

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

<p>Course code: LING5501 Title in English: Topics in Chinese Phonetics and Phonology Title in Chinese: 漢語語音學及音系學</p>
<p>Course description: This course introduces general aspects of Chinese phonetics and phonology, including segmental and prosodic characteristics, from both synchronic and diachronic perspectives. Students will be trained to compare and analyze sound patterns of Chinese languages from different theoretical approaches with common phonetic research tools. The final goal of the course is to provide students with a solid foundation for further phonetic and phonological research.</p>

<p>Learning outcomes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Demonstrate a more in-depth understanding of the basic concepts of phonetics and phonology, such as airstream mechanism, tone sandhi, and phonological processes 2. Understand the sound inventories of standard Mandarin and Cantonese, including consonants, vowels and tones 3. Be familiar with an array of fascinating phonological phenomena with much research attention and their phonetic properties in Chinese languages 4. Develop critical thinking on topics open for debate, e.g., stress in Chinese languages, the nature of apical vowels, classification of Chinese languages, etc. 5. Be able to conduct further phonetic and phonological study on Chinese languages

Course syllabus

Topic	Contents/fundamental concepts
Chinese	Chinese languages/dialects, Middle Chinese, Old Chinese, Sino-Tibetan language family
Onset consonants	Spectrogram, places and manners of articulation, voicing and aspiration, implosive, cluster
Codas and syllabic consonants	Nasal codas, plosive codas, syllabic nasals, apical vowels
Tone	Coda and tonogenesis, onset voicing and tone register, Middle Chinese tone categories, tone in songs, pitch normalization
Tone variations	Neutral tone and stress, Mandarin T3 sandhi, tone sandhi domain, locality and structure-preservation, interacting sandhi processes
Syllable structure	Rhyme, glides, zero-initial and resyllabification, syllable contraction
Vowels	Mandarin mid vowel and competing phonemic analyses, vowel rhotacization, vowel length, literary-colloquial vowel alternation, tone and vowel phonation
/ʔ/-suffixation and diminutive tone change	Rhotics, tongue gesture, Mandarin /ʔ/-suffixation, <i>erhua</i> in non-Mandarin Chinese, diminutive tone change, Cantonese <i>pinjam</i> tones
Phonological processes and sound change	Assimilation, palatalization, weakening and reduction, chain effect, sound change and phonetic feature
Language contact	Loanword adaptation, tone assignment and stress, syllabary expansion, Taiwanese-/Singaporean-/Malaysian- accented standard Mandarin
Classification of Chinese languages/dialects	Phonological typology, voiced obstruent onsets, checked tones/syllables, diachronicity and synchronicity, Mandarin and Jin dialects

Course components

Teaching Modes and Learning Activities	
On-site face-to-face	Percentage of time
<i>Lectures (not hybrid)</i>	28%
<i>Examinations (not hybrid)</i>	4%
Online asynchronous	
<i>Assigned reading (including multimedia resources)</i>	40%
<i>Written assignments</i>	28%

Assessment type and percentage

Assessment type	Percentage
Biweekly written assignments marked by the TA (short answer questions, case study, data analysis, etc.)	5% × 6
Mid-term examination marked by the TA	30%
Final examination marked by the lecturer and TA	40%

Each unexcused absence from lectures will incur a 2% deduction of overall mark.

Required and recommended readings

Required readings:

- Lin, Y.-H. (2007). *The Sounds of Chinese*. Cambridge University Press.
Duanmu, S. (2007). *The Phonology of Standard Chinese*. Oxford University Press.
Bauer, R. S. & Benedict, P. K. (1997). *Modern Cantonese Phonology*. Mouton de Gruyter.

Recommended readings:

- Chen, M. Y. (2000). *Tone Sandhi: Patterns across Chinese Dialects*. Cambridge University Press.
Cheng, C.-C. (1973). *A Synchronic Phonology of Mandarin Chinese*. Mouton de Gruyter.
Reetz, H. & Jongman, A. (2009). *Phonetics: Transcription, Production, Acoustics and Perception*. Blackwell.
Yue-Hashimoto, O. (1972). *Phonology of Cantonese*. Cambridge University Press.
曹志耘：《漢語方言地圖集（語音卷）》。商務印書館，2008 年版。
胡方：《語音講義》。上海教育出版社，2021 年版。
孔江平：《論語言發聲》。中央民族大學出版社，2001 年版。
袁家驊等：《漢語方言概要》。語文出版社，2001 年版。

Online videos:

- Sound waves: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RJi6SkfP4cg>
Speech analysis: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MyNrmiJQ4dI&t=530s>
Reading spectrograms – Consonants: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J-RVpvofhSY>
Reading spectrograms – Vowels: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mWel5j-F8IE>
Reading spectrograms – Words I: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TEOiAnXNFFQ>
Reading spectrograms – Words II: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j9oIhC9QRPg>

Supplementary readings for individual lectures will be available for download from Blackboard.

Feedback for evaluation

Students are encouraged to share feedback or comments on course contents and teaching materials throughout the course via email, oral communication or the Early Feedback Collection System, in addition to the end-of-term Course and Teaching Evaluation. Students can contact either the lecturer or teaching assistant directly. See contact details below.

Grade descriptors

A	Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes. A thorough understanding of the subject demonstrated by consistently high marks of the assignments and exams. Outstanding ability to apply the phonetic/phonological concepts and analytical techniques introduced in the course to analyze language data from standard Chinese and different dialects. Ample evidence of familiarity with reading related to the course.
A-	Generally outstanding performance on most learning outcomes. A good understanding of the subject demonstrated by high marks of most assignments and exams. Generally outstanding ability to apply the phonetic/phonological concepts and analytical techniques introduced in the course to analyze language data from standard Chinese and different dialects. Evidence of familiarity with reading related to the course.
B	Satisfactory performance on most learning outcomes. An adequate understanding of the subject demonstrated by good marks of the assignments and exams. Strong ability to apply the phonetic/phonological concepts and analytical techniques introduced in the course to analyze language data from standard Chinese and different dialects. Evidence of a certain amount of reading related to the course.

C	Satisfactory performance on some learning outcomes. A basic understanding of the subject demonstrated by average marks of the assignments and exams. Sufficient ability to apply the phonetic/phonological concepts and analytical techniques introduced in the course to analyze language data from standard Chinese and different dialects. Evidence of basic reading related to the course.
D	Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes. A poor understanding of the subject demonstrated by poor marks of the assignments and exams. Insufficient ability of applying the phonetic/phonological concepts and analytical techniques introduced in the course to analyze language data from standard Chinese and different dialects. Evidence of very limited reading related to the course.
F	Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes. Very little understanding of the subject demonstrated by consistently poor marks of the assignments and exams. Lack the ability of applying the phonetic/phonological concepts and analytical techniques introduced in the course to analyze language data from standard Chinese and different dialects. No evidence of efforts in completing reading related to the course.

Course schedule

Class/week	Date	Topic	Requirements
1	8/1	Introduction	Lin (Ch. 1 & 6), Duanmu (Ch. 1 & 2.1–2.2)
2	15/1	Onset consonants I	Lin (Ch. 2), Duanmu (Ch. 2.6–2.8), Bauer & Benedict (Ch. 1.1)
3	22/1	Onset consonants II	Supplementary readings
4	29/1	Codas and syllabic consonants	Lin (Ch. 3.4.1 & 8.1.2), Duanmu (Ch. 2.9), Bauer & Benedict (Ch. 1.4)
5	5/2	Tone	Lin (Ch. 4.1–4.2.1), Duanmu (Ch. 10.1–10.6 & 10.9–10.10), Bauer & Benedict (Ch. 2.0–2.9)
6	12/2	Tone variations	Lin (Ch. 4.2.2–4.3, 9.1–9.2.2 & 9.3–9.4), Duanmu (Ch. 11), Bauer & Benedict (Ch. 2.10)
No class	19/2	Lunar New Year Vacation	
7	26/2	Mid-term examination (2 hours) Syllable structure	Lin (Ch. 5), Duanmu (Ch. 4), Bauer & Benedict (Ch. 3.3–3.4)
8	5/3	Vowels I	Lin (Ch. 3), Duanmu (Ch. 2.10–2.11),
9	12/3	Vowels II	Bauer & Benedict (Ch. 1.2–1.3 & 1.5)
10	19/3	/ə/-suffixation and diminutive tone change	Lin (Ch. 8.2), Duanmu (Ch. 9), Bauer & Benedict (Ch. 2.11)
11	26/3	Phonological processes and sound change	Lin (Ch. 7), Duanmu (Ch. 13.2–13.5)
12	2/4	Language contact: loanword adaptation and standard Mandarin outside Mainland China	Lin (Ch. 11–12), Duanmu (Ch. 13.7), Bauer & Benedict (Ch. 3.5)
13	9/4	Phonological criteria in classification of Chinese languages	Supplementary readings
14	16/4	Final examination	

Contact details for teacher or TA

Professor/Lecturer/Instructor:	
Name:	Dr. ZHANG Weijun 張偉竣
Office Location:	Room 221, Fung King Hey Building
Email:	weijunzhang@cuhk.edu.hk
Teaching Venue:	Sino Building LT2 (UG/F)

Teaching Assistant/Tutor:	
Name:	Mr. LIU Zhan
Office Location:	Room G16, Leung Kau Kui Building
Email:	jamesliu@cuhk.edu.hk

Details of course website

A page has been set up for students to access information of the course LING5501 on the Blackboard platform hosted by the University: <https://blackboard.cuhk.edu.hk/>.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools in teaching, learning and assessments

Use of AI tools is allowed with explicit acknowledgement and proper citation

Students may use some AI tools in some learning activities and/or assignments on the condition that they make explicit acknowledgement and proper citations of the input from AI tools.

AI tools could be powerful in dealing with large amounts of linguistic data and facilitate potential scripting needs when using phonetic research tools.

Students are **strictly prohibited from using AI tools for writing (including re-writing, translation, or content generation)** in completing assignments. Checking the AI writing index before submitting assignments to the VeriGuide is strongly recommended (link to AI Writing Detector under VeriGuide: <https://awd.veriguide.org/>). Any AI writing index above 25% will be regarded as disqualified and re-submission will be required.

Students should **fact-check all outputs** of AI tools by cross-checking the claims with reliable sources and are **responsible for any errors or omissions**, if any, when using AI tools.

No AI tools will be used for grading and provision of feedback on student work.

Acknowledging support from AI tools

Students are required to acknowledge all functional uses of an AI tool and cite it when they paraphrase, quote, or incorporate into their own work any content (whether it is text, image, data, or other format) that was created by it.

- i. An example of acknowledgement

'I acknowledge the use of (name of AI tool – e.g. ChatGPT (<https://chat.openai.com/>)) to (specify the support, e.g. generate some ideas for the content, ask for examples of data collection instruments, etc.).

- ii. An example of citation

OpenAI. (2023). *ChatGPT* (Mar 20 version). <https://chat.openai.com/chat>

(Students are reminded that due to the rapid developments of AI tools, some citation formats may be updated regularly.)

- iii. An example of including texts generated by an AI tool in their work

“The following text was generated by an AI tool/language model (ChatGPT):”
[Insert the text generated by ChatGPT here.]

- iv. An example of including texts generated by an AI tool and the prompts that were used to elicit the text from the AI tool

“[The prompt], as generated by an AI language model (ChatGPT):”
[Insert the text generated by ChatGPT in response to the prompt.]

Students are reminded to learn and use the AI tools responsibly and ethically and be aware of the limitations.

Improper/unauthorized use of AI tools in learning activities and assignments will constitute acts of academic dishonesty which will be handled in accordance with the University's *Procedures for Handling Cases of Academic Dishonesty*.

Students are reminded to clarify with the course teacher and obtain permission if necessary when in doubt.

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.

- 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 the teacher or TA.

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.

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