

B.A. (Honours) in Contemporary English Studies

Course Title	: Words: Their Form and Meaning
Course Code	: ENG3378
Recommended Study Year	: 3 rd or 4 th Year
No. of Credits/Term	: 3
Mode of Tuition	: Lecture-tutorial mode
Class Contact Hours	: 2-hour lecture per week 1-hour tutorial per week
Category	: Discipline Elective (Contemporary Language Strand)
Prerequisite(s)	: Nil
Co-requisite(s)	: Nil
Exclusion(s)	: Nil
Exemption Requirement(s)	: Nil

Brief Course Description

This course is an introduction to the study of the forms and meanings of words in the English Language. It demonstrates how the forms of words can be changed by processes like inflection, derivation and compounding, and gives practical exercises in using suffixes to recognise word-class. It discusses how meanings of words can be defined and analysed according to various dimensions of meaning, how these meanings relate to each other and depend upon grammar and reference. It explores the information about words given in dictionaries, and suggests techniques for efficiently learning vocabulary.

Aims

The course aims

1. To make students aware of the forms of words, how these forms relate to meaning and meaning to context;
2. To explore the rich information about words available in different kinds of dictionaries;
3. To help students build their own vocabulary and to use words effectively.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Understand how meanings relate to each other (LO1)
- Understand how words are structured (LO2)
- Be able to use suffixes to predict word-class (LO3)
- Understand how word meanings vary according to reference and to grammar (LO4)
- Be competent in the use of corpus data for the description of words their meanings and grammar (LO5)

Indicative Contents

- Defining the word
- Prefixes and suffixes
- Word formation processes
- Productivity and creativity
- The scope of meaning
- Componential analyses
- Prototype theory
- Necessary and sufficient conditions
- Corpus and concordance analysis

Teaching Method

The course will consist of a lecture in which the key concepts and skills are introduced and a one-hour tutorial in which the students apply the concepts and skills to identify different word components (LO1, LO2, LO3, LO4, LO5). In class, students will have the opportunity to work both individually and in groups as well as give feedback to their peers. Whereas individual tasks (LO1, LO2, LO3) enable students to think critically and work independently, group tasks (LO4, LO5) allow students to exchange ideas and work together to tackle more complex problems, leading to deeper learning.

Measurement of Learning Outcomes

Short paper: Students will be asked to complete a written analysis based on the topic of their choosing and identify linguistic features as specified on the guidelines. This assessment will measure the extent to which students understand concepts. (LO1, LO2, LO3)

Individual presentation: Students will be asked to examine a particular topic and present their findings. This assessment will measure the extent to which students can demonstrate their knowledge and analytical abilities. (LO1, LO2, LO3)

Group presentation: Students will be asked to examine a particular topic and present their findings. This assessment will measure the extent to which students can demonstrate their knowledge and analytical abilities. (LO4, LO5)

Final term paper: Students will be asked to establish a research topic. They will analyse the relevant discourses using the concepts and approaches learnt. This assessment will measure the extent to which students understand and can apply concepts for the purpose of the analysis of texts. (LO4, LO5).

Assessment

Continuous assessment: 100%

- Attendance (10%)
- Short paper (20%)
- Presentations (20% + 20%)
- Final term paper (30%)

Recommended/Supplementary Readings

The handouts will supply most of the materials that students need. If they wish to consult further texts (e.g., for their own interest or for their presentation), the following resources may help.

- Aitchison, J. (1994). *Words in the Mind*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Carter, R. (1987). *Vocabulary: applied linguistic perspectives*, London: Unwin Hyman.
- Deignan, A. (2005). *Metaphor and Corpus Linguistics*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Hardie, A., and McEnery, T. (2011). *Corpus Linguistics: Method, Theory and Practice*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Hudson, R.A. (1995). *Word Meaning*, London: Routledge.
- Kovács, Z. (2010). *Metaphor: A Practical Introduction*. Oxford: OUP.
- Lakoff, G., and Johnson, M. (1980). *Metaphors We Live by*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press
- Langacker, R.W. (1967). *Language and its Structure*, New York: Hart, Brace and World.
- Leech, G.N. (1981). *Semantics*. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Lieer, R. (2012). *Introducing Morphology*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Littlemore, J. (2019). *Metaphors in the Mind: Sources of Variation in Embodied Metaphor*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Quirk, R. and Greenbaum, S. (1973). *A University Grammar of English*. Harlow: Longman.
- Saeed, J. I. (2009). *Semantics*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Important Notes:

- (1) Students are expected to spend a total of 9 hours (i.e. 3 hours of class contact and 6 hours of personal study) per week to achieve the course learning outcomes.
- (2) Students shall be aware of the University regulations about dishonest practice in course work, tests and examinations, and the possible consequences as stipulated in the Regulations Governing University Examinations. In particular, plagiarism, being a kind of dishonest practice, is “the presentation of another person’s work without proper acknowledgement of the source, including exact phrases, or summarised ideas, or even footnotes/citations, whether protected by copyright or not, as the student’s own work”. Students are required to strictly follow university regulations governing academic integrity and honesty.
- (3) Students are required to submit writing assignment(s) using Turnitin.
- (4) To enhance students’ understanding of plagiarism, a mini-course “Online Tutorial on Plagiarism Awareness” is available on <https://pla.ln.edu.hk/>.