

Fall 2026

HUMA5270 Cantonese Linguistics

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Course description

Since the 1990s, much attention has been drawn to the study of Cantonese materials compiled in the 19th and the early 20th centuries. These materials include pedagogical materials, Bible translations, Chinese classics, literary work and local newspapers. The studies of these historical materials cover various aspects, including sounds, vocabulary and grammar. Noticeable differences have been observed by these studies between the Cantonese language spoken two centuries ago and that in the present day. This course aims to explore the unknown facts of Cantonese spoken two centuries ago and examine the development of a number of distinct linguistic characteristics of Cantonese by scrutinizing the historical materials published since the 19th century. Each one/group is responsible for studying the linguistic characteristics in a historical text and for presenting the findings in class. [Depending on the students' linguistic background, historical materials in other dialects may also be studied.]

Intended learning outcomes (ILOs)

- Acquire the basic concepts and skills in conducting linguistic research
- Analyze the structure of the Cantonese language, and by extension other languages and Chinese dialects, with the learnt skills and analytic tools
- Articulate the major linguistic changes undergone by Cantonese since the 19th century

Mapping of course ILOs to assessment tasks

Assessed task	Mapped ILOs	Explanation
Presentations and participation	ILO.1, 2 and 3	Students are required to examine the designated linguistic topics in their assigned historical texts and report the findings in class. The in-class reports evaluate students' understanding of the

		lecture content.
Term paper	ILO 1, 2 and 3	The term paper evaluates students' understanding of the lecture content and provides them an opportunity to conduct independent research.

Assessment and grading

Students will be assessed using criterion-referencing and grades will not be assigned using a curve.

Planned assessment tasks

1. Presentations and participation: 50%
2. Term paper: 50%

Final grade descriptors

Grades	Short description	Elaboration on subject grading description
A	Excellent performance	Demonstrates a comprehensive and precise understanding of the subject matter. Shows the ability to describe and analyze data with the basic concepts discussed and beyond, without fault
B	Good performance	Displays a solid and accurate understanding of the subject matter. Shows the ability to describe and analyze data with the basic concepts discussed with a high degree of accuracy.
C	Satisfactory performance	Has a good grasp of the subject matter. Exhibits the ability to describe and analyze data with the basic concepts satisfactorily.
D	Marginal pass	Shows a basic understanding of the subject matter and the ability to describe and analyze data with the basic concepts albeit with occasional mistakes.
F	Fail	Demonstrates insufficient understanding

		of the subject matter and the lack of ability to describe and analyze data with the basic concepts.
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Course AI policy

Generative AI is not to be used to draft, write or generate any portion of your in-class presentations and term paper. Any violation will result in a zero mark for the related assignment.

Communication and feedback

Marks and feedback will be made available within two weeks of submission.

Academic integrity

Students are expected to adhere to the university's academic integrity policy. Students are expected to uphold HKUST's Academic Honor Code and to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. The University has zero tolerance of academic misconduct. Please refer to [Academic Integrity | HKUST – Academic Registry](#) for the University's definition of plagiarism and ways to avoid cheating and plagiarism.

Major topics to be covered and relevant readings (tentative)

Introduction

Bauer Robert S. (2005) Two 19th century missionaries' contributions to historical Cantonese phonology. *Hong Kong Journal of Applied Linguistics*. 10.1: 21-46.

張洪年 (2017) 〈語法講話：傳教士筆下的舊日粵語風貌〉，《一切從語言開始》。香港：中文大學出版社。1-48 頁。

張洪年 (2021) 《香港粵語：二百年滄桑探索》 [Cantonese in Hong Kong: An exploration of the past 200 years]. 香港：中文大學出版社。[PL1740.H72 C455 2021], online access

Peyraube Alain (2000) Westernization of Chinese grammar in the 20th century: Myth or reality? *Journal of Chinese Linguistics* 28.1: 1-25.

Takekoshi Minako (2009) Cantonese teaching materials in the early 20th century in Japan. In Chin Andy C. et al. (eds.) *Multi-disciplinary approaches to Cantonese Studies: Papers from the 13th International Conference on Cantonese and Yue Dialects*. Hong Kong: Language information sciences Research Centre, City University of Hong Kong, pp. 261-270.

Tang Sze-Wing and Siu-Pong Cheng. (2014) Aspects of Cantonese grammar. In Huang C.-T. James et al. (eds.) *The Handbook of Chinese Linguistics*, pp.

601-628. Hoboken: John Wiley & sons, Inc.

Yue Anne O. (2004) Materials for the diachronic study of the Yue dialects. Shi Feng and Zhongwei Shen (eds.) *The Joy of Research: A Festschrift in Honor of Professor William S-Y. Wang on his Seventieth Birthday*. Tianjin: Nankai University Press, pp. 246-271.

(2003) Chinese dialects: Grammar. In Graham Thurgood and Randy J. LaPolla (eds.) *The Sino-Tibetan Languages*. London: Routledge, pp. 84-125.

余藹芹 (2000) 〈粵語方言的歷史研究--讀麥仕治廣州俗話書經解義〉。《中國語文》第6期，497-507頁。

張振江 (2009) 《早期香港的社會和語言》。廣州：中山大學出版社。

Double object construction

Chin Andy C. (2010) Two types of indirect object markers in Chinese: Their typological significance and development. *Journal of Chinese Linguistics* 38.1: 1-25.

李煒、石佩璇 (2017) 〈從給予句 S2、S3 的選擇看漢語語法地域類型差異〉。《中國語文》6: 662-669。

潘秋平 (2007) 〈粵方言給予義雙賓語結構的來源〉。載於張洪年、張雙慶、陳雄根 (主編)《第十屆國際粵方言研討會論文集》。北京：中國社會科學出版社。214-229 頁。

Takashima Ken-ichi & Anne O. Yue. 2000 Evidence of possible dialect mixture in Oracle-Bone Inscriptions. In Ting Pang Hsin & Anne O. Yue (eds.) *In Memory of Professor Li Fang-Kuei: Essays of Linguistic Change and the Chinese Dialects*, pp.1-52. Taipei: Language and Linguistics Monograph Series. Taipei: Academia Sinica.

Tang Sze-Wing (1998) On the 'inverted' double object construction. In *Studies in Cantonese Linguistics*, pp.35-52. Hong Kong: Linguistic Society of Hong Kong.

Xu Liejiong and Alain Peyraube (1997) On the double object construction and the oblique construction in Cantonese. In *Studies in Language* 21.1: 105-127. [PDF]

翟贊 (2018) 〈雙及物結構在南北官話中的差異〉。《晚清民國時期南北官話語法差異研究》。北京：北京大學出版社。132-145 頁。

Gei-sentences

Chin Andy C. (2011) Grammaticalization of the Cantonese double object verb *pei35* 畀 in typological and areal perspectives. *Language and Linguistics* 12.3:529-563.

Wong May L-Y (2009) *Gei* constructions in Mandarin Chinese and *bei* constructions in Cantonese. *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics* 14:1, pp.60-80.

姚玉敏 (2010) 〈早期粵語中的「畀」字句〉。張洪年、張雙慶主編《中國語言學報專刊：歷時演變與語言接觸－中國東南方言》162-185 頁。[PDF]

李煒、瀨戶口律子 (2007)〈琉球官話課本中表使役、被動義的“給”〉。《中國語文》2: 144-148。

劉雲 (2018)〈處置標記“給”的來源及發展〉。《早期北京話語法演變專題研究》。北京：北京大學出版社。180-219 頁。

(2018)〈北京話被動標記“給”的來源及歷時演變〉。《中國語文》。4: 395-407。

王琳、李煒 (2013)〈琉球官話課本的使役標記“叫”、“給”及其相關問題〉。《中國語文》2: 155-162。

翟贊 (2018)〈被動句在南北官話中的差異〉。《晚清民國時期南北官話語法差異研究》。北京：北京大學出版社。79-132 頁。

Verb-complement construction

丘寶怡 (2008) 早期粵語能性述補結構研究。香港中文大學，博士論文。

劉子瑜 (2006)〈試論粵方言“V 到 C”述補結構的語法化及其與“V 得 C”述補結構的互補分佈〉。《語言研究》第 3 期，50-56 頁。

楊敬宇 (2005)〈三部粵謳作品中的可能式否定形式〉。《方言》第 4 期，319-322 頁。

Yue Anne (2001) The verb complement construction in historical perspective with special reference to Cantonese. In Chappell Hilary (ed.) *Sinitic Grammar: Synchronic and Diachronic Perspectives*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 232-265.

吳福祥 (2005)〈粵語能性述補結構 Neg-V 得 OC-CO 的來源〉。《方言》第 4 期，306-318 頁。

翟贊 (2018)〈述補結構“VOC”和“VCO”在南北官話中的差異〉。《晚清民國時期南北官話語法差異研究》。北京：北京大學出版社。146-166 頁。

Comparative construction

Yue Anne O. (1997) Syntactic change in progress: Part I: The comparative construction in Hong Kong Cantonese. Yue Ann O. and Mitsuaki Endo (eds.) *In Memory of J. Hashimoto*. Tokyo: Uchiyama Books Co., Ltd, pp.329-375.

姚玉敏 (2020)〈粵方言和潮汕閩南方言的“X + A + 過 + Y”差比句〉。《中國語文》2: 158-174.

Interrogatives

Cheung H-N Samuel (2001) The interrogative construction-(Re)constructing early Cantonese grammar. In Chappell Hilary (ed.) *Sinitic Grammar: Synchronic and Diachronic Perspectives*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 191-231.

黃海維 (2005) 早期粵語疑問句研句。碩士研究生學位論文，北京大學。

劉亞男、李煒 (2020)〈《漢語入門》的正反問句〉。《方言》3: 296-302。

- 金桂桃、劉暢 (2017) 〈19 世紀以來廣州方言選擇疑問句的發展〉。《中國語文》5: 582-588。
- 丘寶怡 (2007) 〈談早期粵語選擇問句析取連詞“嘅”、“嘅係”〉。載於張洪年、張雙慶、陳雄根 (主編)《第十屆國際粵方言研討會論文集》，173-190 頁。
- 伍巍、陳衛強 (2008) 〈一百年來廣州話反復問句演變過程初探〉。《語言研究》第 3 期，13-18 頁。
- Yue-Hashimoto Anne (1993) The lexicon in syntactic change-Lexical diffusion in Chinese syntax. *Journal of Chinese Linguistics* 21.2: 213-253.
- 翟贊 (2018) 〈反復問句在南北官話中的差異〉。《晚清民國時期南北官話語法差異研究》。北京：北京大學出版社。51-78 頁。

Sentence-final particles

- Leung Wai mun (2006) On the synchrony and diachrony of sentence-final particles: The case of *wo* in Cantonese. PhD dissertation, The University of Hong Kong.
- 張洪年 (2009) 〈早期粵語中的語氣助詞〉。《中國語言學集刊》第 3 卷，第 2 期，131-167 頁。
- Yiu Yuk-man Carine (2021) “The origin and development of the question particle *mei* in Cantonese. *Lingua* 254: 103049. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lingua.2021.103049>

Topic markers

- 方梅 (1994) 〈北京話句中語氣詞的功能研究〉。《中國語文》2.129-138。
- 董秀芳 (2012) 〈話題標記來源補議〉。《古漢語研究》3.28-36。
- 劉丹青 (2004) 〈話題標記從何而來？—語法化中的共性與個性〉，石鋒、沈鍾偉編《樂在其中—王士元教授 70 華誕慶祝文集》，6-15 頁。天津：南開大學出版社。
- 劉丹青 (2007) 〈話題標記走向何處？—兼談廣義歷時語法化的三個領域〉，沈家煊、吳福祥、李宗江主編《語法化與語化研究》(三)，106-125 頁。北京：商務出版社。
- 萬曉麗、宋增文 (2021) 〈19 世紀域外官話教材中咯的用法及來源〉。《語言研究》3.119-127。
- 張美蘭、陳思羽 (2006) 〈清末民初北京口語中的話題標記—以 100 多年前幾部域外漢語教材為例〉。《世界漢語教學》2: 63-73。

General references

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- Cheung Hung-nin Samuel 張洪年 (2007) *Cantonese as Spoken in Hong Kong* (Revised edition) 香港粵語語法的研究(增訂版). Hong Kong: Chinese

- University Press. [PL1740.H72 C46 2007/Online access]
- Cheung Yat-shing, Zhan Bohui (eds.) 張日昇、詹伯慧主編 (1987) *Zhujiang sanjiaozhou fangyan diaocha baogao* 珠江三角洲方言調查報告. Hong Kong: Xinshiji chubanshe.
- Cheung Yat-shing, Zhan Bohui (eds.) 張日昇、詹伯慧主編 (1994) *Yuebei shi xian shi Yue fangyan diaocha baogao* 粵北十縣市粵方言調查報告. Guangzhou: Jinan daxue chubanshe.
- Huang Borong and Li Wei 黃伯榮、李煒主編. 2016. *Xiandai Hanyu* 現代漢語. Beijing: Peking University Press. [Online access]
- Li Xinkui 李新魁 (1994) *Guangdong de fangyan* 廣東的方言. Guangzhou: Guangdong renmin chubanshe. [PL1731.L54 1994]
- Li Xinkui et al. 李新魁等 (1995) *Guangzhou fangyan yanjiu* 廣州方言研究. Guangzhou: Guangdong renmin chubanshe. [PL1731.K825 1995]
- Matthews Stephen and Virginia Yip (1994/2011) *Cantonese: A Comprehensive Grammar*. London: Routledge. [PL1733.M38 1994/PL1733.M38 2011/online access]
- Norman Jerry (1988) *Chinese*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [PL1075.N67 1988/online access]
- Tang Sze-Wing 鄧思穎 (2015) *Yueyu yufa jiangyi* 粵語語法講義. Hong Kong: The Commercial Press. [PL1734.T36 2015/online access]