

HUMA3030 Course Outline

Language, Communication and Culture

Instructor: Dr. Cathy Ping PAN (hmpanping@ust.hk)

Time: Tuesday & Thursday 10.30pm-11.50am

Venue: Rm 2407, Lift 17-18

Office hours: Monday 1-3pm; Thursday 12.30-2.30pm; Or by appointment

Course TA: Christie LAM (hmchristie@ust.hk)

Course description

This course explores human language in relation to the communicative functions which it serves and the cultural context in which it is used. Issues such as how human language is distinct from other communication systems, how language is used to convey different meanings and how culture affects the use of language will be examined in order to highlight the uniqueness of human language.

This course is designed as a required course in the interdisciplinary area of "Literature, Communication and Media" for SHSS's major program. Students majoring in Global China Studies can take it in their first or second year of study. This course is also open to non-major students who can take it to fulfill their elective requirement.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs):

- Identify the differences between language and other forms of communication systems.
- Analyze the correspondence between form and meaning/function.
- Be aware of the social factors that play a role in shaping the way we use language. Improve the competence in interpersonal and group communication.

Assessment

1. Class participation: 20%

Attendance is essential for the course. Students should attend the lectures on time, and regularly, including sessions dedicated to student presentations and evaluation activities for them. There will be graded in-class tasks, exercises, or assignments *during* the lectures. In total they constitute 20% of the final grade. Students are advised to bring their laptop or tablets for these activities.

2. Quizzes: 35%

There will be 2 in-class quizzes to consolidate and test understanding of the key notions and discussions of the lectures and readings. Students are expected to follow

the lectures carefully, support their learning by reading the materials provided, and participate actively in class discussions and student presentations.

3. Research proposal (collaboration in pairs): 45%

Students will work in pairs to develop a research proposal that aims to investigate 'language in use' in a small-scale study. Additionally, they will share their proposed research through a five-minute in-class presentation. This assignment thus consists of two components:

- Oral presentation: 10%
- Research proposal (max. 2000 words): 35%

Guidelines are available on Canvas regarding the topics, components and format of the proposal.

Policy on use of GenAI:

Generative AI may be used to find and evaluate sources of information, but must **not** be used to compose the proposal or cited in the text or as an author of the text.

Course Schedule (*subject to changes*):

Week 1 - February 1, 2024

Course Introduction: Overview of the course and topics to be covered, the approaches, and expectations.

Week 2 - February 6, 2024

Course Introduction: Preliminary introduction to key notions of meaning, politeness and pragmatics

Week 2 & 3 - February 8 & 15, 2024

Language as a complex system of communication: Sound grammar, lexicon, and meaning

Readings:

Akmajian, A., Farmer, A. K., Bickmore, L., DeMers, R. A., & Harnish, R. M. (2017). What is linguistics? In *Linguistics: An introduction to language and communication (7th ed.)*. Chapter 1.

(Optional) Fromkin V., Rodman, R. & Hyams, N., Amberber, M., Cox, F., & Thornton, R. (2022). *An introduction to language* (10th Australian and New Zealand edition). Cengage Learning Australia Pty Limited. Chapter 1.

Week 4 – February 20 & 22, 2024

The meaning of ‘meaning’: Utterances, sentences and propositions

Readings:

Birner, J. B. (2013). *Introduction to pragmatics*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell. Chapter 1.

Thomas, J. (1996). What is pragmatics? In *Meaning in interaction: An introduction to pragmatics*. Harlow, Essex: Longman. Chapter 1.

Week 5 – February 27 & 29, 2024

Entailment, presupposition, and implicature

Readings:

Birner, J. B. (2021). *Pragmatics: A slim guide*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Chapter 7.

Grice, H. P. (1975). Logic and conversation. In Cole, P. & Morgan, J. L., *Speech acts. Vol. 3 of Syntax and semantics (pp. 41–58)*. New York: Academic Press.

Week 6 – March 5 & 7, 2024

Cooperative Principle and conversational implicature

Readings:

Huang, Y. (2017). Implicature. In Huang, Y. (ed.) *The Oxford handbook of pragmatics* (pp. 155-179). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Week 7 – March 12, 2024

In-class Quiz 1

Week 7 & 8 – March 14 & 19, 2024

Speech acts: Doing things with words

Readings:

Levinson, S. C. (2017). Speech acts. In Huang, Y. (ed.) *The Oxford handbook of pragmatics* (pp. 199-216). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Thomas, J. (1996). Speech acts. In *Meaning in interaction: An introduction to pragmatics* (pp. 28-54). Harlow, Essex: Longman.

Week 8 & 9 – March 21 & 26, 2024

Politeness principles, facework and (im)politeness

Readings:

Brown, P. (2017). Politeness and impoliteness. In Huang, Y. (ed.) *The Oxford handbook of pragmatics* (pp. 383-399). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

31 January 2024

Sifianou & Tzanne (2021). Face, facework and Face-Threatening Acts. In Haugh, M., Kádár, D., & Terkouraf, M. (eds.). *The Cambridge handbook of sociopragmatics* (pp. 249-271). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan Ltd.

(Optional) Watts, R. J. (2005). Linguistic politeness and politic verbal behaviour: Reconsidering claims for universality. In Watts, R. J., Ide, S., & Ehlich, K. *Politeness in language: Studies in its history, theory, and practice* (pp. 43-70). Mouton de Gruyter.

Week 10 – April 9 & 11, 2024

Cross-cultural and intercultural pragmatics

Readings:

Chen, R. (2010). Pragmatics East and West: Similar or different? In Trosborg, A (ed.). *Pragmatics across languages and cultures* (pp.79-102). Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton.

Kecskes, I. (2012). Sociopragmatics and cross-cultural and intercultural studies. In Allan, K. & Jaszczolt, K. M., *The Cambridge Handbook of Pragmatics* (pp. 599-616). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

(Optional) Wierzbicka, A. (2010). Cultural scripts and intercultural communication. In Trosborg, A (ed.). *Pragmatics across languages and cultures* (pp. 43-78). Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton.

Week 11 – April 16, 2024

Language variation (I): On uses and users

Readings:

Meyerhoff, M. (2018). Gender. In *Introducing sociolinguistics* (3rd ed.). New York: Routledge. Chapter 10.

Wardhaugh, R. & Fuller, J. M. (2015). Language variation. *An introduction to sociolinguistics* (7th ed.). Wiley Blackwell. Chapter 6.

Week 11 – April 18, 2024

Proposal presentations (12 pairs x 5mins)

Week 12 – April 23, 2024

Language variation (II): On uses and users

Readings:

Holmes, J. & Wilson, N. (2022). Style, context and register. In *An introduction to sociolinguistics* (6th ed.). Harlow: Longman. Chapter 10.

Wardhaugh, R. & Fuller, J. M. (2015). Ethnographic approach to sociolinguistics. *An introduction to sociolinguistics* (7th ed.). Wiley Blackwell. Chapter 9.

Week 12 – April 25, 2024

Proposal presentations (12 pairs x 5mins)

Week 13 – April 30, 2024

Language contact: Multilingual societies and multilingual discourse

Readings:

Holmes, J. & Wilson, N. (2022). *An introduction to sociolinguistics (6th ed.)*. Harlow: Longman. Chapter 2 & 4.

Deumert, A. (2011). Multilingualism. In Mesthrie, R. (2011). (ed.) *The Cambridge handbook of sociolinguistics*. Chapter 15.

Week 13 – May 2, 2024

Proposal presentations (13 pairs x 5mins)

Week 14 – May 7, 2024

Proposal presentations (13 pairs x 5mins)

Week 14 – May 9, 2024

In-class Quiz 2

Recommended readings:

(These books are accessible at the HKUST Library, with the majority available as ebooks.)

Aitchison, J. (2000). *The seeds of speech: Language origin and evolution*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (HKUST Library E-resource: <https://lbdiscover.hkust.edu.hk/bib/991013160159803412>; or the 1996 version: P116 .A38 1996)

Austin, J. L. (1975[1962]). *How to do things with words*. Oxford, England: Clarendon Press. (HKUST Library E-resource: <https://lbdiscover.hkust.edu.hk/bib/991013127657003412>)

Akmajian, A., Farmer, A. K., Bickmore, L., DeMers, R. A., & Harnish, R. M. (2017). *Linguistics: An introduction to language and communication (7th ed.)*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press (6th edition accessible via HKUST Library E-Resource: <https://lbdiscover.hkust.edu.hk/bib/991013067203703412>)

Beaken, M. (2011). *Making of language*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. (HKUST Library E-resource: <https://lbdiscover.hkust.edu.hk/bib/991013066953703412>)

- Berwick, R. C. & Chomsky, N. (2016). *Why only us: Language and evolution*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press. (HKUST Library E-resource: <https://lbdiscover.hkust.edu.hk/bib/991012897967103412>)
- Birner, J. B. (2013). *Introduction to pragmatics*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell. (HKUST Library E-Resource: <https://lbdiscover.hkust.edu.hk/bib/991013067861503412>)
- Brown, P., & Levinson, S. (1987). *Politeness: Some universals in language usage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (HKUST Library: P40.5.E75 B76 1987)
- Chambers, J. K. & Schilling-Estes, N. (2013). *The handbook of language variation and change* (2nd ed.). Malden: Blackwell publishing Ltd. (HKUST Library E-Resource: <https://lbdiscover.hkust.edu.hk/bib/991012624042203412>)
- Culpeper, J., Haugh, M. & Kadar, D. (2017). (eds.). *The Palgrave handbook of linguistic (im)politeness*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan Ltd. (HKUST Library E-Resource: <https://lbdiscover.hkust.edu.hk/bib/991012694561503412>)
- Fromkin V., Rodman, R. & Hyams, N. (2022). *An introduction to language* (Australian & New Zealand 10th ed.). Melbourne: Cengage Learning. (HKUST Library E-Resource <https://lbdiscover.hkust.edu.hk/bib/991013245759003412>)
- García, O., & Li, W. (2014). *Translanguaging: Language, bilingualism and education*. Palgrave Macmillan. (HKUST Library: P129 .G37 2014)
- Haspelmath, M. & Tadmor, U. (eds.). (2009). *Loanwords in the world's Languages: A comparative handbook*. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton. (HKUST Library E-Resource: <https://lbdiscover.hkust.edu.hk/bib/991013067585303412>)
- Hauser, M. D. (1997). *The evolution of communication*. Cambridge: The MIT Press. (HKUST Library E-resource: <https://lbdiscover.hkust.edu.hk/bib/991011282259703412>)
- Holmes, J. & Hazen, K. (eds.). (2014). *Research methods in sociolinguistics: A practical guide*. (HKUST Library E-resource: <https://lbdiscover.hkust.edu.hk/bib/991013116850503412>)
- Holmes, J. (2006). *Gendered talk at work: Constructing gender identity through workplace discourse*. MA: Blackwell. (HKUST Library E-Resource: P120.S48 H63 2006: https://lbdiscover.hkust.edu.hk/bib/cdi_askewsholts_vlebooks_9781405178457)
- Holmes, J. & Wilson, N. (2022). *An introduction to sociolinguistics* (6th ed.). Harlow: Longman. (5th edition accessible via HKUST Library E-Resource: <https://lbdiscover.hkust.edu.hk/bib/991012900465503412>)
- Huang, Y. (2015). *Pragmatics* (2nd ed.). Hong Kong: Oxford University Press. (HKUST Library E-resource: <https://lbdiscover.hkust.edu.hk/bib/991013069750903412>)

- Leech, G. (2014). *The pragmatics of politeness* (Oxford studies in sociolinguistics). New York, NY: Oxford University Press. (HKUST Library E-Resource: <https://lbdiscover.hkust.edu.hk/bib/991013067438403412>)
- Levinson, S. C. (1983). *Pragmatics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (HKUST Library E-resource: <https://lbdiscover.hkust.edu.hk/bib/991012917169403412>)
- Li, D. C. S. (2017). *Multilingual Hong Kong: Languages, literacies and identities*. Springer International Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-44195-5> (HKUST Library E-resource: <https://lbdiscover.hkust.edu.hk/bib/991012693887603412>)
- Matras, Y. (2009). *Language contact*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (HKUST Library E-Resource: <https://lbdiscover.hkust.edu.hk/bib/991013066947303412>)
- Mesthrie, R., Swann, J., Deumert, A. & Leap, W. L. (2009). *Introducing sociolinguistics* (2nd ed.). Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. (HKUST Library E-Resource: <https://lbdiscover.hkust.edu.hk/bib/991013067324903412>)
- Meyerhoff, M. (2019). *Introducing sociolinguistics* (3rd ed.). New York: Routledge. (2nd Edition accessible via HKUST Library E-Resource: https://lbdiscover.hkust.edu.hk/bib/cdi_proquest_miscellaneous_1935806290)
- Salzmann, Z., Stanlaw, J., & Adachi, N. (2018). *Language, Culture, and Society* (7th ed.). Boulder CO: Westview Press. (6th edition accessible via HKUST Library E-Resource: <https://lbdiscover.hkust.edu.hk/bib/991013067870903412>)
- Trosborg, A (ed.). (2010). *Pragmatics across languages and cultures*. Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton. (HKUST Library E-Resource: <https://lbdiscover.hkust.edu.hk/bib/991013066987603412>)
- Verschueren, J. & Östman, J-O. (eds). (2009). *Key notions for pragmatics*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. (HKUST Library E-Resource: <https://lbdiscover.hkust.edu.hk/bib/991013067296103412>)
- Wardhaugh, R. & Fuller, J. M. (2021). *An introduction to sociolinguistics* (8th ed.). Wiley Blackwell. (7th edition accessible via HKUST Library E-Resource: <https://lbdiscover.hkust.edu.hk/bib/991013116848903412>)
- Watts, R. J., Ide, S. & Ehlich, K. (eds.) (2005). *Politeness in language: Studies in its history, theory, and practice*. Mouton de Gruyter. (HKUST Library E-Resource: <https://lbdiscover.hkust.edu.hk/bib/991013066423703412>)
- Wierzbicka, A. (2003). *Cross-cultural pragmatics: The semantics of human interaction*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter. (HKUST Library E-Reserve: <https://lbdiscover.hkust.edu.hk/bib/991012900765803412>)

31 January 2024

Wierzbicka, A. (2006). *English: Meaning and culture*. New York: Oxford University Press.
(HKUST Library E-Resource:
<https://lbdiscover.hkust.edu.hk/bib/991013127642603412>)

Yule, G. (2020). *The study of language* (7th ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
(HKUST Library Reserve: P107 .Y85 2020)

Yule, G. (1996). *Pragmatics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (HKUST Library Reserve:
P99.4.P72 Y85 1996)