

City University of Hong Kong

**Information on a Course
offered by Department of Linguistics and Translation
with effect from Semester A in 2015 / 2016**

Part I

Course Title: Cognition and Language Differences

Course Code: LT5461

Course Duration: One semester

Credit Units: 3

Level: P5

Medium of Instruction: English

Medium of Assessment: English

Prerequisites: Nil

Precursors: Nil

Equivalent Courses: Nil

Exclusive Courses: Nil

Part II

Course Aims

This course takes a cognitive approach to study language differences. There are many different languages in the world. Does the fact that languages differ mean that people who speak different languages would perceive, conceptualize and reason the world differently? The interrelationship among language, thought and culture has been an important topic in different fields for many years (e.g., philosophy, anthropology, psychology, cognitive neuroscience, etc.). This course examines this issue with a perspective of experimental psycholinguistics and aims to stimulate students' reflections on the cognitive and cultural bases of language, specifically the active role which language plays in cognition and culture. Students will be exposed to a variety of theoretical frameworks, with empirical findings, that are developed to explain the interrelation between language and cognition, cognition and culture, and language, cognition and culture. Examinations of these topics bear a broader goal of learning how to think through complex issues in culture and language, to appreciate research and to understand the value of theories of these issues and importantly to cultivate a more liberal humanity attitudes/spirits. At the end of the course, students are expected to gain a better appreciation for the kind of intellectual rigour essential to academic inquiry.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

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

No.	CILOs	Weighting (if applicable)
1.	Explain the cognitive and cultural underpinnings of language on the one hand and of the multifaceted linguistic representations of cognition and culture on the other.	
2.	Reflect critically on the complex relation among language, cognition and culture via discovering and identifying the interactive dynamics of language and cognition, and of cognition and culture.	
3.	Conduct and critique psycholinguistic analysis of data in relation to the complex relation among language, cognition and culture.	
4.	Recognize the importance of an interdisciplinary approach in understanding human's language behaviours.	
5.	Hypothesize and formulate generalization regarding the cognitive and cultural bases of language, and the active role language plays in cognition and culture.	

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)
CILO 1-5	Reading – academic books and articles	
CILO 1-4	Lecture – basic concepts and theories, explanation and illustration, in-class analysis of linguistic and psycholinguistic data	
CILO 1-5	Tutorial – analysis of language data by applying key concepts and theories introduced in the lecture; group discussion, further elaboration for a refined understanding of concepts and theories, problem solving activities	
CILO 1-4	Written assignment – analysis of language data and psycholinguistic phenomenon, accompanied by explanation and argumentation	

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
CILO 1-5	Mid-term assignment: One written assignment on the relation between language, cognition and culture involving different theoretical perspectives. Students are expected to write short essays and perform psycholinguistic analyses.	50%	
CILO 1-5	Final Examination (2 hours)	50%	

Grading of Student Achievement:

Refer to Grading of Courses in the Academic Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Degrees.

Letter Grade	Grading criteria in relation to CILOs
A+ A A-	<p><u>Assignments</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1). comprehensive understanding of the course contents and being able to critique the contents; 2).demonstrating accurate and <i>critique</i> analysis on linguistic instances and on the relationship between language, cognition and culture from perspectives of both cognitive linguistics and psycholinguistics; 3). writing format is appropriate in an academic style and standard. <p><u>Final Examination</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1). accurate and clear answers to question; 2). demonstrating integrative and comprehensive understanding from question answers; 3). strategic use of ideas and information from referenced articles, course handouts and other sources; 4). argumentation strategies and contents are logic, excellent and substantiated; 5). excellent command of the English language.
B+ B B-	<p><u>Assignments</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1). comprehensive understanding of the course contents; 2). demonstrating accurate analysis on linguistic instances and on the relationship between language, cognition and culture from perspectives of both cognitive linguistics and psycholinguistics; 3). writing format is appropriate in an academic style and standard. <p><u>Final Examination</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1). accurate and clear answers to question; 2). accurate and clear understanding on specific terms taught in the course; 3). good use of ideas and information from referenced articles, course handouts and other sources; 4). accurate and precise analysis on behavioral data of languages; 5). argumentation strategies and contents are logic, good and substantiated; 6). good command of the English language.
C+ C C-	<p><u>Assignments</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1). moderate or just limited understanding on topics and contents of the course; 2). demonstrating basic ability to analyze the relationship between language, cognition from actual linguistic instances and from the perspective of both cognitive linguistics and psycholinguistics; 3). appropriate format in the writing, but writing content merely shows some understanding of the differences between academic and non-academic style of writing and put that understanding to practice. <p><u>Final Examination</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1). accurate and yet insufficient answers to questions; 2). appropriate and yet limited understanding on specific terms taught in the course; 3). good summary of ideas and information from referenced articles, course handouts and other sources; 4). accurate and yet unspecified analysis on the behavioral data of language; 5). argumentation strategies and contents are logic but merely appropriate; 6). adequate command of the English language.

D	<p><u>Assignments</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1). little or no understanding on topics and contents of the course; 2). incorrect or insufficient knowledge on course contents; 3). inappropriate writing style and format for academic paper. <p><u>Final Examination</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1). very limited and/or inappropriate critical answers to questions; 2). little understanding on specific terms taught in the course; 3). unclear answers due to mere collection of ideas and information from referenced articles, course handouts and other sources; 4). lack of abilities to analyze behavioral data of language; 5). argumentations are poorly organization and/or inappropriate; 6). poor and/or little command of the English language.
F	<p><u>Assignments</u></p> <p>Little evidence of familiarity with the subject matter; weakness in critical and analytic skills; limited, or irrelevant use of literature</p> <p><u>Final Examination</u></p> <p>Little evidence of familiarity with the subject matter; weakness in critical and analytic skills; limited, or irrelevant use of literature</p>

Part III

Keyword Syllabus

Language and communication; the concept of meaning; language and cognition; language and conceptualization; language and perception; language and culture; linguistic relativity and cultural relativity

Recommended Reading

Text(s)

- Burke, L., Crowley, T., & Girvin, A. (eds.) (2000). *The Language and Cultural Theory Reader*. London: Routledge.
- Byrd, D. & Mintz, T. H. (2010) *Discovering Speech, Words, and Mind*. Willey-Blackwell.
- Carroll, D. W. (2007) *Psychology of Language*. 5th edition. Belmont, California: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.
- Dedre, G. & Goldin-Meadow, S. (eds.) (2003). *Language in Mind: Advances in the Study of Language and Thought*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Field, J. (2005). *Language and the Mind*. London: Routledge.
- Halliday, M.A.K. & Matthiessen, M.I.M. (1999) *Construing Experience Through Meaning: A Language-based Approach to Cognition*. New York: Cassell.
- Kovecses, Z. (2006). *Language, Mind, and Culture: A Practical Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ross, N. (2004). *Culture and Cognition: Implications for Theory and Method*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Stroinska, M. (ed.). (2001). *Relative Points of View: Linguistic Representations of Culture*. New York: Berghahn Books.

Online Resources