

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Subject Description Form

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| Subject Code | CBS1A01P |
| Subject Title | Fun with Language |
| Credit Value | 3 |
| Level | 1 |
| Pre-requisite / Co-requisite/ Exclusion | None CBS1900 and CBS1902 and CBS1A01V (Students from BACBS/ENGL are excluded from taking this subject) |
| Objectives | <p>Whatever else people do when they come together, they talk. We live in a world of language. The possession of language distinguishes humans from other animals. To understand our humanity, one must understand the nature of language that makes us human.</p> <p>This introductory subject provides an overview of human languages and their interesting aspects. Principles pertaining to language use will also be introduced by making use of everyday examples in the local context. The purposes are to raise consciousness about language use and to remind everyone of the ways to have fun with language. This subject is suitable for those who are interested in language and do not have any prior knowledge.</p> |
| Intended Learning Outcomes | <p>Upon completion of the subject, students will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) make intelligent and informed judgments concerning aspects of language; b) communicate effectively in speech and writing about linguistic issues; c) develop the ability to discuss varieties of language without prejudice and appreciate the scientific aim of describing and understanding language; d) identify and propose preliminary solutions to language problems in Chinese (Cantonese and Putonghua) and English, as and where appropriate, in a scientific manner; e) have a sufficiently deep understanding of linguistics to apply it, where desirable, to other areas of study or to employment; f) apply logical thinking and deduction to problem solving in general. g) develop enhanced language skills in terms of Chinese reading and essay writing |

| Subject Synopsis/ Indicative Syllabus | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Introduction</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <u>What is language?</u> b. <u>Animal communication vs. human language</u> c. <u>Innate language capacity in humans; language acquisition</u> 2. <u>Different Aspects of Language</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <u>Sounds and sound patterns</u> b. <u>Word structure</u> c. <u>Sentence patterns</u> d. <u>Word and sentence meanings</u> 3. <u>Doing Things with Language</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <u>Speech acts</u> b. <u>Conversational conventions</u> 4. <u>Language and Society</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <u>Language contact</u> b. <u>Dialects and accents</u> c. <u>Life and death of language</u> d. <u>Writing and writing systems</u> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| Teaching/Learning Methodology | <p>Face-to-face lectures and small group tutorials will be supplemented with discussions via Blackboard and web-based study materials will be used. Take-home assignments and in-class exercises are closely related to the use of language in the local context and will examine students' mastery of basic linguistic knowledge and problem solving skills. Students are strongly encouraged to apply the concepts and methodologies they learn to solve practical real-world linguistic problems.</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Assessment Methods in Alignment with Intended Learning Outcomes | <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th rowspan="2">Specific assessment methods/tasks</th> <th rowspan="2">% weighting</th> <th colspan="7">Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed</th> </tr> <tr> <th>a</th> <th>b</th> <th>c</th> <th>d</th> <th>e</th> <th>f</th> <th>g</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1. homework assignment 1</td> <td>15%</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>2. homework assignment 2 (including the Chinese Reading (CR)) requirement</td> <td>25%</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>3. in-class exercises</td> <td>15%</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>4. essay</td> <td>40%*</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td>✓</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>✓</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> | Specific assessment methods/tasks | % weighting | Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed | | | | | | | a | b | c | d | e | f | g | 1. homework assignment 1 | 15% | ✓ | | | | ✓ | ✓ | | 2. homework assignment 2 (including the Chinese Reading (CR)) requirement | 25% | ✓ | | | | ✓ | ✓ | | 3. in-class exercises | 15% | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | | 4. essay | 40%* | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| Specific assessment methods/tasks | % weighting | | | Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | | a | b | c | d | e | f | g | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1. homework assignment 1 | 15% | ✓ | | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2. homework assignment 2 (including the Chinese Reading (CR)) requirement | 25% | ✓ | | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3. in-class exercises | 15% | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4. essay | 40%* | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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| | 5. seminar participation | 5% | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| | Total | 100 % | | | | | | | |
| <p>*10% assessed by language instructors for the Chinese Writing (CW) requirement; 30% assessed by the subject teacher in terms of the essay contents</p> <p>This subject intends to provide an overview of human languages and their interesting aspects. Topics covered vary from origin of language, language types, forms and varieties, language evolution and changes, functions of language, relationship between language and society, language processing and language acquisition etc. It would be difficult to evaluate student's learning outcome with one or two single assignment(s) in terms of term papers. Therefore, a number of exercises and small assignments, each with different focuses and covering specific topics, will be given to students to help them grasp the basic concepts and to develop their abilities in handling language issues.</p> <p>The second homework assignment includes questions (accounting for 10% of the final grade) based on readings assigned as part of the CR requirement. The CR-related questions may take a variety of formats (e.g., short answer questions, multiple choice questions) and assess students' understanding of the text's main ideas, the authors' logical arguments and uses of examples, and the important concepts related to the descriptions of and solutions to language problems.</p> <p>Towards the end of the study period, students will be required to produce an essay as part of the CW requirement containing in-depth discussion of a linguistic phenomenon. This final piece of work would require students to make use of the knowledge learnt in this subject and to demonstrate that they have achieved the intended learning outcomes.</p> | | | | | | | | | |
| Student Study Effort Expected | Class contact: | | | | | | | | |
| | ▪ Lectures: 2 x 13 | 26 Hrs. | | | | | | | |
| | ▪ Tutorials: 1 x 13 | 13 Hrs. | | | | | | | |
| | Other student study effort: | | | | | | | | |
| | ▪ assignments | 40 Hrs. | | | | | | | |
| | ▪ reading | 30 Hrs. | | | | | | | |
| | Total student study effort | | 109 Hrs. | | | | | | |
| Reading List and References | <p>Main Readings:</p> <p>Fromkin, V., Rodman, R. and Hyams N. (2014). <i>An Introduction to Language</i> (10th ed.). Cengage Learning.</p> <p>叶蜚声、徐通锵。1981。《语言学纲要》。北京: 北京大学出版</p> | | | | | | | | |

社。(Chinese Reading requirement: pp. 1-197)

Selected Reference List:

Crystal, D. (2010). *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language* (3rd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Pinker, S. (1995). *The Language Instinct: How the Mind Creates Language*. New York: Harper Perennial.

Trask, R.L. (1997). *A Student's Dictionary of Language and Linguistics*. London: Arnold.

Yule, G. (2010). *The Study of Language* (4th ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

The sci.lang FAQ (<https://www.zompist.com/langfaq.html>)

纪秀生、王建设。2010。《现代语言学通论》。昆明：云南大学出版社。

李新魁。1988。《香港方言與普通話》。香港：中華書局。

胡裕樹主編。1992。《現代漢語》。香港：三聯書店。

袁家樺等譯。1980。《語言論》。北京：商務印書館。

熊学亮。2010。《语言学导论》。上海：复旦大学出版社。