**The Chinese University of Hong Kong**
**Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages**
**First Term, 2026-27**

**1. Course Code: LING2008B**

**2. Title in English: Linguistic Argumentation II**

**3. Title in Chinese: 語言學論證(下)**

**4. Course description**

This course enhances students' sensitivity to the structure of linguistic argumentation. It will engage students in critical reflections on the character of linguistic units and categories at various levels of grammar, as well as systematic descriptions and analyses of language phenomena using linguistics concepts. Through critical discussion of selected cases, students will explore the ways in which one may arrive at generalizations based on linguistic evidence, how different analyses may apply to a given linguistic phenomenon, and the grounds on which one analysis may be judged to be superior to another.

**5. Learning outcomes**

By the end of this course, you are expected to:

- Understand the basic units and categories of language and define these units and categories cross-linguistically.
- Describe the structure of argumentation of a linguistics article, and respond to the ideas contained in it.
- Observe the languages encountered in daily life, and tap into one's own native language competence.
- Use reference grammars for descriptive facts about a language.
- Write clear, well-organized and coherent expository papers on language, making use of techniques such as formulating thesis statements, paragraphing and self-editing
- Reflect on some of the typical errors of advanced Chinese learners of English.

**6. Course syllabus**

| Topic | Contents/fundamental concepts |
|---|---|
| Module 6: Topics in Linguistics III<br>Arguing about the existence and categorization of linguistic units | Morphemes, words, and phrases; cross-linguistic differences in the conception of wordhood; Word classes (parts of speech); justification for the existence of categories and category membership; cross-linguistic differences in the defining of linguistic categories |
| Module 7: Topics in Linguistics IV<br>Arguing about realizations of and interactions among linguistic units | Acoustic and perceptual realization of linguistic units; interactions among tone, intonation, prosody, and voice quality; phonological variation and sound change; phonotactic knowledge and wordlikeness. |
| Module 8: Topics in Linguistics V<br>Formulating, justifying, and articulating a research idea in linguistics | Format of a research proposal, thesis, and academic writings; literature review; research topics in theoretical linguistics; qualitative and quantitative research methods; research tools. |
| Module 9: Argumentation | Types of empirical data used as evidence in linguistic argumentation; arguments based on generalizations about language; essentials of academic writing: title, abstract, thesis statement, introduction, elaboration, citation, quotation, reporting results, conclusion |

**7. Course components (Teaching modes and Learning activities)**

| Teaching Modes and Learning Activities | |
|---|---|
| **On-site face-to-face** | **Percentage of time** |
| *Lectures (hybrid no)* | 14% |
| *Interactive tutorial (hybrid no)* | 7% |
| **Out-of-classroom** | |
| *Readings* | 35% |
| *Written Assignments* | 35% |
| *Group discussions* | 7% |
| *One-on-one consultation* | 2% |

**8. Assessment type, percentage and rubrics**

| Assessment type | Percentage |
|---|---|
| **Closed-note post-reading quizzes**<br>• A set of multiple-choice questions on the basic content of each required reading. | 20% |
| **Writing assignment I: Reading based**<br>• One essay to evaluate the validity of argumentations made in one required reading under Module 6 or Module 7.<br>• The components of the essay will be built up incrementally in tutorials.<br>• The in-class completion of the full essay will take place in Week 8.<br>• A detailed guideline will be provided.<br>• The written essays will be graded by the instructor. | 20% |
| **Writing assignment II: Research proposal**<br>• One proposal on an original research project in linguistics.<br>• The components of the proposal will be built up incrementally in tutorials.<br>• Each student will submit a short written proposal and take an oral defense.<br>• A detailed guideline will be provided.<br>• The written essays will be graded by the instructor. | 30% = 20%(essay) + 10%(oral) |
| **Data-oriented mini debates**<br>• For each required reading:<br>▪ Affirmative team: One group of students should provide and present additional original linguistic data to support the author(s) argumentation;<br>▪ Negative team: Another group of students should provide and present original linguistic data to challenge the author(s) argumentation'.<br>• For each group of students:<br>▪ Sign up once for the affirmative team for one required reading;<br>▪ Sign up once for the negative team for a different required reading.<br>• Reading pre-written scripts is strictly forbidden and considered cheating. | 20% |
| **In-class discussion**<br>• Consistent and active participation in lectures and tutorials is required.<br>• For each missed class meeting without a documented family or medical emergence, 2% will be taken off.<br>• A maximal **bonus 2%** will be given for raising questions in class throughout the semester: 1% for every 3 questions raised. | 10% |

**Late Submission Policy**

| Assessment task | Extension allowed (Y/N) | Descriptions of late submission policy |
|---|---|---|
| Quizzes | Y | Students must submit a **written application** to the course teacher **on or before the scheduled test date**, together with appropriate supporting documentation, to be considered for a make-up quiz.<br>Only **one make-up quiz** will be scheduled for each quiz, to be held within **5 working days** or **7 calendar days** after the originally scheduled quiz date. |
| Debates | Y | Students must submit a **written application** to the course teacher **on or before the scheduled debate presentation date**, together with appropriate supporting documentation, to be considered for a make-up quiz.<br>A penalty of **10% deduction** from the full mark of the test will be applied, **regardless of the reason** for the absence.<br>Only **one make-up debate presentation** will be scheduled for each debate, to be held within **5 working days** or **7 calendar days** after the originally scheduled debate presentation date. |
| Written assignments | Y | Unless an extension is granted, late submissions will result in **a deduction of 10% of the marks awarded per day**, with no marks to be given for a delay beyond 5 calendar days. Extension requests, supported by appropriate documentation, should be submitted to the course teacher for **at least 5 working days** or **7 calendar days before the deadline in writing**. Requests submitted late or without valid reasons and supporting documents will not be accepted. Only unforeseen or exceptional circumstances beyond a student's control will be considered. |
| Oral defense | Y | Students must submit a **written application** to the course teacher **on or before the scheduled defense date**, together with appropriate supporting documentation, to be considered for a make-up defense.<br>A penalty of **10% deduction** from the full mark of the defense will be applied, **regardless of the reason** for the absence.<br>Only **one make-up defense** will be scheduled for the entire class, to be held within **5 working days** or **7 calendar days** after the originally scheduled defense date. |

| Assessment rubrics | |
|---|---|
| Grade | Overall course |
| A | Recognize almost all the linguistic concepts and their supporting arguments covered in the course<br>Recognize and identify a good range of common errors made by Chinese learners of English |

| | |
|---|---|
| | Excellent in applying linguistic knowledge and knowledge about academic discourse in writing<br>Excellent in evaluating linguistic papers with a lot of critical insights |
| A- | Recognize most of the linguistic concepts and their supporting arguments covered in the course<br>Recognize and identify a good range of common errors made by Chinese learners of English<br>Good in applying linguistic knowledge and knowledge about academic discourse in writing<br>Good in evaluating linguistic papers with some critical insights |
| B+<br>B<br>B- | Recognize some linguistic concepts and their supporting arguments covered in the course<br>Recognize and identify some common errors made by Chinese learners of English<br>Satisfactory in applying linguistic knowledge and knowledge about academic discourse in writing<br>Satisfactory in evaluating linguistic papers |
| C+<br>C<br>C- | Recognize relatively few linguistic concepts and their supporting arguments covered in the course<br>Recognize and identify relatively few common errors made by Chinese learners of English<br>Weak in applying linguistic knowledge and knowledge about academic discourse in writing<br>Weak in evaluating linguistic papers |
| D | Recognize very few linguistic concepts and their supporting arguments covered in the course<br>Recognize and identify very few common errors made by Chinese learners of English<br>Very weak in applying linguistic knowledge and knowledge about academic discourse in writing<br>Very weak in evaluating linguistic papers |
| F | Recognize almost no linguistic concepts and their supporting arguments covered in the course<br>Recognize and identify almost no common errors made by Chinese learners of English<br>Extremely weak in applying linguistic knowledge and knowledge about academic discourse in writing<br>Extremely weak in evaluating linguistic papers |

## 9. Required and recommended readings

- **Required readings**:
  See Section 11 for a detailed list of required readings

- **Recommended readings**:

**A. Linguistic argumentation**

Aarts, B. (2001). *English syntax and argumentation* (2nd ed.). Palgrave.
Haegeman, L. M. V. (2006). *Thinking syntactically: A guide to argumentation and analysis*. Blackwell.
Larson, R. K. (2009). *Grammar as science*. MIT Press.

**B. Reference books**

Bauer, L., & Trudgill, P. (Eds.). (1998). *Language myths*. Penguin Books.
Di Sciullo, A. M., & Williams, E. (1987). *On the definition of word*. MIT Press.
Hockett, C. F. (1958). *A course in modern linguistics*. Macmillan.
Langacker, R. W. (1972). *Fundamentals of linguistic analysis*. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
Palmer, F. R. (1984). *Grammar* (2nd ed.). Penguin Books.

**C. English grammar**

Biber, D., Conrad, S., & Leech, G. (2002). *Longman student grammar of spoken and written English*. Longman.

Carter, R., & McCarthy, M. (2006). *Cambridge grammar of English: A comprehensive guide—Spoken and written English grammar and usage*. Cambridge University Press.
Huddleston, R., & Pullum, G. K. (2002). *The Cambridge grammar of the English language*. Cambridge University Press.
McCawley, J. D. (1988). *The syntactic phenomena of English*. University of Chicago Press.
Quirk, R., Greenbaum, S., Leech, G., & Svartvik, J. (1985). *A comprehensive grammar of the English language*. Longman.

**D. Chinese grammar**

Chao, Y. R. (1968). *A grammar of spoken Chinese*. University of California Press.
Huang, C. R., & Shi, D. (Eds.). (2016). *A reference grammar of Chinese*. Cambridge University Press.
Huang, C.-T. J., Li, Y.-H. A., & Li, Y. (2009). *The syntax of Chinese*. Cambridge University Press.
Li, C. N., & Thompson, S. A. (1981). *Mandarin Chinese: A functional reference grammar*. University of California Press.

**E. Academic writing style**

Ohashi, Y. (1978). *English style: Grammatical and semantic approach*. Newberry House.
Strunk, W., Jr., & White, E. B. (2000). *The elements of style* (4th ed.). Allyn & Bacon.
Wallwork, A. (2013). *English for academic research: Grammar, usage and style*. Springer.

**F. Research methods**

Coolican, H. (2004). *Research methods and statistics in psychology* (4th ed.). Hodder & Stoughton.
Johnson, K. (2008). *Quantitative methods in linguistics*. Blackwell.
Litosseliti, L. (Ed.). (2010). *Research methods in linguistics*. Continuum.
Sharp, J. A., Peters, J., & Howard, K. (2002). *The management of a student research project* (3rd ed.). Gower.
Wen, Q. (2001). *Applied linguistics: Research methods and thesis writing* [應用語言學：研究方法與論文寫作]. Foreign Language Teaching and Research Press.

- Lecture PowerPoint slides will be posted on the Blackboard website for download before class.
- The relevant concepts and techniques will be introduced and discussed in class. They include - but are not limited to - materials found in the textbook. Disclaimer: In case of any conflict, in-class instructions always have precedence over the textbook.

## 10. Feedback for evaluation

- You are more than welcome to share your thoughts and concerns by emailing your feedback or questions to us, or making in-person/virtual appointments with us.
- Whenever you feel that you are falling behind and have content questions, please also do not hesitate to ask us for help!
- When you contact us via emails, please kindly put "LING2008 Linguistic Argumentation II" in the subject line and allow us **24 hours (on weekdays)** to respond.

## 11. Course schedule (subject to change)

| Week | Date | Topic | Requirements/comments (required readings are marked with *) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Sep 10 | Course overview | Langacker, R. W. (1972). Ch. 2.1 "The |

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|---|---|---|---|
| | | [Module 6] Topics in Linguistics III: Arguing about the existence and categorization of linguistic units #1:<br><br>An overview of wordhood;<br>Morphosyntactic and semantic criteria | isolation of words". In *Fundamentals of Linguistic Analysis*, pp. 36-50. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.<br>Bauer, L. (2003). Ch. 4 "Defining the word form". In *Introducing Linguistic Morphology*, (2nd ed.), pp. 57-69. Edinburgh University Press. |
| 2 | Sep 17 | [Module 6] Topics in Linguistics III: Arguing about the existence and categorization of linguistic units #2:<br><br>Wordhood in Chinese<br><br>[Module 9] Argumentation<br><br>Mini-debate #1-1 | *Duanmu, S. (1998). "Wordhood in Chinese". In J. L. Packard (Ed.), *New Approaches to Chinese Word Formation: Morphology, Phonology and the Lexicon in Modern and Ancient Chinese*, pp. 135-159 (Sections 1-2). De Gruyter Mouton.<br>https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110809084.135 |
| 3 | Sep 24 | [Module 6] Topics in Linguistics III: Arguing about the existence and categorization of linguistic units #3:<br><br>An overview of parts of speech;<br>Parts of speech in Chinese<br><br>[Module 9] Argumentation<br><br>Mini-debate #1-2 | *Paul, W. (2010). Adjectives in Mandarin Chinese: The rehabilitation of a much ostracized category. In P. Cabredo Hofherr & O. Matushansky (Eds.), *Adjectives* (Vol. 153, pp. 115–152). John Benjamins Publishing Company.<br>https://doi.org/10.1075/la.153.04pau. |
| 4 | Oct 1 | No class: Public holiday | |
| 5 | Oct 8 | [Module 7] Topics in Linguistics IV: Arguing about realizations of and interactions among linguistic units #1:<br><br>[Module 9] Argumentation<br><br>Mini-debate #2-1 | *Lan, C., & Mok, P. (2026). Acoustic Cues in the Production and Perception of Cantonese Sarcasm. *Language and Speech*, *69*(2), 378-411.<br>https://doi.org/10.1177/00238309251333766 |
| 6 | Oct 15 | [Module 7] Topics in Linguistics IV: Arguing about realizations of and interactions among linguistic units #2:<br><br>[Module 9] Argumentation<br><br>Mini-debate #2-2 | *Mok, P. P., Zuo, D., & Wong, P. W. (2013). Production and perception of a sound change in progress: Tone merging in Hong Kong Cantonese. *Language variation and change*, *25*(3), 341-370.<br>https://doi.org/10.1017/S0954394513000161 |
| 7 | Oct 22 | [Module 7] Topics in Linguistics IV: Arguing about realizations of and interactions among linguistic units #3:<br><br>[Module 9] Argumentation<br><br>Mini-debate #2-2 | *Kirby, J. P., & Yu, A. C. (2007). Lexical and phonotactic effects on wordlikeness judgments in Cantonese. In *Proceedings of the International congress of the Phonetic Sciences XVI* (Vol. 13891392, p. 81). Germany: Saarbrücken.<br>*Ma, J. K. Y., Ciocca, V., & Whitehill, T. L. (2011). The perception of intonation questions and statements in Cantonese. *The* |

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|---|---|---|---|
| | | | *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, *129*(2), 1012-1023. https://doi.org/10.1121/1.3531840 |
| 8 | Oct 29 | **In-class completion of reading-based essay** | Due: 12:15pm |
| 9 | Nov 5 | [Module 8] Topics in Linguistics V: Formulating, justifying, and articulating a research idea in linguistics #1:<br><br>An overview | |
| 10 | Nov 12 | No class: 97th Congregation | |
| 11 | Nov 19 | [Module 8] Topics in Linguistics V: Formulating, justifying, and articulating a research idea in linguistics #2:<br><br>Format of a research proposal, thesis & academic writing<br><br>[Module 9] Argumentation | |
| 12 | Nov 26 | [Module 8] Topics in Linguistics V: Formulating, justifying, and articulating a research idea in linguistics #3:<br><br>How to do a literature review<br><br>[Module 9] Argumentation | |
| 13 | Dec 3 | [Module 8] Topics in Linguistics V: Formulating, justifying, and articulating a research idea in linguistics #4:<br><br>Exploring research topics in syntax, semantics, phonetics, and phonology<br><br>[Module 9] Argumentation | |
| 14 | Dec 7 (make-up class I) | [Module 8] Topics in Linguistics V: Formulating, justifying, and articulating a research idea in linguistics #5:<br><br>Research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches<br><br>[Module 9] Argumentation | Time and location TBA |
| | Dec 8 (make-up class | [Module 8] Topics in Linguistics V: Formulating, justifying, and articulating a research idea in linguistics #6: | Time and location TBA |

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|---|---|---|---|
| | II) | Research tools for data access and reference management: databases and software | |
| | Dec 12 | Research **proposal submission** | Due: 11:59pm |
| 15 | | One-on-one **oral defense** | Time and location TBA |

## 12. Teachers' and TA's contact details

| **Instructor:** | |
|---|---|
| Name: | CHEN Zhuo 陳卓 |
| Office Location: | G27 Leung Kau Kui Building, https://cuhk.zoom.us/j/5652900145 |
| Email: | zhuochen[AT]cuhk.edu.hk |
| Teaching Venue: | Lecture: Thu 9:30-11:15am, Tsang Shiu Tim Bldg 105<br>Tutorial: Thu 11:30am-12:15pm, Tsang Shiu Tim Bldg 105 |
| Office hours: | By appointment |

| **Teaching Assistant/Tutor:** | |
|---|---|
| Name: | WANG Hongyan, YU Zhiyin Danny |
| Office Location: | |
| Email: | hongyanwang[AT]link.cuhk.edu.hk,<br>dannyzhiyinyu[AT]link.cuhk.edu.hk |
| Office hours: | By appointment |

## 13. Details of course website

- We will use the course Blackboard website to post course materials (lecture handouts and optional readings), assignments, and announcements.
- We will also send out email reminders once we post assignments and make announcements, please make sure to check your email regularly.

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

**All use of AI tools is prohibited**

In any kind of learning activity or assessment that will be counted towards the final course grades (or used for evaluating attainment of the desired learning outcomes), students are not allowed to submit work which is produced with the collaboration of or supported by the use of any AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT, DeepSeek, Grok, Claude, Gemini, etc.).

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

In case of queries, students should seek advice from the course teacher.

## 15. 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.

**16. Guideline on sharing lecture recordings**

Attention is drawn to the following:

- The copyright of any lecture recordings shared in the course, whether they are produced by teachers, students, or peer note-takers, belongs to the University.
- Students should not share these recordings with others without obtaining prior written consent from the teacher(s).

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