City University of Hong Kong
Course Syllabus

offered by Department of Linguistics and Translation
with effect from Semester A 2024 / 25

Part I   Course Overview

Course Title: Special Topics in Linguistics

Course Code: LT5430

Course Duration: One 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)   CTL5430 Special Topics in Linguistics

Exclusive Courses:
(Course Code and Title)   Nil

Part II   Course Details

1.   **Abstract**

To explore the theoretical foundations of one or more dominant schools of thought in the study of language, with reference to their methodological assumptions and achievements as manifested in investigations of the core areas of phonetic, phonology, syntax and semantics. Emphasis will be placed on modern linguistic theories, which may include major paradigms such as Saussurean theory, Prague School Linguistics, American Structuralism, Generative Grammar, and Functional Linguistics. When needed, the course may also cover the Pedagogical Grammar of English.

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.	Identify major issues in the field		√	√	
2.	Capture important literature in the field		√	√	
3.	Provide critical review of the literature		√	√	√
4.	Compare alternative hypotheses and theories, and independently formulate hypotheses/theories on a specific topic.		√	√	√
5.	Conduct independent research on a particular topic, discovering and formulating hypotheses that are descriptively, explanatorily and theoretically adequate.		√	√	√
		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. Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)
(LTAs designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs.)

LTA	Brief Description	CILO No.						Hours/week (if applicable)
		1	2	3	4	5		
1	**Lectures and seminars**: Lectures for presenting concepts. Seminars will typically consist of an introduction to and critical review of the literature, comparison and evaluation of alternative hypotheses and theories, and data analysis.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
2	**Assignments and papers:** Students are required to complete assignments based on what they have learnt in class. Students are expected to participate actively in terms of writing their individual research papers.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
3	**Independent learning:** Materials are posted onto the blackboard from time to time, and students are advised to refer to these materials for independent learning.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		

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	5			
Continuous Assessment: 100%								
1st Assignment -Analytic questions	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		25%	
2nd Assignment -Analytic questions	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		25%	
3rd Assignment -Analytic questions (25%) -One 2000-word essay (25%)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		50%	
Examination: % (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)
1. 1st Assignment	Demonstrate understanding of basic concepts in linguistic theories and how they can be used in analysing natural languages.	Demonstrate strong evidence of capacity to analyse and superior grasp of basic concepts in linguistic theories; and evidence of excellent understanding of key issues involved in analysing natural languages at lexical, phrasal, and sentence levels.	Demonstrate some evidence of capacity to analyse and synthesize; grasp of basic concepts of linguistic theories, and evidence of good understanding of key issues involved in analysing natural languages at lexical, phrasal, and sentence levels.	Demonstrate evidence of ability to develop solutions to simple problems in the study of linguistic theories; adequate understanding of key issues involved in analysing natural languages at lexical, phrasal and sentence levels.	Demonstrate little understanding of basic concepts of semantics and key issues involved in analysing natural languages at lexical, phrasal and sentence levels.	Demonstrate limited understanding or virtually no understanding of basic concepts of linguistic theories and key issues involved in analysing natural languages.
2. 2nd Assignment	Demonstrate understanding of basic concepts in conducting linguistic analysis. Show the capacity to analyse natural languages at all levels.	Demonstrate excellent understanding of basic concepts in conducting linguistic analysis, and strong evidence of capacity to analyse natural languages at all levels.	Demonstrate good understanding of basic concepts in conducting linguistic analysis, and some evidence of capacity to analyse natural languages at all levels.	Demonstrate adequate understanding of basic concepts in conducting linguistic analysis.	Demonstrate little understanding of basic concepts in conducting linguistic analysis.	Demonstrate limited understanding or virtually no understanding of basic concepts in conducting linguistic analysis.

3. 3rd Assignment	Apart from the ability of conducting linguistic analysis, demonstrate through writing the ability to critically discuss and appreciate issues in linguistics.	Apart from the ability of conducting linguistic analysis, demonstrate strong evidence of excellent ability through writing to critically discuss and appreciate issues in linguistics.	Apart from the ability of conducting linguistic analysis, demonstrate some evidence of good ability through writing to critically discuss and appreciate issues in linguistics.	Apart from the ability of conducting linguistic analysis, demonstrate adequate ability through writing to discuss fundamental issues in linguistics.	Apart from the ability of conducting linguistic analysis, demonstrate little ability through writing to discuss fundamental issues in linguistics.	Demonstrate limited understanding or virtually no understanding of basic concepts in conducting linguistic analysis or limited ability in discussing fundamental issues in linguistics.

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)
1. 1st Assignment	Demonstrate understanding of basic concepts in linguistic theories and how they can be used in analysing natural languages.	Demonstrate strong evidence of capacity to analyse and superior grasp of basic concepts in linguistic theories; and evidence of excellent understanding of key issues involved in analysing natural languages at lexical, phrasal, and sentence levels.	Demonstrate some evidence of capacity to analyse and synthesize; grasp of basic concepts of linguistic theories, and evidence of good understanding of key issues involved in analysing natural languages at lexical, phrasal, and sentence levels.	Demonstrate evidence of ability to develop solutions to simple problems in the study of linguistic theories; adequate or little understanding of key issues involved in analysing natural languages at lexical, phrasal and sentence levels.	Demonstrate limited understanding or virtually no understanding of basic concepts of linguistic theories and key issues involved in analysing natural languages.
2. 2nd Assignment	Demonstrate understanding of basic concepts in conducting linguistic analysis. Show the capacity to analyse natural languages at all levels.	Demonstrate excellent understanding of basic concepts in conducting linguistic analysis, and strong evidence of capacity to analyse natural languages at all levels.	Demonstrate good understanding of basic concepts in conducting linguistic analysis, and some evidence of capacity to analyse natural languages at all levels.	Demonstrate adequate or little understanding of basic concepts in conducting linguistic analysis.	Demonstrate limited understanding or virtually no understanding of basic concepts in conducting linguistic analysis.

3. 3rd Assignment	Apart from the ability of conducting linguistic analysis, demonstrate through writing the ability to critically discuss and appreciate issues in linguistics.	Apart from the ability of conducting linguistic analysis, demonstrate strong evidence of excellent ability through writing to critically discuss and appreciate issues in linguistics.	Apart from the ability of conducting linguistic analysis, demonstrate some evidence of good ability through writing to critically discuss and appreciate issues in linguistics.	Apart from the ability of conducting linguistic analysis, demonstrate adequate or little ability through writing to discuss fundamental issues in linguistics.	Demonstrate limited understanding or virtually no understanding of basic concepts in conducting linguistic analysis or limited ability in discussing fundamental issues in linguistics.

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.)

   The domain of study will be based on a relevant, coherent body of published literature which has played or is currently playing a role in the development of theories in the core areas of phonetics, phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics, in addition to other areas such as psycholinguistics, computational linguistics, etc., with an emphasis on acquisition of in-depth knowledge of the current issues in linguistic theory, critical review of relevant literature and independent formulation of hypotheses/theories.

   Due to its nature, the course may cover topics from one of the following areas: Pedagogic Grammar of English, Phonetics, Phonology, Morphology, Syntax, Semantics, Discourse Analysis, Computational Linguistics, Psycholinguistics, etc., depending on the need of the students and the expertise of the instructor.

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.)

   Chapters taken from the following books.

1.	Lappin, S. (1997) *The Handbook of Contemporary Semantic Theory*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
2.	Wolfram, W., M. Baltin & C. Collins. (2000) *The Handbook of Contemporary Syntactic Theory*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
3.	Spencer, A. & A. Zwicky (2001) *The Handbook of Morphology.* Blackwell Publishers.
4.	Bernhardt, B. H. & J. P. Sternberger (1997) *The Handbook of Phonological Development: from the Perspective of Constraint-Based Non-linear Phonology*. Academic Press.
5.	Hardcastle, W. J. & J. Laver (1999) *The Handbook of Phonetic Sciences.* Blackwell Publishers.
6.	Mitkov, R. (2003) *The Oxford Handbook of Computational Linguistics.* Oxford University Press.
7.	Gernsbacher, M. A. (1994) *The Handbook of Psycholinguistics*. Elsevier Academic Press.

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

1.	Haegeman, Liliane. (2006) *Thinking Syntactically: A Guide to Argumentation and Analysis.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
2.	Cook, Vivian. (1993) *Linguistics and Second Language Acquisition.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

| 3. | Haegeman, Liliane and Jacqueline Gueron. (1999) *English Grammar: A Generative Perspective.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishers. |
| 4. | Aronoff, M., Rees-Miller, J., *The handbook of linguistics*, 2001. Blackwell Publishers Ltd. |