

Programme Structure

Master of Arts Programme in Chinese Linguistics and Language Acquisition

Introduction

To promote Chinese linguistics and its applications to other disciplines of research, and to respond to the growing global demand for the teaching and learning of Chinese as a second/foreign language, the Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages of the Chinese University of Hong Kong offers an MA programme in Chinese Linguistics and Language Acquisition. The programme aims to provide students with systematic training in Chinese language structure and the acquisition of Chinese, to help them develop a firm grasp of the complexities of the language, and an informed understanding of the teaching and learning of Chinese in monolingual and multilingual communities.

Objectives

- (i) to enable students to acquire a rich understanding of the systematic design of Mandarin Chinese, through providing them with principled accounts of language phenomena in Chinese, in comparison to other languages and other Chinese dialects;
- (ii) to equip students with methodological tools for the analysis of the structure of the Chinese language, and for the empirical study of learners of Chinese, as well as the dynamics of the teaching and learning process.
- (iii) to enhance students' understanding of the complexities of second/foreign language learning and second dialect learning in the context of multi-lingual and multi-dialectal communities.

Learning Outcomes

- (i) Students will achieve a theory-based and informed understanding of the structure of Mandarin Chinese, and of the major findings related to the acquisition of the core features of Mandarin Chinese as a first or second/foreign language.

- (ii) Students will be familiar with selected methodological tools used in the analysis of language form, language acquisition, and language performance, such as computerized corpora, naturalistic and experimental methods of data collection, data processing, and frameworks for analysis.
- (iii) Students will be able to approach a teaching and learning problem with a deep appreciation of the complex array of variables underlying the learning of Chinese as a second/foreign language, and as a second dialect, in multilingual and multidialectal settings.
- (iv) Students will gain practical experience in investigating the Chinese language through supervised training in conducting linguistic research under laboratory conditions, or engaging themselves in experimental teaching of Chinese as a second/foreign language, against the background of theoretical and typological understanding of the structure of Mandarin Chinese and current developments in language acquisition.

Programme Structure

The programme is offered in both full-time and part-time modes. The full-time mode covers a normal period of one academic year while the part-time mode covers a normal period of two academic years. Students are required to complete a total of 27 units, including 15 units of required courses and 12 units of elective courses.



Course List

Course List

Course Title	MOI	Unit
Required Courses (15 units)		
Foundations in Linguistics and Applied Linguistics	P	3
Chinese Language Acquisition	P	3
Chinese Syntax and Semantics	P	3
Chinese Phonetics and Phonology	P	3
Linguistics and Language Teaching	P	3
Elective Courses (12 units)		
Foundations in Linguistics I	E	3
Foundations in Linguistics II	E	3
Topics in Contemporary Chinese Linguistics	P/E	3
Topics in Comparative Grammar	P/E	3
Topics in Language Acquisition	E	3
Topics in Sign Language Research	E	3
Topics in Sociolinguistics	E	3
Topics in Language Change	E	3
Topics in Pragmatics	E	3
Special Topics in Linguistics	E	3
Seminars in Linguistic Research	E	3
Research Project	P/E	6
Field Practicum	P	3
Chinese Culture and the Teaching of Chinese	C	3
Chinese Language Curriculum and Assessment	C	3

(MOI: Medium of instruction; P: Putonghua; E: English; C: Cantonese)

Course Descriptions

Required Courses

Foundations in Linguistics and Applied Linguistics

This course introduces students to foundational concepts in the study of linguistic competence, and trains them in analytical methods for the comparative study of grammar. The course is concerned with how comparative analysis of language structure can shed light on the mechanisms and processes of language learning in naturalistic and pedagogic contexts. The course also aims to familiarize students with the complex factors affecting language acquisition and language use in multilingual and multidialectal communities.

Course Descriptions

Chinese Language Acquisition

This course aims to introduce the major tenets of generative and usage-based approaches to language acquisition, with a focus on the characteristics of the learner and the learning situation in first and second language. The course familiarizes students with the basic methodology and tools for analyzing acquisition data. It critically surveys the major findings on the acquisition of Chinese as a first language and as a second language.

Chinese Syntax and Semantics

This course aims to acquaint students with fundamental issues in the syntax and semantics of the Chinese language and the related theoretical implications. Through an investigation of a rich array of data, students will have the opportunity to appreciate the inner workings of the Chinese language with regard to its structural and semantic properties, to enrich and broaden their understanding of linguistic theories and methodologies, to develop skills in analyzing Chinese phrases and sentences, and to defend their analysis systematically.

Chinese Phonetics and Phonology

This course introduces general aspects of modern Chinese phonetics and phonology, including both segmental and prosodic characteristics. Students will be trained to compare and analyze sound patterns of standard Chinese and other Chinese dialects from different theoretical approaches. The final goal of the course is to provide students with a solid foundation for further phonological research.

Linguistics and Language Teaching

The course aims to highlight the relevance of linguistic studies to language teaching. Various pedagogical issues such as curriculum development, teaching methodology, language assessment, language development and professional teacher training will be discussed in light of theories of general and applied linguistics. Students are encouraged to reflect upon their language teaching experience and problems and seek an explanation from the perspective of theories and issues in general and applied linguistics.

Qualifications for Admission

Elective Courses

Please visit the homepage of the Department at <http://www.cuhk.edu/lin> for the course description of the elective courses.

Qualifications for Admission

The programme appeals to current or prospective Chinese language teachers and students of Chinese who are interested in a scientific understanding of the cognitive processes underlying language learning and teaching. The applicants must meet the general qualifications for admission of the Graduate School of the Chinese University of Hong Kong (<http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/gss>), and must possess a bachelor's degree or equivalent from a recognized tertiary institute. All applicants are required to submit a written statement explaining the purpose of their application and the focus of their academic interests. Applicants may be required to attend an interview and take a written test as part of the admission process. Past academic record, work experience, references, and language abilities will be considered in the admission decision. Proficiency in Putonghua is required.

Application Deadline 29 February 2008

Tuition Fee (Provisional)

HK\$81,000 per annum (Full-time)

HK\$40,500 per annum (Part-time)

Contact Methods

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漢語 語言學及語言獲得文學碩士



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