

The Chinese University of Hong Kong
Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages
First Term, 2025-26

Course Title: LING5701 Linguistics Research
<p>Description:</p> <p>The course aims to train students in conducting linguistic research and is a prerequisite of LING5702 Research Project. General research methodology will be introduced, with a focus on methods commonly used in linguistic research and analysis. Towards the end of the course, students have to submit a formal project proposal leading to LING5702.</p> <p>The course is a general introduction to research methods and the research process. It serves as a step-by-step guide to help students develop their own research projects. Students will be introduced to research projects in several areas of linguistics through short presentations by guest speakers. These presentations give concrete examples of linguistic research projects and methods by peer researchers and can stimulate students to design their own projects. Basic statistics and academic writing skills will also be introduced. The use of electronic resources in research and writing is emphasized throughout the course. This course, however, will not cover specific research methods in different areas of linguistics. Students need to present their research proposals towards the end of the course in 'mini-conference' style.</p>

Content, highlighting fundamental concepts

Topic	Contents/fundamental concepts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is linguistic research - Research skills - Research methodology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - hypothesis testing, the research process - using electronic database and software - quantitative and qualitative research, validity and reliability
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Basic statistics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - descriptive and inferential statistics, t-test, ANOVA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Thesis writing - Proposal presentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - structure of a thesis, academic writing skills - presentation skills, critical assessment of research hypotheses and methods

<p>Learning outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students will have a clear understanding of the process and requirements of conducting research. - Students will be able to use electronic resources to facilitate their research. - Students will produce a research proposal on a topic of their choice. - Students will know how to assess research hypotheses and methods critically. - Students will understand the importance of statistics in data analysis; they will also have a basic idea of some common statistical tests. - Students will learn how to communicate their ideas formally in writing and in oral presentation.

Learning activities

- Lectures (3 hrs per week)
- Assignments (on average 1 hr per week)
- Independent reading and research (2 hrs per week)

Assessment scheme

Task nature	Description	Weight
1. Participation	Ask 3 questions in proposal presentations	3%
2. Four individual assignments		
1. 10 references with abstracts	due Week 4 (22/09) marked by TA	5%
2. Critique of research methods	due Week 5 (29/9) marked by TA	10%
3. Statistics	due Week 7 (13/10) marked by TA	12%
4. Proposed method and abstract	due Week 9 (27/10) marked by Prof.	15%
3. Individual presentation	10 minutes + Q&A (see 1.)	15%
4. Individual research proposal	Due on 1/12	40%
		Total: 100%

Grade descriptors

Grade	Overall Course
A A-	Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes. A thorough grasp of the subject as demonstrated by consistently high marks of the assignments. Ample evidence of familiarity with the literature of the relevant research topics. Students can generate good and worthwhile research ideas by themselves and produce a substantial research project.
B+ B B-	High performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall good performance. A generally good grasp of the subject as demonstrated by good marks of the assignments. Some evidence of familiarity with the literature of the relevant research topics. Students can generate doable research ideas by themselves.
C+ C C-	Satisfactory performance on some learning outcomes, possibly with a few weaknesses. A general grasp of the subject as demonstrated by average marks of the assignments. Students need help in generating doable research ideas.
D	Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes. Insufficient grasp of the subject as demonstrated by poor marks of the assignments. Students need substantial help in generating research ideas.
F	Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, or failure to meet specified assessment requirements.

Course schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Presentations*
1	01/09	Introduction to research and electronic databases	TBD
2	08/09	How to do a literature review	
3	15/09	Qualitative and quantitative research	
4	22/09	Discussion of research methods	
5	29/09	Introduction to statistics	
6	06/10	Practical class with R	
7	13/10	Research topics: Syntax & Semantics	
8	20/10	Research topics: Phonetics and Phonology	
9	27/10	Format of a research proposal, thesis & academic writing	
10	03/11	Individual consultations of proposal topics	
11	10/11	Presentations (online)	
12	17/11	Presentations (online)	
13	24/11	Presentations (online)	
	1/12	Proposals due	

* Guest presentations are subject to change.

** For online classes, students are required to turn on their cameras. You may enable virtual background beforehand.

*** Consultations can be made online or face-to-face.

Learning resources for students

Coolican, H. (2004). *Research Methods and Statistics In Psychology*. London: Hodder & Stoughton.

Field, A., Miles, J. & Field, Z. (2012). *Discovering Statistics Using R*. London: Sage.

Johnson, K. (2008). *Quantitative Methods in Linguistics*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Litosseliti, Lia (ed.) (2010). *Research Methods in Linguistics*. London: Continuum International Publishing Group.

Nunan, D. (1992). *Research Methods in Language Learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Podesva, R. & Sharma, D. (eds.) (2013). *Research Methods in Linguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rasinger, S.M. (2013). *Quantitative Research in Linguistics* (2nd edition). London: Bloomsbury.

Seliger, H. & Shohamy, E. (1989). *Second Language Research Methods*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Sharp, J. & Howard, K. (1996). *The Management of A Student Research Project*. Aldershot, England: Gower.

Wen, Q.F. (2002). *Applied Linguistics: Research Methods and Thesis Writing*. Beijing: Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.

<https://www.gradsch.cuhk.edu.hk/pgstudent/main.htm> (thesis > research and thesis writing)
(the CUHK guide to research and thesis writing, login required)

www.lib.cuhk.edu.hk (various library workshops) and <http://smart.lib.cuhk.edu.hk/> (Research Smart)

Feedback for evaluation

Students are encouraged to give feedback or comments on course contents and teaching materials throughout the course, in addition to the midterm and final course evaluation. Students can contact either

the lecturer or tutor directly. See contact details below.

Teachers' or TA's contact details

Professor/Lecturer/Instructor:	
Name:	Prof. Regine Lai
Office Location:	Leung Kau Kui Building G12
Telephone:	3943 4711
Email:	ryklai@cuhk.edu.hk
Teaching Venue:	LSK LT1
Other information:	Appointment by email

Teaching Assistant/Tutor:	
Name:	
Office Location:	Leung Kau Kui Building G16
Telephone:	3943 7053
Email:	

Academic honesty and plagiarism

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>.

With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed [declaration](#) that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures.

- In the case of group projects, all members of the group should be asked to sign the declaration, each of whom is responsible and liable to disciplinary actions, irrespective of whether he/she has signed the declaration and whether he/she has contributed, directly or indirectly, to the problematic contents.
- For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based and submitted via VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students' uploading of the soft copy of the assignment.
- Students are fully aware that their work may be investigated by AI content detection software to determine originality.
- Students are fully aware of the AI approach(es) adopted in the course. In the case where some AI tools are allowed, students have made proper acknowledgment and citations as suggested by the course teacher.

Assignments without a properly signed declaration will not be graded by teachers.

Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide.

The submission of a piece of work, or a part of a piece of work, for more than one purpose (e.g. to satisfy the requirements in two different courses) without declaration to this effect shall be regarded as having

committed undeclared multiple submissions. It is common and acceptable to reuse a turn of phrase or a sentence or two from one's own work; but wholesale reuse is problematic. In any case, agreement from the course teacher(s) concerned should be obtained prior to the submission of the piece of work.

The copyright of the teaching materials, including lecture notes, assignments and examination questions, etc., produced by staff members/ teachers of The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) belongs to CUHK. Students may download the teaching materials produced by the staff members/ teachers from the Learning Management Systems, e.g. Blackboard, adopted by CUHK for their own educational use, but shall not distribute/ share/ copy the materials to a third-party without seeking prior permission from the staff members/ teachers concerned.

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools in Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Use of generative AI tools

Approach 1 – Prohibit all use of AI tools

Students are not allowed to use any AI tools in any kind of learning activity or assessment that will be counted towards students' final grade of the course, or used for evaluating students' attainment of the desired learning outcomes. Students are expected to produce their own work independently without any collaboration or use of AI tools. Such information should be spelt out clearly in the course outline or learning activity/assessment guide.