The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Subject Description Form

Please read the notes at the end of the table carefully before completing the form.

Subject Code	ENGL1CN06
Subject Title	Languages in a Globalising World
Credit Value	3
Level	1
Pre-requisite / Co-requisite/ Exclusion	Exclusion: Programme code: 71418
Cluster Area	Please check the box(es) below to indicate the cluster area(s) the subject contributes in a major way: ☐ Human Nature, Relations and Development ☐ Community, Organization and Globalisation ☒ History, Cultures and World Views ☐ Science, Technology and Environment
Requirements intended to fulfil	☐ **China-Study Requirement (CSR)** - More than 60% CSR-related content ☒ **Eligible for "English Writing" (EW) designation** - include an extensive piece of writing (1,500 – 2,500 words) **AND "English Reading" (ER) designation** - include a reading of an extensive text (100,000 words or 200 pages) ☐ **Eligible for "Chinese Writing" (CW) designation** - include an extensive piece of writing (2,000 – 3,000 characters) **AND "Chinese Reading" (CR) designation** - include a reading of an extensive text (100,000 characters or 200 pages) ☐ **Others** _____
Medium of Instruction	Please check the appropriate box: ☒ English ☐ Cantonese ☐ Putonghua ☐ Others (Please specify: _____)
Objectives	This subject aims to provide students with an informed understanding of the multiplicity of historical forces – political, economic, social, cultural, demographic – that have determined the relative status and use of languages worldwide during the post-Columbian era of globalisation. The subject commences by raising students' awareness of the centrality of the faculty of language in the human condition and then proceeds to examine the causes and consequences of the rise of the world's major languages in the past five centuries, including French, Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Arabic and, most notably, English, the lingua franca of business, diplomacy and science. The subject therefore encourages students to explore the relationship between language and power across time and space, and particularly the linguistic and cultural effects of the rise and fall of the great powers since 1500.

	The most disastrous consequence has been the loss of perhaps half of the world's languages in the past five centuries and the predicted extinction of half of its remaining languages in the present century. An important objective of the subject is therefore to raise students' awareness of the links between diversity of human language and culture and diversity of the natural world: the loss of a language, which represents the death of a cultural tradition lasting thousands of years, alarms linguists in much the same way that the extinction of animal and plant species concerns environmentalists. In addition to providing temporal and spatial perspectives on the contemporary linguistic order, the subject encourages students to explore Hong Kong as a globally significant site of sociolinguistic inquiry, one in which the world's two most important languages (English and Putonghua) are competing for societal space with a currently vibrant local language (Cantonese). The unique context of the Hong Kong SAR, Asia's World City, provides students with a stimulating starting-point from which to speculate on the future of languages in the human community.
Intended Learning Outcomes *(Note 1)*	Upon completion of the subject, students will be able to: (a) demonstrate an awareness of the centrality of language in the human condition and the human community; (b) classify and evaluate the causes of the spread of the world's major languages since 1500; (c) analyse and appraise the factors that have contributed to the decline in linguistic diversity worldwide since 1500; (d) show a critical awareness of the historical forces that have contributed to the emergence of English as the global lingua franca since 1945; (e) relate issues surrounding the globalisation of English to developments in Hong Kong and China; (f) speculate on the future roles of the English and Chinese languages in their local, national and global contexts. Please explain how the stated learning outcomes relate to the following three essential features of GUR subjects: Literacy, Higher order thinking, and Skills for life-long learning. The above learning outcomes are closely related to the three essential features because they require students to: (1) read a wide range of reputable academic sources and demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the subject matter in an extended written assignment incorporating in-text and bibliographic references (i.e. literacy); (2) analyse, evaluate and apply information and ideas from multiple sources and display key judgemental skills such as critical thinking when speculating on the future (i.e. higher order thinking); and (3) develop and use strategies for learning autonomously and collaboratively (i.e. skills for life-long learning).
Subject Synopsis/ Indicative Syllabus *(Note 2)*	• Language and the human condition: language and culture; • The world's 'big' languages: the rise of French, Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Arabic since 1500; the relationship between language and power • The fate of the world's 'small' languages: the decline in linguistic diversity since 1500; language loss and revitalisation • The rise of English as an international language (c. 1600-1950) and as the global lingua franca (c. 1945- present): language and colonialism; cultural and linguistic imperialism • Language issues in post-colonial states (Singapore, India, South Africa),

	supranational bodies (European Union, ASEAN), international organisations (United Nations, World Bank) • Language in Hong Kong: the changing roles of Cantonese, Putonghua and English in key societal domains (education, government, law, business, the professions, the media) • Global trends influencing language learning and use: political, economic, social, demographic, cultural, technological
Teaching/Learning Methodology *(Note 3)*	Teaching and learning will take place in interactive lectures involving teacher input interspersed with short written tasks and video-viewing activities, and student-centred seminars focusing on text-driven discussions and research-based group presentations. Students will also be expected to work individually and collaboratively outside class in preparation for lectures, seminars and assignments. In order to deepen students' awareness of the importance of intercultural communication in a rapidly globalising world and of the crucial role that English currently plays as a lingua franca, students will be given the opportunity in specially arranged, lab-based seminars to interact online with their counterparts in other Asian contexts. In this regard, the Faculty of Humanities is currently discussing the practical details of this initiative with colleagues in other Asian contexts such as Japan and Taiwan.

Specific assessment methods/tasks	% weighting	Intended subject learning outcomes to be assessed (Please tick as appropriate)					
		a	b	c	d	e	f
1. Term paper (ER/EW)	60%	✓	✓	✓	✓		
2. Seminar presentation (ER)	30%	✓				✓	✓
3. Writing process activities (EW)	10%	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Total	100 %						

Assessment Methods in Alignment with Intended Learning Outcomes

(Note 4)

The first assignment gives students the opportunity to explore a self-chosen topic relating to one the key themes covered in the course. This involves conducting an extensive literature search, synthesising and evaluating information and ideas from a wide range of reputable academic sources, and demonstrating their knowledge and understanding of the issues in a term paper that meets the EW requirement. The paper represents the culmination of a semester-long process, which includes extensive reading (i.e. ER), the preparation of an annotated bibliography, an outline of the paper, an introduction, and a draft prior to the formal submission. The second assignment, which is done in small groups, gives students the opportunity to explore language trends in contemporary Hong Kong and to speculate on the future of language in the territory in the short and long terms. The project, whose main outcome is a seminar presentation, involves the collection and analysis of primary and secondary data. To complete the two major assignments satisfactorily students will need to fulfil the reading requirement.

Student Study Effort Expected	Class contact:	
	▪ Lectures (13 × 2hrs)	26 Hrs.

	▪ Seminars (13 × 1 hr)	13Hrs.
	Other student study effort:	
	▪ Private study ▪ Assignments	56 Hrs. 28 Hrs.
	Total student study effort	123Hrs.
Reading List and References	Students will be expected to read relevant sections of following books in the further reading section: Crystal (2003), Nettle and Romaine (2000), Ostler (2005). This reading constitutes around 200 pages. The ER activities form an integral component of the term paper. **Required reading** Crystal, D. (2000). *Language death.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Janson, T. (2002). *Speak: A short history of languages.* Oxford: Oxford University Press. **Further reading** Abernethy, D.B. (2000). *The dynamics of global dominance: European overseas expansion.* New Haven: Yale University Press. Bolton, K. (2003). *Chinese Englishes: A sociolinguistic history*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Brenzinger, M. (ed.). (2007). *Language diversity endangered.* Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter. Comrie, B., Matthews, S. and Polinsky, M. (2003). *The atlas of world languages.* New York: Facts On File. Coupland, N. (2010). *The handbook of language and globalization.* Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell. Crystal, D. (2000). *Language death.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (ER) Crystal, D. (2003). *English as a global language* (2nd edition). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (pp. 1-28) Darwin, J. (2007). *After Tamerlane: The global history of empire.* London: Allen Lane. de Swaan, A. (2001). *Words of the world.* London: Polity Press. Fairclough, N. (2006). *Language and globalization.* London & New York: Routledge. Goucher, C.L. and Walton, L. (2008). *World history: Journeys from past to present.* New York: Routledge.

| | Graddol, D. (2006). *English next.* London: British Council.

Harrison, K.D. (2007). *When languages die: The extinction of the world's languages*
    and the erosion of human knowledge. New York: Oxford University Press.

Hopkins, A.G. (ed.) (2002). *Globalization in world history.* London: Pimlico.

Joseph, B. (ed.) (2003). *When languages collide: Perspectives on language conflict,*
    language competition and language coexistence. Columbus: Ohio State University
    Press.

Kennedy, P. (1989). *The rise and fall of the great powers: Economic change*
    and military conflict from 1500 to 2000. London: Fontana Press.

Lu, D. (2008). Pre-imperial Chinese: Its hurdles towards becoming a world language.
    Journal of Asian Pacific Communication, *18*(2), 268-279.

McGroarty, M. (ed.). (2006). *Lingua franca languages.* West Nyack, N.Y.:
    Cambridge University Press.

(ER) Nettle, D. and Romaine, S. (2000). *Vanishing voices: The extinction of*
    the world's languages. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (pp. 1-49;
    150-204)

(ER) Ostler, N. (2005). *Empires of the word: A language history of the world.*
    London: HarperCollins. (pp. 456-559)

Pennington, M.C. (ed.) (1998). *Language in Hong Kong at century's end*. Hong
    Kong: Hong Kong University Press.

Tam, K.L. and Weiss, T. (eds.) (2004). *English and globalisation:*
    Perspectives from Hong Kong and Mainland China. Hong Kong: Chinese
    University Press.

Revised by Stephen Evans, March 2014

Note 1: Intended Learning Outcomes
Intended learning outcomes should state what students should be able to do or attain upon completion of the subject. Subject outcomes are expected to contribute to the attainment of the overall programme outcomes.

Note 2: Subject Synopsis/ Indicative Syllabus
The syllabus should adequately address the intended learning outcomes. At the same time over-crowding of the syllabus should be avoided.

Note 3: Teaching/Learning Methodology
This section should include a brief description of the teaching and learning methods to be employed to facilitate learning, and a justification of how the methods are aligned with the intended learning outcomes of the subject.

Note 4: Assessment Method

This section should include the assessment method(s) to be used and its relative weighting, and indicate which of the subject intended learning outcomes that each method purports to assess. It should also provide a brief explanation of the appropriateness of the assessment methods in assessing the intended learning outcomes.