

B.A. (Honours) in Contemporary English Studies

Course Title	:	Introduction to Language
Course Code	:	ENG101
Recommended Study Year	:	1 st Year
No. of Credits/Term	:	3
Mode of Tuition	:	Lecture and Tutorial
Class Contact Hours	:	2 hours Lecture/week 1 hour Tutorial/week
Category in Major Programme	:	Required Course
Prerequisite(s)	:	N/A
Co-requisite(s)	:	N/A
Exclusion(s)	:	N/A
Exemption Requirement(s)	:	N/A

Brief Course Description

This course introduces students to the study of language. It covers such basic questions as the nature of human language, the importance of language in society, the major perspectives for studying language, the acquisition and use of language, as well as language change. Students are not only given an exposure to the basic concepts and theories, they are encouraged to examine various kinds of language data as well as use their own experience and knowledge as learners and users of language in Hong Kong to deepen their understanding of language.

Aims

1. To raise consciousness about the importance of language in human society;
2. To encourage an open mind and inquisitive attitude towards language;
3. To get acquainted with a variety of perspectives in looking at language;
4. To foster appreciation of the richness and complexity of language and language use;
5. To encourage reflection on language use and language learning situations;
6. To introduce basic concepts in linguistics as a preparation for later courses.

Learning Outcomes

This course provides students with a basic understanding of the nature and functions of language as well as introducing them to the major approaches to the study of language in order to prepare them for higher studies in the programme

Indicative Content

1. Language and non-language; criteria for distinguishing; language and communication; functions of language;
2. Writing and speech; origins of language; history of writing; technological developments;
3. Levels of language: grammar (syntax and morphology), lexis, semantics, pragmatics, discourse, phonetics and phonology;
4. Language variety and change: historical, geographical, social; language families; language and dialect;
5. Language and the mind; competence and performance; learning and acquiring languages;
6. Language and education.

Teaching Methods

Teaching is conducted through lectures and workshops where students are exposed to different kinds of language data for discovering the various aspects of language, how language is used and develops.

Measurement of Learning Outcomes

The progress of learning will be measured through class discussions, exercises, presentations, a term paper, and a final examination.

Assessment

Continuous Assessment: 50%

Final Examination: 50%

Required Readings

Yule, G., *The Study of Language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Supplementary Readings

Crystal, D., *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language*, 2nd Edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Fromkin, V. and R. Rodman, *An Introduction to Language*, 6th Edition. Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1998.

Norman, J., *Chinese*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

Trask, R.L., *Language: The Basics*. London: Oxford University Press. Widdowson, H.G. Linguistics. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995.