

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

**offered by Department of Linguistics and Translation**  
**with effect from Semester A 2019/20**

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**Part I Course Overview**

**Course Title:** Amazing Things about Language

**Course Code:** LT1101

**Course Duration:** One semester

**Credit Units:** 3 credits

**Level:** B1

**Proposed Area:**  
*(for GE courses only)*

Arts and Humanities  
 Study of Societies, Social and Business Organisations  
 Science and Technology

**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)* CLA1302 The Many Faces of Language

**Exclusive Courses:**  
*(Course Code and Title)* Nil

## Part II Course Details

### 1. Abstract

(A 150-word description about the course)

The aim of this course is to introduce to the students the various ways in which language manifests itself. Some particular languages of the world are brought in to illustrate the intricacy of natural language. Also discussed is how language is related to certain aspects of human cognition and biology, culture and society, as well as communication between different cultures and societies. Students will be exposed to the various ways in which texts are generated from language and how language effects communications between interlocutors and across cultures.

### 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 <sup>#</sup>	Weighting* (if applicable)	Discovery-enriched curriculum related learning outcomes (please tick where appropriate)		
			A1	A2	A3
1.	Demonstrate knowledge of the nature and properties of natural language, as abstract concepts and in practical applications in human communication, in particular, translation.		√	√	√
2.	Discuss how language is related to culture, society, psychology, cognition, biology and human communication.		√	√	√
3.	Describe how texts are created from language.		√	√	√
4.	Reflect critically on how language enables and enhances inter-personal, cross-linguistic, and cross-cultural communication.		√	√	√
		100%			

\* If weighting is assigned to CILOs, they should add up to 100%.

# Please specify the alignment of CILOs to the Gateway Education Programme Intended Learning outcomes (PILOs) in Section A of Annex.

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			
	<b>Readings</b> Students read critically reference materials selected from books and journals.	√	√	√	√			
	<b>Lectures</b> Lecturer introduces concepts, theories, models, explanations, illustrations, synthesis of readings, exercises and feedback thereon, and discusses issues arising.	√	√	√	√			2 hours/week
	<b>Tutorials</b> The class considers more examples illustrating the concepts and issues related to the subject matters discussed in the lectures, and does exercises.	√	√	√	√			1 hour/week
	<b>Writing</b> Students critically review an article and express own opinions about the issues. Moreover, students will be asked to select their own topic to write on, and through writing a short essay, further explore issues related to language and its use.	√	√	√	√			

### 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: <u>80</u> %								
One in-class midterm test (multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, and short questions, 2 hours)	x	x	x	x			20%	
Two written assignments (1,000 words for each assignment), one on linguistics and another on translation.	x	x	x	x			60%	30% each
Examination: <u>20</u> % (multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, and short questions, 2 hours)								
							100%	

\* The weightings should add up to 100%.

## 5. Assessment Rubrics

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

Assessment Task	Criterion	Excellent (A+, A, A-)	Good (B+, B, B-)	Fair (C+, C, C-)	Marginal (D)	Failure (F)
1. Written assignments	Demonstrate the ability to critically discuss and analyse fundamental issues in language, language use, intercultural communication as well as the formal and cultural differences between languages.	Demonstrate excellent ability to critically discuss and analyse fundamental issues in language, language use, intercultural communication as well as the formal and cultural differences between languages.	Demonstrate good ability to critically discuss and analyse fundamental issues in language use, intercultural communication as well as the formal and cultural differences between languages.	Demonstrate adequate ability to discuss and analyse fundamental issues in language, language use, intercultural communication as well as the formal and cultural differences between languages.	Show little ability to discuss and analyse fundamental issues in language, language use, intercultural communication as well as the formal and cultural differences between languages.	Show virtually no ability to discuss and analyse fundamental issues in language, language use, intercultural communication as well as the formal and cultural differences between languages.
2. Midterm test	Demonstrate understanding of basic concepts in the study of language discussed in class, discussing briefly some fundamental issues in language use and its relation to some other aspects of cognition such as perception as well as to culture.	Demonstrate excellent understanding of basic concepts in the study of language discussed in class, discussing briefly some fundamental issues in language use and its relation to some other aspects of cognition such as perception as well as to culture.	Demonstrate good understanding of basic concepts in the study of language discussed in class, discussing briefly some fundamental issues in language use and its relation to some other aspects of cognition such as perception as well as to culture.	Demonstrate adequate understanding of basic concepts in the study of language discussed in class, discussing briefly some fundamental issues in language use and its relation to some other aspects of cognition such as perception as well as to culture.	Show little understanding of basic concepts in the study of language discussed in class, discussing briefly some fundamental issues in language use and its relation to some other aspects of cognition such as perception as well as to culture.	Show virtually no understanding of basic concepts in the study of language discussed in class, discussing briefly some fundamental issues in language use and its relation to some other aspects of cognition such as perception as well as to culture.

3. Final exam	Demonstrate understanding of the fundamental issues in intercultural communication, the formal and cultural differences between languages, and basic concepts involved in analysing our language.	Demonstrate excellent understanding of the fundamental issues in intercultural communication, the formal and cultural differences between languages.	Demonstrate good understanding of the fundamental issues in intercultural communication, the formal and cultural differences between languages.	Demonstrate adequate understanding of the fundamental issues in intercultural communication, the formal and cultural differences between languages.	Show little understanding of the fundamental issues in intercultural communication, the formal and cultural differences between languages.	Show virtually no understanding of the fundamental issues in intercultural communication, the formal and cultural differences between languages.
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**Part III Other Information** (more details can be provided separately in the teaching plan)

**1. Keyword Syllabus**

Language, properties of natural languages, language typology, human cognition, interpersonal communication, intercultural communication,.

**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.	Rickerson, E. M. and Barry Hilton. 2006. <i>The 5 minute linguist</i> . London: Equinox Publishing.
2.	Pinker, Steven. 1994. <i>The language instinct</i> . New York: HarperCollins.

**2.2 Additional Readings**

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

1.	Yule, George. 1996. <i>Pragmatics</i> . Oxford: Oxford UP.
2.	Bellos, David. 2012. <i>Is that a fish in your ear?: Translation and the meaning of everything</i> . New York: Faber & Faber.
3.	Deutscher, Guy. 2011. <i>Through the language glass: Why the world looks different in other languages</i> . London: Arrow.