B.A. (Honours) in Contemporary English Studies

Course Title : Varieties of English
Course Code : ENG2020
Recommended Study Year : 2nd Year for 4-year System
No. of Credits/Semester : 3
Mode of Tuition : Sectional
Teaching Hours : 3 hours per week + 1 hour out-of-class work
Category in Programme : Required
Prerequisite(s) : Nil
Co-requisite(s) : Nil
Exclusion(s) : Nil
Exemption Requirement(s) : N/A

Brief course description

This course aims to complement the three English courses offered by CEAL, with their focus on English for Academic Purposes. It does so by helping students to engage with a variety of English texts, both academic and non-academic, with the aim of encouraging lifelong engagement with such texts. Consequently, it chooses texts which are relevant to students’ everyday lives, for instance computer-mediated communication and advertisements. It aims to raise students’ awareness of how texts and language vary according to social situation, and how variation may be used to express identity. In doing so it makes students aware of the parameters affecting variation, an awareness which is transferable and applicable to communication at the personal, academic, professional and global levels. In summary, the course aims to facilitate students’ development of a linguistic and cultural toolkit which will expand communicative repertoires in terms of proficiency and competence, enhance confidence, and encourage life-long learning in the context of the increasing demands on effective communication in our globalized world.

Aims

1. To raise students’ awareness of how texts and language vary according to social situation, and how variation may be used to express identity;
2. To introduce students to the parameters affecting variation, creating an awareness which is transferable and applicable to the texts they may encounter or produce in their future lives;
3. To familiarize students with a range of both academic and non-academic genres in their current lives;
4. To enable students to become effective communicators in their future workplaces, by focusing on factors such as context, purpose and participants;
5. To encourage students to use language and genres creatively in the development of their cultural identities as English language learners.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course students should be able to:
1) Appreciate and critically evaluate English texts in a variety of academic and non-academic spoken, written, and computer-mediated genres, so that they will engage with similar texts in their present and future lives.

2) Work in groups and individually to differentiate, categorize and evaluate English usage in various genres, in terms of pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, discourse structure and graphics.

3) Create written and spoken texts that are appropriate and effective in terms of the above linguistic and non-linguistic features, and which relate to students’ personal, current academic, and future professional lives.

4) Creatively adapt and modify texts, and analyse critically the source and adapted text.

5) Show evidence of independent and self-motivated strategies and approaches to their learning of English and reflect critically on their effectiveness, in class learning and e-portfolio.

Indicative Content

1. How language varies: introduction to genres; written and spoken language
2. Conversation: intonation and stress; fluency; formality and informality
3. Jokes: language play and creative destruction; informal presentations
4. Advertising: style; graphics; visual-linguistic multimodality
5. Instructional texts: recipes and cooking demonstrations
6. Interviewing: types of questions; interview techniques
7. Internet chat, texting and email: written and spoken features; code switching and mixing; creativity with emoticons.
8. Blogs and social media: the distinctiveness of blogs and facebook pages; the visual impact of texts
9. Web-sites: complex generic structure; standardization of web-pages
10. Intertextuality and mixed genres

Teaching Method

The course meets for a total of 3 hours each week, with one extra hour being assigned for out-of-class course work. Multimedia presentations will be used to present the necessary analytical and conceptual frameworks. The primary teaching mode will be experiential and participative, with students analyzing, comparing, producing and evaluating written and spoken texts according to the particular focus of the class.

Measurement of Learning Outcomes

1. Individual presentation of an adapted text (outcomes 1 to 5)
2. Group-based presentation and submission of a proposal drawing on different genres (outcomes 1 to 5)
3. Individual e-portfolios with critical reflection (outcomes 1 to 6)
4. Written examination (outcomes 1 to 5)

Assessment

1. Attendance and Participation (10%)
2. Individual presentation of an adapted text (20%)
3. Group project presentation and submission (25%)
4. E-portfolio and presentation (25%)
5. Final written exam (20%)

**Recommended Readings**

Tonge, R. *How to Write Information and Instruction Manuals*, Coolum Beach, Qld, Gull Pub., 1993.