Legal_English
Legal Writing: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Legal_writing
Company Formation: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Company_formation
Agreement: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/English_contract_law#Agreement
Contract: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Contract>
Legal Opinion: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Legal_opinion
Court decision: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Court_decision
Power of Attorney: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Power_of_attorney
Agency Agreement: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agency_agreement
Covenant: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Covenant_\(law\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Covenant_(law))
Arbitration: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arbitration>
Mediation: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mediation>

Dictionaries

Multitran on-line dictionary
Barron's Law Dictionary
Garner's Dictionary of Legal Usage
Legal Dictionary for Businessmen
Oxford Business English Dictionary
Cardiff Index to Legal Abbreviations (search engine)

Case study sources

Memorandum: <http://www.ukstartingbusiness.co.uk/index.php/memorandum-of-association>
Articles of association: <http://www.ukstartingbusiness.co.uk/index.php/articles-of-association>
Sample Form:
http://www.acc.com/_cs_upload/vl/membersonly/SampleFormPolicy/409703_1.pdf
Case Study Arbitration Award:
<http://www.lordhacking.com/awards/GAFTA%20PRELIMINARY%20AWARD%20Zurich%20International%20v%20Moscow%20Export%20Oct%202004-1.pdf>

Databases and search engines:

- electronic foundation of legal and normative-technical documentation <http://docs.cntd.ru/>
- Yandex search engine <https://www.yandex.ru/>
- Google search engine <https://www.google.ru/>
- Scopus abstract database <http://www.elsevierscience.ru/products/scopus/>

*Training toolkit for self- studies to master the course *:*

A set of theoretical materials on the course
A booklet of practical tasks and glossaries

8. ASSESSMENT TOOLKIT AND GRADING SYSTEM* FOR EVALUATION OF STUDENTS' COMPETENCES LEVEL UPON COURSE COMPLETION

The assessment toolkit and the grading system* to evaluate the competences formation level (competences in part) upon the course study completion are specified in the Appendix to the course syllabus.

* The assessment toolkit and the grading system are formed on the basis of the requirements of the relevant local normative act of RUDN University (regulations / order).

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position, department

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