City University of Hong Kong

Information on a Course
offered by Department of Linguistics and Translation
with effect from Semester A in 2014 / 2015

Part I

Course Title: Historical Linguistics

Course Code: LT5416

Course Duration: One Semester

No. of Credit Units: 3

Level: P5

Medium of Instruction: English

Prerequisites: NIL

Precursors: CTL5401 Phonetics and Phonology, LT5401 Phonetics and Phonology
CTL5402 Syntax and Morphology, LT5402 Syntax and Morphology

Equivalent Courses: CTL5416 Historical Linguistics

Exclusive Courses: NIL

Part II

1. Course Aims:

This course introduces to the study of language change, discusses the different ways in which languages can and do change, and explains why some kinds of changes are more frequent than others. Students will be able to identify areas of language change in the lexicon, in phonology, morphology and syntax. Further, students will be initialized to the comparative method on which the genealogical classification of world's languages is based.

2. Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

No.	CILOs	Weighting (if applicable)
1.	Describe the areas of language change as well as the techniques used for uncovering changes that occurred long ago by ● Investigating how sound changes occur, ● evaluating semantic changes and changes in the lexicon, ● discovering changes that occur in the morphological system of a language, ● analyzing examples of syntactic changes;	
2.	Demonstrate a good knowledge of basic concepts in the theory of grammaticalization and lexicalization by ● understanding how lexical items become part of the grammar, ● exploring how grammatical forms become entries of the lexicon;	
3.	Apply the comparative reconstruction method on which the genealogical classification of world's languages is based by ● familiarizing with the techniques of the comparative method, ● applying the comparative method to reconstruct proto-languages.	

3. Teaching and learning Activities (TLAs)

(Indicative of likely activities and tasks designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs. Final details will be provided to students in their first week of attendance in this course)

CILO No	TLAs	Hours/week (if applicable)
1, 2, 3	**Lecture:** Theoretical foundations of all learning outcomes are laid in the lecture. Basic ideas are taught during two hours per week	2 hrs/week
1, 2, 3	**Tutorial:** Exercises presented in tutorials will familiarize the students with the theoretical concepts of the lecture	1 hrs/week
1, 2, 3	**Individual Reading:** Students will read lecture and tutorial notes and additional literature proposed by the lecturer	
1, 2, 3	**Assignment:** During three assignments, students will analyze and synthesize linguistic data helping them apply the notions of the lecture	

4. Assessment Tasks/Activities
(Indicative of likely activities and tasks designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs. Final details will be provided to students in their first week of attendance in this course)

CILO No	Type of assessment tasks/activities	Weighting (if applicable)	Remarks
1	**Assignment 1** (areas of language change): students have two weeks time to write a report on a linguistic problem	33%	
2	**Assignment 2** (grammaticalization & lexicalization): guidelines as for assignment 1	33%	
3	**Assignment 3** (comparative method & genealogical classification): guidelines as for assignment 1	34%	

5. Grading of Student Achievement:
Refer to Grading of Courses in the Academic Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Degrees.

Grading pattern: Standard (A+, A, A-...F). Grading is based on student performance in assignment tasks exam (100% Coursework).

Excellent (A-, A, A+)	Good (B-, B, B+)	Adequate (C-, C, C+)	Marginal (D)
(i) excellent sensibility for the view of the modern languages as historical product; (ii) deep understanding of the aspects, procedures and results of language change; (iii) excellent use of reanalysis and analogy in the argumentation; (v) familiarity to reconstruct proto-sounds; (vi) very good writing style and format for academic paper.	(i) good sensibility for the view of the modern languages as historical product; (ii) good understanding of the aspects, procedures and results of language change; (iii) good use of reanalysis and analogy in the argumentation; (v) good ability to reconstruct proto-sounds; (vi) good writing style and format for academic paper.	(i) some sensibility for the view of the modern languages as historical product; (ii) some understanding of the aspects, procedures and results of language change; (iii) adequate use of reanalysis and analogy in the argumentation; (v) adequate ability to reconstruct proto-sounds; (vi) appropriate writing style and format for academic paper.	(i) little sensibility for the view of the modern languages as historical product; (ii) little understanding of the aspects, procedures and results of language change; (iii) poor use of reanalysis and analogy in the argumentation; (v) little ability to reconstruct proto-sounds; (vi) inappropriate writing style and format for academic paper.

Part III

Keyword Syllabus:

<u>Areas of language change</u>: sound change, chain shifts, morphologization, change of morphology type, rise of ergativity, shift of markedness, regularity hypothesis
<u>Theory of grammaticalization and lexicalization</u>: Reanalysis, analogy, institutionalization, fusional lexicalization
<u>Comparative method and genealogical classification</u>: systematic correspondences, comparative reconstruction, the Neogrammarian hypothesis, dialectology, genetic relations, the tree model, the language families of the world

Recommended Reading:

Essential Reading
Campbell, Lyle (1998). *Historical linguistics: An introduction to its principles and procedures.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
Trask R.L. (1996). *Historical linguistics*. Edward Arnolds.

Supplementary Readings
Baldi, Philip, ed. (1990). *Linguistic change and reconstruction methodology.* Berlin, NY: Mouton de Gruyter.
Brinton, Laurel and Elisabeth Closs Traugott (2005). *Lexicalization and Language Change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Bybee, Joan, Revere Perkins, and William Pagliuca (1994). *The evolution of grammar: Tense, aspect, and modality in the languages of the world.* Chicago and London: Chicago University Press.
Hopper, Paul and Closs Traugott, Elizabeth (1993). *Grammaticalization*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
Lehmann, Winfred (1992). *Historical linguistics: An introduction,* 3rd ed. London: Routledge.