Jan. 19, 2026

HUMA2034 Spring 2026 Tentative Couse Outline
Language Planning and Policy in Asian Contexts

Instructor: Dr. Cathy Ping PAN (hmpanping@ust.hk)
Time: Monday 16:30-17:50; Friday 12:00-13:20
Venue: Rm2407, Lift 17-18
Office hours: Monday & Tuesday: 12:00-13:30; Or by appointment
Course TA: Christie LAM (hmchristie@ust.hk)

Course description

Language is never just about words; it is about who we are, who holds power, and who gets heard. This course takes you deep into the heart of language planning and policy across Asia, where a vast array of languages coexist amid rapid globalization and shifting national identities. Why does Singapore mandate English and "Mother Tongues" in schools, while Japan's Ainu language fights for recognition? How do democratic societies like India navigate the challenges of managing 22 official languages? How can the promotion of dominant languages, such as Putonghua in China, impact the linguistic heritage of ethnic minorities? Is English a tool for opportunity or a weapon of cultural erasure in post-colonial contexts? Through vivid case studies, we will engage in critical discussions about how governments, educational institutions, and communities navigate these linguistic tensions and explore the implications of language policies on social cohesion, cultural identity, and access to opportunities.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs):

1. Define the key concepts and theories in language planning and policy.
2. Explore case studies of language management in various societal contexts in Asia.
3. Evaluate the effectiveness of different language planning strategies employed by governments and educational institutions in different contexts within Asia.
4. Explain the challenges and dilemmas of language planning and policy in multicultural contexts.
5. Reflect upon the impact of language policies on equity, identity, and access to opportunities.

Assessments:
- **Class participation**: 15%
- **Mid-term Quiz**: 30% (Week 9)
- **LPP Project**: 55%
  (Guidance will be provided continuously throughout the course.)
  a. A 2-minute pitch on project proposal (5%)
  b. Project presentation (15%)
  c. Project artifact (35%)

Mapping of Course ILOs to Assessment Tasks

Assessed Task	Mapped ILOs	Explanation
Class Participation	ILO-1, 2, 3, 4, 5	Students will participate in class activities and discussions. There will be cases, scenarios and controversies raised in class and students are encouraged to share their views through in-class tasks and activities. Some of these tasks will be graded, contributing to the class participation mark.
Mid-term Quiz	ILO-1, 2, 3, 4, 5	There will a mid-term quiz that consolidates and tests students' understanding of the key concepts, theories and debates delivered in the readings and lectures.
Group Project	ILO-1, 2, 3, 4, 5	Students will form groups and carry out a project on language planning and policy. They can select a country, region, or institution located in Asia to investigate the LPP issues in that particular context. They may choose to focus on a specific time period or examine a critical case of language policy at an institution. Alternatively, students can design language policies for a hypothetical scenario provided. The project will be documented through an in-class presentation and final project artifact.

Course Schedule (*subject to changes*):

Week	Lecture Topic
1	**Opening the conversation:** What are language planning and language policy, and why are they important? What distinguishes language policy from language planning?
2	**Theoretical foundations of language policy:** What theoretical or philosophical perspectives shape language policy? How do they apply in real-world contexts?
3	**Language management agencies:** What do we mean by 'advocates and managers' of language policy? Who are they and where do they fit into language policy?
4	**Globalization, language policy and role of English:** How has globalization changed the landscape of language policy worldwide? How should we approach the role of English as a "global" language and its impact on LPP?
5	**Nation-state, nationalism and language policy:** What is linguistic nationalism and where does it originate? How can concepts of nationhood and national identity influence language policies?

6	**Language education policy:** How can language education policies yield impact on multilingualism, language rights, and social equity, especially in the nations and territories in Asia?
7	**Language policy and linguistic landscape:** How do language policies manifest in public spaces and signage? What does signage reveal?
8	**From theory to practice** **Singapore:** Language management, culture, and identity in a city-state
9	**From theory to practice:** **India:** Linguistic federalism and diversity in a mega-polity **Mid-term Quiz**
10	**From theory to practice:** **Modern China:** Nation-building, standardization and national identity
11	**From theory to practice:** **Japan and South Korea:** Monolingual ideologies, global English and heritage
12	Student presentations
13	Student presentations

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.

Policy on Use of GenAI:

Generative AI may be used to find sources of information and brainstorm ideas but must not be used to compose the final assignments or cited in the text or as an author of the text.

Communication and Feedback:

Assessment marks for individual assessed tasks will be communicated via Canvas within two weeks of submission. Feedback on assignments will include details appropriate to the assignment type. Students who have further questions about the feedback including marks should consult the instructor within five working days after the feedback is received.

Recommended books and resources (*selected*):

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

1. Gazzola, M., Grin, F., Cardinal, L., & Heugh, K. (2023). (Eds.). *The Routledge handbook of language policy and planning*. Routledge.
2. Klöter, H., & Saarela, M. S. (2020). *Language diversity in the Sinophone world: Historical trajectories, language planning, and multilingual practices*. Taylor & Francis Group.

3. Lee, H. Y., M., Hamid, O. H. & Hardy, I. (2024). *Language policy at the supranational level: English and the ASEAN*. Cham: Springer.
4. Spolsky, B. (2021). *Rethinking language policy*. Edinburgh University Press.
5. Tollefson, J. W., & Pérez-Milans, M. (2018). (Eds). *The Oxford Handbook of language policy and planning*. Oxford University Press.
6. Tsui, A. B. M., & Tollefson, J. W. (2017). (Eds.). *Language policy, culture, and identity in Asian contexts*. Routledge.
7. Wright, S. (2016). *Language policy and language planning: From nationalism to globalization (2nd ed.)*. Palgrave Macmillan

Assessment and Grading:

This course will be assessed using criterion-referencing, and grades will not be assigned using a curve. The marking rubric for the project is as follows:

A (Excellent Performance)	The project presents an outstanding and professional synthesis of a complex LPP case. It demonstrates exceptional command of relevant language policy theories and concepts, applied with appropriate and critical insight to the specific Asian context. The analysis is original, well-evidenced, and leads to persuasive, well-justified policy evaluations and/or recommendations. The accompanying individual reflections are insightful, demonstrating genuine and deep reflective thinking. They offer an honest and meticulous analysis of the individual's role and the group's collaborative process and make sophisticated connections between the project experience and broader themes from the course. The work considerably exceeds expectations in both scholarly rigor and communicative effectiveness.
B (Good Performance)	The project is a solid, competent presentation of an LPP case. It displays a good grasp of relevant theories and applies them properly to the chosen context. The analysis is clear and supported by evidence, leading to logical evaluations and/or recommendations. The individual reflections are thoughtful, clearly describing the individual's contribution and the group's dynamics, and link the project work to course concepts in a meaningful way. This grade recognizes work that meets all project expectations with reliability and clarity, though it may lack the exceptional depth, originality, or synthesis of an 'A' grade.
C (Satisfactory Performance)	The project presents a basic overview of an LPP case. It demonstrates a satisfactory but limited understanding of key concepts, with an analysis that is more descriptive than critical. Evaluations and/or recommendations are present but may be general or not fully derived from the analysis. The individual reflections are evident but summarise the individual's role and the project process at a surface level, with only a basic attempt to connect the experience to course themes. The work meets the core requirements but shows limited critical engagement, depth of analysis, or professional presentation.

D (Marginal Pass)	The project demonstrates a marginal understanding of the LPP case. The analysis is superficial, underdeveloped, or relies excessively on description without critical insight, with weak or inconsistent application of theories. Evaluations and/or recommendations are unclear, impractical, or missing. The individual reflections are minimal, lacking detail in describing contributions or process, and fail to meaningfully engage with course concepts. The project falls short in several key areas, showing a significant need for improvement in research, analysis, and communication.
F (Fail)	The project fails to demonstrate a coherent understanding of language planning and policy. The research is incomplete, irrelevant, or significantly inaccurate. There is no meaningful analysis or application of theory. It is disorganized and/or incoherent, failing to communicate its purpose. The individual reflections are missing, perfunctory, or show no evidence of engagement with the project or course learning. The work does not meet the minimum standards required for the course.