**B.A. (Honours) in Contemporary English Studies**

**Course Title**: Language and Society  
**Course Code**: ENG3202 / ENG202  
**Recommended Study Year**: 3rd Year for 4-year System  
2nd Year for 3-year System  
**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 subject is aimed at giving students a basic understanding of how language is used in society from both a macro and micro perspective. It encompasses traditional sociolinguistic themes as well as those from social psychology, ethnography of communication, semiotics, pragmatics, and critical linguistics. It is believed that only such a varied approach can give students a more comprehensive understanding of how language is essentially both a process and product of society. Because of its social orientation, the subject also acts as a link between the more formal aspects of linguistics and the other applied areas of language studies. Apart from giving students a grounding in relevant theories, it also exposes them to issues arising from the use of language in contemporary society, using Hong Kong as an example.

**Aims**

Students will be able to understand the relationship between language and society, to apply sociolinguistic concepts, and to analyze patterns of language use in society, especially in this age of computer-mediated communication.

**Learning Outcomes**

1. To understand how language is used for communication in the social context;  
2. To acquire theoretical frameworks for the analysis of language as a social artifact;  
3. To be able to analyze sociolinguistic propositions critically;  
4. To be aware of the patterns of language use in society, especially in Hong Kong;  
5. To develop a critical attitude towards the way language is used in society;  
6. To understand and evaluate some of the issues in bilingualism, language education and language policy.
Indicative Content

1. Approaches to the study of language: the formal, the functional and the ethnographic
2. Code choice, code-switching and code-mixing
3. Diglossia, bilingualism and trilingualism
4. Language attitudes
5. Acts of identity
6. Varieties of language
7. Varieties of English
8. Computer-mediated communication
9. Politeness
10. Language education and language policy
11. Approaches to sociolinguistic research

Teaching Method

The course is delivered mainly through lectures and tutorials. Students will be asked to prepare critical reading either individually or in small groups. They will be expected to take an active part in class discussions. They will also be required to carry out small-scale research projects to gain experience of sociolinguistic approaches to language study.

Measurement of Learning Outcomes

1. Students will observe, record and analyze their own language behaviour so that they will develop an understanding of how language is used for communication in specific social contexts. They will apply sociolinguistic concepts in their analysis. Learning outcomes 1, 2, 4 and 5 are measured.
2. They will analyze linguistic data collected from primary sources. They will examine the patterns of language use in the bilingual community of Hong Kong, especially in computer-mediated communication. They will apply sociolinguistic concepts in their analysis. Learning outcomes 1, 2, 4 and 5 are measured.
3. They will be assigned a number of readings for tutorials. They will analyze sociolinguistic propositions and examine issues related to bilingualism, language education and language planning in class discussions. They will present their critical views in the oral presentation and the essay. Learning outcomes 1, 3, 5 and 6 are measured.
4. They will demonstrate their understanding of sociolinguistic concepts, critical responses to propositions and analytical skills in the examination. Learning outcomes 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 are measured.

Assessment

Continuous Assessment : 60%
Final Examination : 40%
Required Readings


Recommended Readings

