City University of Hong Kong
Course Syllabus

offered by Department of English
with effect from Semester A 2024 / 2025

Part I   Course Overview

Course Title:	Language in Its Social Context
Course Code:	EN5461
Course Duration:	1 Semester
Credit Units:	3
Level:	P5
Medium of Instruction:	English
Medium of Assessment:	English
Prerequisites: *(Course Code and Title)*	Nil
Precursors: *(Course Code and Title)*	Nil
Equivalent Courses: *(Course Code and Title)*	Nil
Exclusive Courses: *(Course Code and Title)*	Nil

Part II   Course Details

1.   Abstract

This course aims to enable students to:
- Describe essential theoretical concepts in sociolinguistics;
- Apply theoretical concepts to the analysis and discussion of language and society;
- Demonstrate an understanding of the complex relationship between language and society;
- Discover patterns of language use in real-life situations;
- Research and analyze language issues in different contexts from a sociolinguistic perspective; and
- Evaluate language issues in different contexts and create solutions.

2.   Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)
(CILOs state what the student is expected to be able to do at the end of the course according to a given standard of performance.)

No.	CILOs	Weighting (if applicable)	Discovery-enriched curriculum related learning outcomes (please tick where appropriate)		
			A1	*A2*	*A3*
1.	Describe theoretical concepts in sociolinguistics such as language variation, code choice, speech community, identity, gender, code-switching, and world Englishes.		X		
2.	Discuss and apply key issues and concepts through in-class participation and online exchanges.		X	X	
3.	Research and analyze selected key issues and concepts in language and society in depth through comparing and contrasting different contexts.		X	X	
4.	Evaluate the selected concepts and key issues to local and global contexts and collaboratively create solutions and recommendations.		X	X	X
		100%			

A1:   Attitude
Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.
A2:   Ability
Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.
A3:   *Accomplishments*
Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

3. Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)
(LTAs designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs.)

LTA	Brief Description	CILO No. 1	2	3	4			Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Students will participate in interactive lectures, discussions, tasks, and activities. Students will learn to describe and evaluate sociolinguistic concepts relevant to the study of language use in different contexts (including language education contexts) through participating in interactive lectures and activities where those concepts are introduced, modelled, and illustrated.	X	X					
2	Students will engage in discussions of required readings and selected articles to develop an in-depth understanding of sociolinguistic concepts relevant to the study of language use and language education.	X	X					
3	Students will engage in group work to research and investigate a particular sociolinguistic issue of their choice. Specifically, students will work in small teams to research a key concept of their choice related to language, education and society.	X		X	X			

4. Assessment Tasks/Activities (ATs)

(ATs are designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs.)

Assessment Tasks/Activities	CILO No.						Weighting	Remarks
	1	2	3	4				
Continuous Assessment: _100_ %								
Class Participation	X	X	X	X			20%	Individual: Based on how frequently, actively, and constructively students participate. In-class activities, discussions and presentations measure students' ability to apply newly learned principles to real contexts and situations. Active participation in all classes, discussions, tasks, and activities. Students are assessed according to how actively they contribute to in-class discussions, tasks, and activities on course topics and readings, as well as how they lead in-class discussions. Active in-class participation requires verbal (and online) contributions.
Final Project			X	X			50%	Group work: Students will have the opportunity to apply their knowledge to critically analyze and evaluate authentic language data and other kinds of data. Students will apply

								analytical methods in their analysis. Students will also have the opportunity to identify and reflect on language, society, education, and identity.
In-class Test	X	X	X	X				30%	Individual: The test will be designed to test students' understanding of theoretical concepts from lectures and readings. It will also test students' application of knowledge.
Examination: __0__ % (duration: , if applicable)									
							100%	

5. Assessment Rubrics
(Grading of student achievements is based on student performance in assessment tasks/activities with the following rubrics.)

Applicable to students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
Class Participation	Active participation in and contributions to all in-class tasks, activities, discussions.	Actively and verbally participated in and contributed to all in-class tasks, activities, and discussions. An excellent record of attendance and participation. Attended all classes punctually, always participated actively and constructively in class and group activities.	Actively participated in and contributed to almost all in-class tasks, activities, and discussions. Satisfactory attendance and punctuality. Generally participated actively and constructively in class and group activities.	Adequately participated in and contributed to most in-class tasks, activities, and discussions. Satisfactory attendance and punctuality. Frequently participated actively and constructively in class and group activities.	Marginally participated in and contributed to in-class tasks, activities, and discussions. Attendance and punctuality not fully satisfactory and/or participation in class and group activities was inconsistent.	Failed to participate in and contribute to in-class tasks, activities, and discussions. Attendance and punctuality were unsatisfactory. Did not meaningfully engage with class and group activities.
Final Project	Written paper on a topic that presents data collected and analyzed using a sociolinguistic perspective.	Analyzed and presented a sociolinguistic issue very clearly	Analyzed and presented a sociolinguistic issue clearly,	There may be some inaccuracies in understanding the sociolinguistic issue	There are serious flaws and/or inaccuracies in understanding the	Unable to apply the theories in an accurate way, present a coherent

		and insightfully, applying the theoretical framework, accurately giving evidence from data collected, and synthesizing points into a coherent argument expressed in clear and accurate English and within the word limit.	applying the theoretical framework fairly accurately giving evidence from data collected, and synthesizing points into a relatively coherent argument expressed in clear and mostly accurate English and within the word limit.	under investigation. Sufficient evidence may not be provided. The paper may lack focus or be poorly argued. There may be problems with the organization or grammar of the paper. The paper may exceed the word limit.	sociolinguistic issue under investigation. Sufficient evidence is not provided. The paper lacks focus or is poorly argued. There are serious problems with the organization or grammar of the paper. The paper is incomplete or incomprehensible due to a large number of language inaccuracies.	analysis and/or communicate in written English to an acceptable standard.
In-class Test	The test will be marked according to the accuracy of the answers. Correct answers will be awarded full marks of the respective questions, half-correct answers will be awarded half of the marks	Demonstrated excellent skills in describing, explaining, analyzing, comparing and evaluating sociolinguistic	Demonstrated good skills in describing, explaining, analyzing, comparing and evaluating sociolinguistic concepts and	Demonstrated adequate skills in describing, explaining, analyzing, comparing and evaluating sociolinguistic concepts and	Demonstrated very limited skills in describing, explaining, analyzing, comparing and evaluating sociolinguistic	Unable to demonstrate skills in describing, explaining, analyzing, comparing and evaluating sociolinguistic

devoted to the respective questions, and wrong or irrelevant answers will be awarded zero.	concepts and consistently maintained a high degree of grammatical accuracy in giving descriptions, explanations, analyses, comparisons and evaluations.	showed a relatively high degree of grammatical control in giving descriptions, explanations, analyses, comparisons and evaluations.	communicated with reasonable accuracy in giving descriptions, explanations, analyses, comparisons and evaluations.	concepts and used simple structures correctly in giving descriptions, explanations, analyses, comparisons and evaluations.	concepts and showed only limited control of a few simple grammatical structures and sentence patterns in giving descriptions, explanations, analyses, comparisons and evaluations.

Applicable to students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B)	Marginal (B-, C+, C)	Failure (F)
Class Participation	Active participation in and contributions to all in-class tasks, activities, discussions.	Actively and verbally participated in and contributed to all in-class tasks, activities, and discussions. An excellent record of attendance and participation. Attended all classes punctually, always participated actively and	Actively participated in and contributed to almost all in-class tasks, activities, and discussions. Satisfactory attendance and punctuality. Generally participated actively and constructively in class and group activities.	Marginally participated in and contributed to in-class tasks, activities, and discussions. Attendance and punctuality not fully satisfactory and/or participation in class and group activities was inconsistent.	Failed to participate in and contribute to in-class tasks, activities, and discussions. Attendance and punctuality were unsatisfactory. Did not meaningfully engage with class and group activities.

		constructively in class and group activities.			
Final Project	Written paper on a topic that presents data collected and analyzed using a sociolinguistic perspective.	Analyzed and presented a sociolinguistic issue very clearly and insightfully, applying the theoretical framework, accurately giving evidence from data collected, and synthesizing points into a coherent argument expressed in clear and accurate English and within the word limit.	Analyzed and presented a sociolinguistic issue clearly, applying the theoretical framework fairly accurately giving evidence from data collected, and synthesizing points into a relatively coherent argument expressed in clear and mostly accurate English and within the word limit.	There are flaws and/or inaccuracies in understanding the sociolinguistic issue under investigation. Evidence is not sufficiently provided. The paper lacks focus. There are problems with the organization or grammar of the paper. The paper is partially incomprehensible due to a large number of language inaccuracies.	Unable to apply the theories in an accurate way, present a coherent analysis and/or communicate in written English to an acceptable standard.
In-class Test	The test will be marked according to the accuracy of the answers. Correct answers will be awarded full marks of the respective questions, half-correct answers will be awarded half of the marks devoted to the respective questions, and wrong or irrelevant answers will be awarded zero.	Demonstrated excellent skills in describing, explaining, analyzing, comparing and evaluating sociolinguistic concepts and consistently maintained a high degree of grammatical accuracy in giving descriptions, explanations, analyses, comparisons and	Demonstrated good skills in describing, explaining, analyzing, comparing and evaluating sociolinguistic concepts and showed a relatively high degree of grammatical control in giving descriptions, explanations, analyses, comparisons and evaluations.	Demonstrated very limited skills in describing, explaining, analyzing, comparing and evaluating sociolinguistic concepts and used simple structures correctly in giving descriptions, explanations, analyses, comparisons and evaluations.	Unable to demonstrate skills in describing, explaining, analyzing, comparing and evaluating sociolinguistic concepts and showed only limited control of a few simple grammatical structures and sentence patterns in giving descriptions, explanations, analyses,

		evaluations.			comparisons and evaluations.

Part III   Other Information (more details can be provided separately in the teaching plan)

1.   **Keyword Syllabus**
     (An indication of the key topics of the course.)

     sociolinguistics, language variation and change, dialect, diglossia, register, world Englishes, style, code-switching, speech community, politeness, language and ideology, language and identity, language and gender

2.   **Reading List**
2.1 **Compulsory Readings**
     (Compulsory readings can include books, book chapters, or journal/magazine articles. There are also collections of e-books, e-journals available from the CityU Library.)

1.	Mooney, A., & Evans, B. (2015). *Language, society & power: An introduction*. London and New York: Routledge.
2.	Holmes, J. (2012). *An introduction to sociolinguistics*. Harlow: Pearson Longman.

2.2 **Additional Readings**
     (Additional references for students to learn to expand their knowledge about the subject.)

1.	Mooney, A. et al. (2011). *The language, society & power reader.* London: Routledge.
2.	Li, E. S. H. (2015). *Language, society and culture in Hong Kong*. Hong Kong: The Open University Press.