Aug. 20, 2025

HUMA2033 Fall 2025 Tentative Couse Outline
Language and Intercultural Communication

Instructor: Dr. Cathy Ping PAN (hmpanping@ust.hk)
Time: Tuesday & Thursday 15:00-16:20
Venue: LTK
Office hours: Monday & Friday: 12-13.30; Or by appointment
Course TA: Winnie PUN (winniepun@ust.hk)

Course Description

This course introduces the fundamental themes of intercultural communication, with the aim to better understand communication between culturally diverse individuals. Through experiential projects and personal reflections, we will explore what it means to be an interculturally competent communicator or mediator and the competencies necessary for interacting more appropriately and effectively in intercultural encounters. Through exposure to current theory, research, and practice in language and intercultural communication, students are encouraged to be more actively engaged with intercultural interactions and to foster an ethno-relative perspective with greater curiosity and open-mindedness. Topics covered include conceptions of culture and multiculturalism, the relationship between language, communication, power and context, language and cultural socialization, identity and belonging, 'othering', prejudice and stereotypes, facework and conflict management, intercultural transition, intercultural relationship-building, social justice and global citizenship.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs):

1. Articulate the key elements and notions in language and intercultural communication.
2. Recognize diverse ways of communicating in different cultural situations and how communication is shaped by cultural values, norms, and beliefs.
3. Identify productive and mindful ways to meet the challenges of intercultural communication.
4. Assess one's cultural self-awareness and communication style and explain why intercultural competence development is best viewed as a lifelong process.
5. Analyse challenges and possibilities for social justice and global citizenship.

Assessments:
- **Class participation**: 15%
- **In-class Quizzes**: 30%
- **Group Project documented in project portfolio**: 55%
    a. Project proposal & consultation (5%)
    b. Project presentation (15%)
    c. Project documentations & reflections (35%)

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Mapping of Course ILOs to Assessment Tasks

Assessed Task	Mapped ILOs	Explanation
Class participation	ILO-1, 2, 3, 4	Students will participate in class activities and discussions. They will respond to the cases and scenarios brought up in class and share their views out of their diverse backgrounds. This aims to facilitate students' critical thinking, collaboration, and appreciation of diverse ways of understanding.
Quizzes	ILO-1, 2, 3, 5	There will be 2 in-class quizzes to test and consolidate students' understanding of the key concepts, theories and issues delivered in the readings and lectures.
Group Project	ILO-1, 2, 3, 4, 5	Students will carry out an intercultural project by getting in touch with individuals, groups, settings, or a culture-specific phenomenon that was previously unfamiliar to them (e.g., ethnic, religious, social, cultural group in the community, cultural or linguistic landscape, or others.). They will create an online space/portfolio (e.g., via Lucid on Canvas) to document and report their project and reflections, both online and through in-class presentations.

Course Schedule (*Subject to changes*):

Week	Lecture Topic
1	**Opening the conversation:** Why study intercultural communication, what is the role of language in studying intercultural communication, and what characterizes an ethical intercultural communicator?
2	**Building blocks of intercultural communication:** Language, culture, power and context
3	**Culture, language and primary socialization:** What is the relationship between language and cultural socialization, and what is the cultural dimension of language?
4	**Identity and belonging:** The bright and dark side
5	**Intercultural communication in a multilingual world:** How do we understand multilingualism, language learning and learning choice in the context of intercultural communication? Why is it that misunderstandings could arise from linguistic rather than cultural aspects?
6	**Nonverbal codes in intercultural communication:** What can be the characteristics and functions of nonverbal communication? How do nonverbal codes interact with verbal code(s) in the process of communication, and what impact does culture have in it?

7	**Intercultural transition and adaptation:** How do we understand acculturation and second language socialization in the process of mobility and migration? What could be the potential causes, symptoms and benefits of transition shock and confusion? **In-class Quiz 1**
8	**Intercultural relationships:** What could be the benefits and challenges to build up intercultural relationships? What factors (internal and external) can facilitate, nurture, or hinder intercultural relationships?
9	**Facework and conflict management in workplace:** What can be the nature and characteristics of conflict? What insights can we draw from studies of face and intercultural politeness to manage intercultural conflicts, and build rapport in the workplace situations?
10	**Towards intercultural communicative competence (ICC):** What can be the components of ICC and why is the development of ICC considered a life-long developmental process? What does it mean to become an intercultural mediator or intercultural speaker?
11	**Globalization, social inclusion, and global citizenship:** What constitutes an intercultural-global citizen? What attitudes, capacities, and values are needed to achieve global citizenship and become 'global-ready' graduates? **In- class Quiz 2**
12	Student presentations
13	Student presentations

Recommended Books and Resources (*selected*):

(*Note:* Weekly readings and supplementary materials will be made available on Canvas.)

1. Dai, X., & Chen, G.-M. (Eds.). (2022). *Conflict management and intercultural communication: The art of intercultural harmony (2nd ed.).* Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003252955
2. Gallois, C., Liu, S., & Volčič, Z. (2023). *Introducing intercultural communication: Global cultures and contexts*. SAGE Publications.
3. Jackson, J. (2024). *Introducing language and intercultural communication (3rd ed.)*. New York, NY: Routledge.
4. Klyukanov, I. E. (2024). *Principles of intercultural communication* (3rd ed.). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003463054
5. Piller, I. (2025). *Intercultural communication: A critical introduction (3rd ed.).* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
6. Sorrells, K. (2022). *Intercultural Communication: Globalization and Social Justice (3rd ed.)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
7. Spencer-Oatey, H., & Kádár, D. Z. (2021*). Intercultural politeness: Managing relations across cultures*. Cambridge University Press.

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.

Marking Rubric for the Intercultural Project

Assessment Category	Excellent (A)	Good (B)	Fair (C)	Pass (D)	Fail (F)
Intercultural Awareness	Demonstrates profound curiosity and genuine openness; insightfully articulates cultural values, norms, and beliefs where appropriate; displays deep understanding of their influence on communication; exhibits strong sensitivity in using interculturally appropriate language to communicate.	Displays good curiosity and openness; clearly identifies cultural values and norms where appropriate; demonstrates a solid understanding of their influence on communication; exhibits sensitivity in using interculturally appropriate language to communicate.	Exhibits some level of curiosity and openness; identifies cultural values and perspectives but lacks depth; displays limited understanding of their influence; shows sensitivity in using interculturally appropriate language to communicate, but only occasionally.	Minimal curiosity or openness; superficial identification of cultural values and perspectives; intercultural understanding is either ambiguous or inappropriate. Minimal presence of sensitivity in using interculturally appropriate language to communicate.	Lacks curiosity and openness; fails to identify cultural values and perspectives or to understand their influence on communication in any appropriate manner. Ethnocentrism in evidence.
Reflective Thinking	Provides deep, critical reflections on possible personal biases, assumptions, and ways to approach and communicate with the target group or individuals; effectively associates observations, perceptions and feelings with intercultural concepts and theories.	Offers sensible reflections on potential biases and assumptions, and ways to approach and communicate with the target group or individuals; associates observations, perceptions and feelings to course concepts with some depth.	Basic reflections are present but lack clarity; demonstrates some initiative in relating to, and communicating with the target group or individuals, though it is inconsistent; minimal connection to course concepts; observations may be superficial.	Limited reflections; unclear connections to course concepts; lacks depth in observations or ways to communicate with the target group or individuals.	No evidence of reflective thinking; fails to associate observations with course concepts. Ethnocentrism in evidence.

Critical Thinking	Strong initiative to challenge one's own mindset; analyses incidents/challenges with exceptional insight; proposes innovative solutions and interpretations; draws meaningful conclusions with close reference to literature and course discussions.	Demonstrates initiative to challenge one's own mindset; analyses incidents/challenges effectively; proposes practical solutions; interprets findings with some reference to literature and course discussions.	Initiative to challenge one's own mindset appears only occasionally; basic analysis of challenges/incidents; solutions are simplistic; interpretation of findings lacks depth or reference to literature.	Minimal intention to challenge one's own mindset and minimal analysis of incidents/challenges; unclear solutions; little interpretation of findings.	No analysis of challenges or proposed solutions; fails to interpret findings in any constructive way. Ethnocentrism in evidence.
Documentation & Presentation	Logically and informatively documents the project, introducing key components (purpose, target culture, guiding questions, visits, findings) with exceptional clarity; presents a compelling multimodal narrative of their intercultural journey, including observations, feelings, and reflective thoughts.	Documents the project clearly and coherently, introducing key components effectively; presents a good multimodal narrative of their intercultural journey.	Documentation is somewhat clear but lacks organization; key components are mentioned but not well integrated; narrative lacks depth.	Minimal documentation; key components are present, but either poorly presented or ineffective; narrative is weak.	Fails to document the project in any meaningful way; key components either missing or incomprehensible; fails to present a coherent narrative.
Collaboration	Works exceptionally well as a group; actively fosters a collaborative environment; contributes significantly to group dynamics and project outcome.	Collaborates well as a group; members contribute positively to the group dynamics and project outcome.	Some collaboration; contributions are inconsistent or minimal; group dynamics are somewhat affected.	Limited collaboration; minimal contribution to group dynamics or project outcome.	Does not collaborate effectively; no meaningful contribution made to the group by some or even most of the members.