

MA Seminar Description

2023-2025

Edyta Frelik, PhD

The American Modern: representations of society, culture, art and popular media in American films about the United States in the first half of the 20th century

The seminar will focus on how the ideas of modernity and modernism have been represented in American films. Specifically, we will discuss Hollywood and alternative movies which show the United States' transformation at the turn of the century from early-stage capitalism to full-scale modernity. Various aspects of the modernization of American culture and society will be considered, such as urban growth, industrialization, the advent of mass society and mass media, and the appearance of the entertainment industry, the intensification of class divisions and conflict, etc. These serious issues have been made socially relevant and attractive to the general public largely through the work of film makers, who both in blockbuster Hollywood productions and in "auteur" cinema offer a wide array of approaches and treatments. Discussions and presentations during the seminar will be aimed at establishing a framework within which various themes and vantage points – from historical to contemporary – will be used to select representative examples of films dealing with the discussed topics. Each student will have to write an M.A. paper based on 2-3 films, discussed in a context chosen as the paper's main topic. All films made in the last 100 years, from Charlie Chaplin's *Modern Times* (1936) and Orson Welles' *Citizen Kane* (1941) to *The Great Gatsby* (1974, 2013) and *Babylon* (2022) can be used as analytical material.

Marta Komsta, PhD

Utopia and dystopia in contemporary literature and film

Few cultural concepts have gained resonance comparable to utopia. Coined by Sir Thomas More in his 1516 *Utopia*, the term denotes a literary genre as well as a vision of a perfect(ed) reality that successfully curtailed the shortcomings of human nature. Following More's ground-breaking work, literary utopias have functioned as texts of instruction but also warning in an everlasting quest to create a better future. After all, as Oscar Wilde famously stated, "a map of the world that does not include Utopia is not worth even glancing at, for it leaves out the one country at which Humanity is always landing."

Dystopia, utopia's younger sibling, gained immense popularity in the previous century, with utopian thinking often deemed as naïve and incapable of providing any viable solutions. Dystopian worlds, as depicted in George Orwell's *1984*, Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale*, the Wachowskis' *The Matrix*, or Charlie Brooker's *Black Mirror*, offer an unvarnished perspective on some of the most urgent issues of our day, such as authoritarian and totalitarian regimes, climate crisis, rapid technological development, economic inequalities, and various discriminatory practices of modern societies.

In this seminar, we will explore the shifting conventions and definitions of utopia and dystopia in contemporary literary and cinematic narratives (British and American) alongside the essential theory of utopian thought that is meant to familiarize the students with the field of utopian studies. While

discussing some of the most thought-provoking works of the genre, we will investigate the multi-layered relationship between utopia and dystopia, seeking to answer the question whether the genres have retained their transformative potential in contemporary culture. The M.A. papers will focus on the representations of utopia/dystopia in the selected text(s), literary and/or filmic.

Prof. Zbigniew Mazur

Migration and mobility in British and American film and visual culture

Global migration has intensified in the last decades and became one of the most significant demographic, political, social, and economic problems. Migration and human mobility in general have an undeniable impact on economic prosperity, global and national politics, and the shaping of national and ethnic identity. The seminar will explore the questions of migrations, border crossing, and human mobility and their representations in recent British and American film and visual culture. It will explore such concepts as hostility and hospitality, cultural hybridization, inclusion of migrant communities in public life, border fortification, securitization, gate-keeping, liminality, ex-centricity, trans-border dynamics, contested territories, and others.

The source texts to be studied in the students MA projects will be British and American films and other visual texts (projects based on source texts from other English-speaking countries are also acceptable). Visual narratives greatly affect public perception of migration. Film and other visual media are used to express complex issues, and have the power to transform attitudes and perceptions. The aim of the students' projects will be to identify the narratives of migration present in the cinema and study the language and imagery which is used to interpret the processes of immigration, emigration, and border crossing, including internal migration and mobility.

Before the students begin work on their projects, the seminar will investigate the theoretical aspects of migration studies and the history of migration in Britain and the USA in the 21st century and its political and economic contexts. The analysis of visual texts will be preceded by a thorough introduction to the methodology of film studies. The seminarists will be able to take part in the activities of the Erasmus + project "MigraMedia" (Migration Narratives in European Media: Teaching, Learning, and Reflecting) in which UMCS is one of the participants.

Prof. Przemysław Łozowski

linguistics – translation studies

The seminar facilitates research into selected **linguo-cultural aspects of translation**, mainly in terms of **practical consequences and effects**. The material basis for the students' own investigation can be anything from independent expressions, such as idioms, slogans and jokes, to coherent wholes, such as poems and novels. This makes the seminar suitable for all those that have developed in their BA years any taste for material/**textual examination**, be it literary and/or linguistic. As to the theory behind, traditionally, translation is attempted in terms of a language-to-language process, with either formal or functional considerations coming to the fore. Thus, the Polish title *Duma i uprzedzenie* for the original *Pride and prejudice* may be praised for its functional import (that is, it renders well the sense of the original) but frowned upon for its formal imperfection (that is, it kills the original /pr/ alliteration of *pride* and *prejudice*). And, conversely, *Rozważna i*

romantyczna may be found much of a formal match to the original *Sense and sensibility* (because it does reflect the alliteration effect) but may as well be said to miss the point of the original (because, say, *romantyczna* does not correspond tightly to *sensibility*, nor *rozważna* anticipates *sense*). In **culturally-oriented approach to translation**, all such considerations can only be secondary, with translation being a culture-to-culture process, not a word-for-word or sense-for-sense ones.

Selected **examples** of diploma works completed so far along the lines described above:

- Language and Culture in the Context of English-Polish Translation: Rendering Selected Terms of Abuse in the Film Adaptation of *Bridget Jones's Diary*
- Song Lyrics in the Context of Literary and Translation Considerations: Love Songs of *Grease* in Relation to the History of the Musical
- Language-Film Correspondences: Selected Song Lyrics in the *Peaky Blinders* TV Series in a Film-Making Perspective
- Translating Neologisms: Selected Names of Creatures in J. K. Rowling's *Fantastic Beasts and where to Find them* in an English-Polish Comparative Context
- Language and Culture Interrelations in Translation: the Worldview behind Selected Polish, English, and Turkish *mother*-Related Figurative Expressions
- Film Narration in Translation: Comparative Investigation into English, Russian, and Polish Interpretations of Selected *Titanic* Rose-Jack Dialogues
- Language at the Juncture of Music and Culture: Critical Examination of Kendrick Lamar's Selected Rap Lyrics in an English-Polish Translation Perspective
- Domestication versus Foreignization in Translating Selected Expressions in *Dungeons&Dragons: The Player's Handbook* into Polish: A Source- vs. Target-Language User's Perspectives

Prof. Jolanta Szpyra-Kozłowska

Wybrane zagadnienia współczesnej fonetyki i fonologii

Dlaczego Japończycy wymawiają dwusylabowe angielskie *Christmas* jako aż 5-sylabowe [kurisimasu]? Skąd się wzięło [w] w nazwie zespołu *Golec Łorkiestra*? Dlaczego wielu Polaków mówi *labolatorium* i *lablador*, a nie prawidłowo *laboratorium* i *labrador*, *wziąść*, a nie *wziąć*, a dzieci przekręcają *kołdrę* na *kordłę*? Czy członek zespołu *The Beatles* to po polsku *bitels* czy *bitles*?

Jak przebiega proces przyswajania wymowy angielskiej przez Polaków i innych Słowian? Czy możliwe jest jej perfekcyjne opanowanie? Które elementy fonetyki angielskiej są szczególnie trudne i dlaczego? Jak nauczać tego aspektu języka w sposób efektywny, a jednocześnie atrakcyjny, za pomocą nowoczesnych metod fonodydaktycznych?

W trakcie seminarium spróbujemy odpowiedzieć na te i inne pytania dotyczące wybranych i ciekawych problemów fonetycznych i fonologicznych języka angielskiego i polskiego, a także innych języków słowiańskich, co pozwoli nam lepiej zrozumieć, jak działa i jakimi zasadami kieruje się system dźwiękowy. Przyjrzymy się bliżej takim zagadnieniom jak adaptacja zapożyczeń, struktura sylaby czy przejęzyczenia i błędy językowe, a także poznamy tajniki procesu akwizycji oraz nauczania wymowy angielskiej przez cudzoziemców z naszej części świata.

Tak szeroki zakres tematyczny seminarium pozwoli jego uczestnikom i uczestniczkom na wybór tematu pracy magisterskiej zgodnie z ich zainteresowaniami.