

**City University of Hong Kong**  
**Course Syllabus**

**Offered by Department of Linguistics and Translation**  
**with effect from Semester A 2022 / 23**

---

---

**Part I Course Overview**

<b>Course Title:</b>	<u>Lexical Semantics</u>
<b>Course Code:</b>	<u>LT5432</u>
<b>Course Duration:</b>	<u>One Semester</u>
<b>Credit Units:</b>	<u>3</u>
<b>Level:</b>	<u>P5</u>
<b>Medium of Instruction:</b>	<u>English</u>
<b>Medium of Assessment:</b>	<u>English</u>
<b>Prerequisites:</b> <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	<u>Nil</u>
<b>Precursors:</b> <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	<u>Nil</u>
<b>Equivalent Courses:</b> <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	<u>Nil</u>
<b>Exclusive Courses:</b> <i>(Course Code and Title)</i>	<u>Nil</u>

## Part II Course Details

### 1. Abstract

This course is designed to introduce students to the fascinating field of lexical semantics, the study of the interaction of syntactic behavior and semantic properties. Lexical semantics can be approached from different perspectives with different concerns and the class is meant to introduce the major approaches that have shed important light on the study of lexical knowledge and representations. Lectures and class discussions will focus on the major theoretical frameworks and their applications. Each theoretical framework will be illustrated with representative works that show the basic constructs of the theory and how the approach can be applied to the analysis of a linguistic issue. After the theories are introduced, a case study will be provided to show it may relate to recent works on Chinese or English lexical semantic issues. The ultimate goal of this class is to provide students with a broad range of background knowledge that will enable the students to carry out meaningful research in lexical semantics.

### 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	Show enthusiastic and proactive participation in class discussion and weekly reading assignment	20%	✓	✓	
2	Demonstrate team work, critical thinking, clear organization and oral skills in group assignment and presentation	25%	✓	✓	✓
3.	Demonstrate a clear grasp of the analytical methods in participating in a lexical workshop in teasing out the semantic distinction in a near-synonym set	25%		✓	✓
4.	Demonstrate the ability of applying one of the approaches to the analysis of a set of data and writing up a preliminary proposal for a research question.	30%		✓	✓
		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 self-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. Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)

(TLAs designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs.)

TLA	Brief Description	CILO No.						Hours/week (if applicable)
		1	2	3	4			
Weekly reading and inquiry	Assigned reading materials and inquiry will be posted for discussion	✓						1-3 hours/wk
Group production	In-class oral presentation of a chosen text produced by individual groups		✓					3-5 hours/sem
Lexical workshop	Group or individual work on a near-synonym set by taking the role of a teacher to explain the differences			✓				4-6 hours/sem
Discovery project	Students will apply what is learned in class to a hands-on project for analysing a set of data and write up a research proposal				✓			10-20 hours/sem

### 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%								
Weekly reading/inquiry	✓						20%	
Group creative production and presentation		✓					25%	
Lexical workshop: tell me the difference!			✓				25%	
Final discovery project				✓			30%	
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 in Semester A 2022/23 and thereafter

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B)	Marginal (B-, C+, C)	Failure (F)
Weekly readings/inquiry (20%)	Clear and critical understanding of the reading and answering the inquiries	Excellent ability in demonstrating the said criteria	Good ability in demonstrating the said criteria	Barely adequate evidence in demonstrating the said criteria	Little or no evidence of the said ability
Group production and presentation (25%)	Clear, interesting, and well-organized oral presentation	Excellent ability in demonstrating the said criteria	Good ability in demonstrating the said criteria	Barely adequate evidence in demonstrating the said criteria	Little or no evidence in demonstrating the said criteria
Lexical workshop (25%)	Clear, interesting and well-delivered arguments for the near-synonym analysis	Excellent ability in demonstrative the said criteria	Good ability in demonstrating the said criteria	Barely adequate evidence in demonstrating the said criteria	Little or no evidence in demonstrating the said criteria
Discovery Project (30%)	Clear, interesting and well-argued proposal for a research question based on a set of data	Excellent ability in demonstrating the said criteria	Good ability in demonstrating the said criteria	Barely adequate evidence in demonstrating the said criteria	Little or no evidence in demonstrating the said criteria

Applicable to students admitted before Semester A 2022/23

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
Weekly readings/inquiry (20%)	Clear and critical understanding of the reading and answering the inquiries	Excellent ability in demonstrating the said criteria	Good ability in demonstrating the said criteria	Satisfactory ability in demonstrating the said criteria	Barely adequate evidence in demonstrating the said criteria	Little or no evidence of the said ability
Group production and presentation (25%)	Clear, interesting, and well-organized oral presentation	Excellent ability in demonstrating the said criteria	Good ability in demonstrating the said criteria	Satisfactory ability in demonstrating the said criteria	Barely adequate evidence in demonstrating the said criteria	Little or no evidence in demonstrating the said criteria
Lexical workshop (25%)	Clear, interesting and well-delivered arguments for the near-synonym analysis	Excellent ability in demonstrative the said criteria	Good ability in demonstrating the said criteria	Satisfactory ability in demonstrating the said criteria	Barely adequate evidence in demonstrating the said criteria	Little or no evidence in demonstrating the said criteria
Discovery Project (30%)	Clear, interesting and well-argued proposal for a research question based on a set of data	Excellent ability in demonstrating the said criteria	Good ability in demonstrating the said criteria	Satisfactory ability in demonstrating the said criteria	Barely adequate evidence in demonstrating the said criteria	Little or no evidence in demonstrating the said criteria

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

### 1. Keyword Syllabus

#### Topics to be covered in class discussion include:

- 1) Syntax-semantics interface: Argument structure (B. Levin)
- 2) Prototype Theory (Dowty)
- 3) Construction Grammar (A. Goldberg)
- 4) Frame Semantics (C. Fillmore)
- 5) Construction Grammar (A. Goldberg)
- 6) Cognitive grammar and configuration (Langacker)
- 7) Conceptualization and lexicalization (L. Talmy)
- 8) Cognitive Semantics and metaphorical extension (G. Lakoff)
- 9) Generative Lexicon (J. Pustejovsky)
- 10) Corpus-based approach
- 11) Grammaticalization and Semantic change (E. Traugott and J. Bybee)

### 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.)

14 core readings (A packet of required readings will be available for use):

1. Tuggy, D. 1993. Ambiguity, polysemy, and vagueness. *Cognitive Linguistics* 4(3), 273-290.
2. Levin, B. 1993. *English verb classes and alternations: a preliminary investigation*. Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press.
3. Levin, B. and M. Rappaport Hovav (2005). From lexical semantics to argument realization. in *Argument Realization*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
4. Dowty, D. 1991. Thematic proto-roles and argument selection. *Language* 547-619.
5. Goldberg, A. E., & Jackendoff, R. 2004. The English resultative as a family of constructions. *Language*, 532-568.
6. Jackendoff, R. 1997. Twistin' the Night away. *Language* 73 III:534-559.
7. Fillmore, Charles J. & Beryl T. Atkins. 1992. Toward a frame-based lexicon: the semantics of RISK and its neighbors. In Adrienne Lehrer and Eva Feder Kittay (eds.) *Frames, Fields and Contrasts*. 75-102. Hillsdale, NJ. Erlbaum.
8. Liu, Meichun. 2005. Lexical information and beyond: Meaning coercion and constructional inference of the Mandarin verb GAN. *Journal of Chinese Linguistics* 33,2: 310-332
9. Talmy, L. 1991. Path to realization: A typology of event conflation. In *Proceedings of the annual meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society, General Session and Parasession on The Grammar of Event Structure*, 480-519.
10. Liu, Meichun. 1997. Conceptual Basis and Categorical Structure: A Study of Mandarin V-R Compounds as a Radial Category. *Chinese Languages and Linguistics* 4: 462-473. Taipei: Academia Sinica.
11. Lakoff, G. 1990. Women, fire, and dangerous things: What categories reveal about the mind. Chicago: University of Chicago press.
12. Bybee, J. L., & Pagliuca, W. und Revere D. Perkins. 1991. Back to the Future. *Approaches to Grammaticalization II: Focus on Types of Grammatical Markers*, eds by E. Traugot and B. Heine. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
13. Traugott, E. C., & König, E. 1991. The semantics-pragmatics of grammaticalization revisited. *Approaches to grammaticalization*, 1, 189-218.
14. Pustejovsky, J. 1995. The nature of lexical knowledge. *The Generative Lexicon*, 5-26. London: MIT Press.

## 2.2 Additional Readings

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

1.	韓少功. 1997. 醒, 覺. <i>馬橋詞典</i> : 27-30, 58-62. 台北: 時報出版.
2	蔡美智, 黃居仁, & 陳克健. (1996). 由近義詞辨義標準看語意語法之互動. <i>Language and Linguistics (中國境內語言記語言學)</i> . Vol. 5 語言中的互動, 439-459. Taipei: Academia Sinica Press.
3	Levin, B. & M.R. Hovav 1996b. Lexical semantics and syntactic structure. <i>The Handbook of Contemporary Semantic Theory</i> , ed. by S. Lappin, 487-507.
4	15. Pustejovsky, J. 1995. <i>The Generative Lexicon</i> . Ch. 4, MIT Press.
5.	Biber, D., Conrad, S., & Reppen, R. 1998. <i>Corpus linguistics: Investigating language structure and use</i> . Cambridge University Press.
6	Talmy, L. 2003. Lexicalization pattern. In <i>Toward a Cognitive Semantics, Vol. II., chapter 1</i> . Cambridge, MA: MIT press.
7	Goldberg, A.E. 1995. <i>Constructions: A Construction Grammar Approach to Argument Structure</i> . Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press.
8	Goldberg, A. E. 1996. Jackendoff and construction-based grammar. <i>Cognitive Linguistics</i> 7(1), 3-20.
9	Nemoto, N. 1998. On the polysemy of ditransitive <i>save</i> : the role of frame semantics in construction grammar. <i>English linguistics</i> , 15, 219-242.
10	Petruck, M. R. 1996. Frame semantics. <i>Handbook of pragmatics</i> , 1-13.
11	Jackendoff, R. 2007. <i>Language, consciousness, culture: Essays on mental structure</i> . MIT Press.
12	Langacker, R. W. 1987. <i>Foundations of cognitive grammar: Theoretical prerequisites</i> (Vol. 1). Stanford university press.
13	Hongyin, T. 2003. Toward an emergent view of lexical semantics. <i>Language and Linguistics</i> 4.4: 837-856. Taipei: Academic Sinica.
14	Liu, Meichun., & Chiang, Tingyin. 2008. The construction of Mandarin VerbNet: A frame-based study of statement verbs. <i>Language and Linguistics</i> , 9.2: 239-270. Taipei: Academic Sinica.
15	Liu, Meichun. 2003. From Collocation to Event Information: The Case of Mandarin Verbs of Discussion. <i>Language and Linguistics</i> 4.3:563-585. Taipei: Academic Sinica. Liu, Meichun. 2003. From Collocation to Event Information: The Case of Mandarin Verbs of Discussion. <i>Language and Linguistics</i> 4.3:563-585. Taipei: Academic Sinica.