

City University of Hong Kong

Information on a Course
offered by Department of English
with effect from **Semester A in 2008 / 2009**

This form is for completion by the Course Co-ordinator/Examiner. The information provided on this form will be deemed to be the official record of the details of the course. It has multipurpose use: for the University's database, and for publishing in various University publications including the Blackboard, and documents for students and others as necessary.

Please refer to the Explanatory Notes attached to this Form on the various items of information required.

Part I

Course Title:	English and Chinese in contrast
Course Code:	EN2304
Course Duration:	1 semester
No. of Credit Units:	3
Level:	B2
Medium of Instruction:	English
Prerequisites:	Nil
Precursors:	Nil
Equivalent Courses:	Nil
Exclusive Courses:	Nil

Part II

1. Course Aims:

This course aims at familiarizing students with some fundamental lexico-grammatical and pronunciation differences between English and Chinese in order to help them understand the nature of learning difficulties encountered by Chinese learners of English in the ESL (English as a second language) learning process. The contrasts will focus on specific grammatical subsystems of the two standard languages. Common ESL errors among Hong Kong Chinese learners will be used to illustrate the adverse influences of the learners' mother tongue (Chinese) on their 'learner English' output.

2. Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

(state what the student is expected to be able to do at the end of the course according to a given standard of performance)

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

No.	CILOs	Weighting (if applicable)
1.	Identify the fundamental grammatical differences between English (British and American English) and Chinese (Cantonese and standard Chinese);	
2.	Analyze the fundamental grammatical differences between English (British and American English) and Chinese (Cantonese and standard Chinese);	
3.	Identify the fundamental pronunciation differences between English (British and American English) and Chinese (Cantonese);	
4.	Analyze the fundamental pronunciation differences between English (British and American English) and Chinese (Cantonese);	
5.	Apply their understanding of the salient contrastive differences between English and Chinese to overcome ESL learning difficulties encountered by Chinese ESL learners.	

3. Teaching and learning Activities (TLAs)

(designed to facilitate students' achievement of the CILOs)

This section is indicative of likely activities and tasks students will undertake to learn in this course. Final details will be provided to students in the first week.

CILO No	TLAs	Hours/week (if applicable)
CILOs	Reading the course book	5 hours / week

1 - 5	The course book, written specifically for this course, contains 8 chapters covering all the topics on the English-Chinese contrastive differences covered in the syllabus, including a set of questions at the end of each chapter. Students are encouraged to have completed the reading assignment(s) of the week before class.	over 13 wks
CILOs 1 - 5	Interactive Lecturing There will be one three-hour lesson every week. In the lessons, basic concepts in the fundamental grammatical and pronunciation differences between English and Chinese will be discussed. The problems encountered by Chinese ESL learners as a result of the differences will also be discussed.	2 hours / week over 13 wks
CILOs 1 - 5	In-Class Activities In the lessons, consolidating exercises will be given to students for reinforcement and/or for checking students' understanding. Some common ESL errors among Hong Kong Chinese ESL learners will be used to illustrate a variety of adverse influences of Chinese on Chinese ESL learners' English output. Some discussion topics may also be given to provide students with an opportunity to apply the concepts presented and to consider some of the controversies which exist in the study of individual topics.	1 hour / week over 13 wks

4. Assessment Tasks/Activities

(designed to assess how well the students achieve the CILOs)

This section is indicative of likely activities and tasks students will undertake to learn in this course. Final details will be provided to students during the semester.

CILO No	Type of assessment tasks/activities	Weighting (if)	Remarks
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		applicable)	
CILOs 1, 2, 5	<p>In-class Test</p> <p>One 50-minute test will be designed to help students revise and learn the concepts covered in the course. Their performance in the tests will be assessed individually according to how well they are able to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. identify and analyze the grammatical differences between English and Chinese; b. apply their understanding of the grammatical differences between English and Chinese to overcome ESL learning difficulties encountered by Chinese ESL learners. <p>Students are encouraged to do continuous revision throughout the course.</p>	20%	Individual work; to be assessed individually
CILOs 5	<p>Individual Assignment</p> <p>One individual assignment will be given to students to apply their understanding of the salient contrastive differences between Chinese and English to overcome ESL learning difficulties encountered by Chinese ESL learners</p>	40%	Individual work; to be assessed individually
CILOs 1 - 5	<p>End-of-Semester Examination</p> <p>One 2-hour examination will be designed to help students revise and learn the concepts</p>	40%	Individual work; to be assessed individually

	<p>covered in the course. Their performance in the exam will be assessed individually according to how well they are able to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. identify and analyze the grammatical differences between English and Chinese; b. identify and analyze the pronunciation differences between English and Chinese c. apply their understanding of the grammatical and pronunciation differences between Chinese and English to overcome ESL learning difficulties encountered by Chinese ESL learners. <p>Students are encouraged to do continuous revision throughout the course.</p>		
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5. Grading of Student Achievement:

Grading pattern: Standard (A+, A, A-....F). Grading is based on student performance in assessment tasks/activities.

Non-essay type questions in the in-class test and the examination will be marked according to the accuracy of the answers. Correct answers will be awarded full marks of the respective questions, half-correct answers will be awarded half of the marks devoted to the respective questions, and wrong or irrelevant answers will be awarded zero.

Criteria for Assessment

Essay type questions in the in-class test, examination and assignment will be marked according to the following criteria.

Grade A: Students demonstrate excellent skills in identifying and analyzing the grammatical and pronunciation differences between English and Chinese and in applying their understanding of the grammatical and pronunciation differences between Chinese and English to overcome ESL learning difficulties encountered by Chinese ESL learners. They also consistently maintain a high degree of grammatical accuracy in giving identifications, analyses, and applications.

Grade B: Students demonstrate good skills in identifying and analyzing the grammatical and pronunciation differences between English and Chinese and in applying their understanding of the grammatical and pronunciation differences between Chinese and

English to overcome ESL learning difficulties encountered by Chinese ESL learners. They also show a relatively high degree of grammatical control in giving identifications, analyses, and applications.

Grade C: Student demonstrate adequate skills in identifying and analyzing the grammatical and pronunciation differences between English and Chinese and in applying their understanding of the grammatical and pronunciation differences between Chinese and English to overcome ESL learning difficulties encountered by Chinese ESL learners. They also communicate with reasonable accuracy in giving identifications, analyses, and applications.

Grade D: Student demonstrate very limited skills in identifying and analyzing the grammatical and pronunciation differences between English and Chinese and in applying their understanding of the grammatical and pronunciation differences between Chinese and English to overcome ESL learning difficulties encountered by Chinese ESL learners. They also use simple structures correctly in giving identifications, analyses, and applications.

Grade F: Student cannot demonstrate skills in identifying and analyzing the grammatical and pronunciation differences between English and Chinese and in applying their understanding of the grammatical and pronunciation differences between Chinese and English to overcome ESL learning difficulties encountered by Chinese ESL learners. They also show only limited control of a few simple grammatical structures and sentence patterns in giving identifications, analyses, and applications.

Part III

Keyword Syllabus:

Contrastive analysis, error analysis, and understanding negative transfer in the ESL learning process

- Outline of Contrastive Analysis (CA) and Error Analysis (EA)
- The distinction between error and mistake

Structural differences and negative transfer

- One finite verb per clause in English vs. chaining of verbs in Chinese
- Noun groups, gerundial phrases, and noun clauses
- Conditional statements in English and their Chinese counterparts
- Word class morphology
- Calque or direct translation
- Pseudo-tough movement
- Differences in Q-A sequence between English and Chinese
- Word order and the position of the question word
- Ellipsis in Chinese and English in the expression of comparison
- Europeanization and the influence of Western languages on Chinese grammar
- Passives in English and Chinese
- Chinese learners' problems with the English passive

Some typological differences between Chinese and English

- Basic writing unit: ‘word’ vs. character
- Morphemic structure and syllabic structure
- Writing systems: The English alphabet vs. logographic morpho-syllables
- Language family and typological distance: Indo-European vs. Sino-Tibetan
- Subject-prominence vs. topic-prominence

Word classes and grammatical categories

- Grammar and redundancy
- Word class and syntactic function
- Grammatical category
- Nouns; Syntactic features of nouns in general
- Syntactic features specific to Chinese nouns
- Chinese and English pronouns in contrast
- ‘Dummy it’ and ‘cleft sentence’
- Relative pronouns; Chinese pronouns
- Articles vs. measure words
- English and Chinese adjectives in contrast
- Expressing the comparative and the superlative
- The construction: ‘too ADJ to V’
- The semantics of English -ing adjectives and -ed adjectives
- Adverbs
- Prepositions
- Divergent transitivity patterns
- omission and misuse of prepositions
- Conjunctions
- Hypotaxis and parataxis

Pronunciation problems and Cantonese–English contrastive phonology

- Cantonese and English vowels
- Cantonese and English consonants
- Consonant clusters and the maximal syllable structure in Cantonese
- Rhythm and intonation

Recommended Readings:

- Chan, A.Y.W. (2004). Noun phrases in Chinese and English: a study of English structural problems encountered by Chinese ESL students in Hong Kong. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, 17.1: 33-47.
- Chan, A.Y.W. (2004). Although ... but; because ... so: why can't they be used together? *Modern English Teacher*, 13.2: 24-25.
- Chan, A.Y.W. (2006). An algorithmic approach to error correction: an empirical study. *Foreign Language Annals*, 39.1: 131-147.
- Li, D.C.S. (1999). The functions and status of English in Hong Kong: a post-1997 update. *English World-Wide*, 20.1: 67-110.
- Li, D.C.S. (2000). ‘Hong Kong English’: new variety of English or interlanguage? *English Australia EA Journal*, 18.1: 50-59.

Li, David. C.S. (2007). *English and Chinese in Contrast*. Department of English and Communication, City University of Hong Kong. Unpublished manuscript.

Luke, K.K. and Richards, J.C. (1982). English in Hong Kong: functions and status. *English Worldwide*, 3.1: 47-64.

Yip, V. (1995). *Interlanguage and learnability: from Chinese to English*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
<http://personal.cityu.edu.hk/~encrproj/>

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