

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
UG Course Syllabus
Spring 2025-2026

Cantonese for Non-Chinese Language Background Students I

LANG1130

3 Credits (free elective)

Pre-/co-requisites: LANG 1130 is open to UST undergraduates of non-Chinese speaking background (including exchange students) and for complete beginners only.

No pre-requisites and co-requisites are required.

Name of Course Leader: Alfred TSANG

Email of Course Leader: lcalfred@ust.hk

Office Hours: By appointment. Students should contact their section instructor directly with questions.

Course Description

LANG 1130 is a credit-bearing Cantonese elective course for UST undergraduates of non-Chinese speaking background. It equips students with the Cantonese proficiency and communication competence necessary for living and networking in Hong Kong, thus facilitating their smooth integration into the local community. The learning activities involve developing students' listening and speaking skills in an attempt to build learners' confidence and fluency in using Cantonese for daily communication. Students attend three hours of class and complete up to six hours of out-of-class work, per week. The course is offered in Fall and Spring semesters.

Course outlines:

Week	Course Topics
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Greeting and getting to know each other
1-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Basic knowledge of Cantonese PhonologyRecognizing frequently used Chinese characters and phrases
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Talking about self and others
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Asking for and giving personal information
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ordering food and drinks
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Telling the time and date
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Talking about schedules and timetables
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Making appointments
8	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Mid-Term Assessment
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Going places
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Talking about likes, dislikes, interests and hobbies
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Asking for prices and bargaining
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Exchanging phone numbers and making phone calls
13	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Final Assessment

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Acquire knowledge of Cantonese phonological and tonal systems
2. Demonstrate interest in and appreciation of Cantonese culture, and show cross-cultural awareness
3. Achieve basic communicative tasks in listening and speaking on topics or conversations closely related to personal and school contexts for daily and social interactions
4. Understand basic Cantonese grammar for effective oral communication

5. Use a range of Cantonese vocabulary and simple colloquial expressions appropriately
6. Identify, evaluate, select, critique, integrate, and cite relevant information from culture-related sources to complete the research report on Hong Kong culture.
7. Develop ideas clearly and fully.
8. Organize ideas coherently, ensuring logical flow and focused development from sentence to text level.

Assessment and Grading

This course will be assessed using criterion-referencing and grades will not be assigned using a curve.

Assessments:

Assessment Task	Contribution to Overall Course grade (%)	Due date
A1a: In-class listening comprehension	15%	First lesson of Week 8
A1b: In-class speech (1.5 minutes, individual)	20%	Second lesson of Week 8
A2: Individual research project report (1000 English words, topic - an aspect of Hong Kong culture)	15%	17:00, Friday of Week 13
A3a: In-class speech (1.5 minutes, individual)	15%	Second lesson of Week 13
A3b: Dialogue with instructor (1.5 minutes, individual)	15%	
Group project: in-class role-play presentation	10%	First lesson of Week 13
Peer Evaluation	5%	17:00, Friday of Week 13
Online contributions via Canvas discussions	5%	spread through course

* Assessment marks for individual assessed tasks will be released within two weeks of the due date.

Mapping of Course ILOs to Main Assessment Tasks

Assessed Task	Mapped ILOs	Explanation
A1a: In-class listening comprehension A1b: In-class speech (1.5 minutes, individual)	ILO3, ILO4, ILO5	These tasks assess students' abilities to achieve basic communicative tasks in listening and speaking on the topics or conversations closely related to personal and school contexts for daily and social interactions (ILO3), understand basic Cantonese grammar for effective oral communication (ILO4), and use a range of Cantonese vocabulary and simple colloquial expressions appropriately (ILO5)
A2: Individual research project report (1000 English words, topic - an aspect of Hong Kong culture)	ILO2, ILO6, ILO7, ILO8	This task assesses students' ability to demonstrate interest in and appreciation of Cantonese culture, and show cross-cultural awareness (ILO2), critique and synthesize information from multiple sources (ILO6) to fully and clearly develop ideas (ILO7) that are communicated coherently (ILO8) in cultural research report
A3a: In-class speech (1.5 minutes, individual) A3b: Dialogue with instructor (1.5 minutes, individual)	ILO3, ILO4, ILO5	These tasks assess students' abilities to achieve basic communicative tasks in listening and speaking on the topics or conversations closely related to personal and school contexts for daily and social interactions (ILO3), understand basic Cantonese grammar for effective oral communication (ILO4), and use a range of Cantonese

		vocabulary and simple colloquial expressions appropriately (ILO5)
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Grading Rubrics

Detailed rubrics for each assignment will be provided on the course Canvas site. These rubrics clearly outline the criteria used for evaluation. Students can refer to these rubrics to understand how their work will be assessed.

Final Grade Descriptors

Grades	Short Description	Elaboration on subject grading description
A	Excellent Performance	Demonstrates abilities to use sophisticated Cantonese and non-verbal communication skills, flexible, rich, coherent, expressive written English, and apply engaging multimodal approaches to create discourses for various language tasks, which are based on a high level of creative thinking, critical thinking, digital context awareness, information analysis and synthesis. Displays significant achievement in self-reflection, cooperative learning, and problem-solving initiatives.
B	Good Performance	Demonstrates abilities to use fluent Cantonese, appropriate non-verbal communication, accurate, clear, concise, coherent written English, and apply some multimodal elements to produce discourses for various language tasks, which are based on critical thinking, digital context awareness, information analysis and synthesis. Shows a strong sense of self-reflection, cooperative learning, and problem-solving initiatives.
C	Satisfactory Performance	Demonstrates abilities to use Cantonese, some non-verbal communication, and adequate written English to complete discourses, which are based on some capacity for critical thinking, information analysis and synthesis. Shows persistence and effort to achieve broadly defined learning goals.
D	Marginal Pass	Shows a certain level of ability to use Cantonese to do simple communication. Has the potential to further develop Cantonese proficiency, awareness of communication, and/or learning motivation and attitude.
F	Fail	Demonstrates insufficient understanding of the course content and requirements. Shows very limited abilities in the Cantonese and/or lack of effort towards achieving learning goals.

Course AI Policy

We encourage students to make use of all the tools available that can help them to communicate more effectively in Cantonese. We also expect students to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity. There is no penalty for using or not using GenAI. However, GenAI and other tools cannot be used as a substitute for a student's own work. Students are expected to complete their own assessed assignments and to prepare their presentations themselves.

Communication and Feedback

Assessment marks for individual assessed tasks will be communicated via Canvas within two weeks of submission. Feedback on assignments will include strengths and areas for improvement. Students who have further questions about the feedback including marks should consult the instructor within five working days after the feedback is received.

Resubmission Policy

Resubmissions are not accepted, except in exceptional circumstances.

Required Texts and Materials

Course materials and additional resources are provided via Canvas.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to adhere to the university's academic integrity policy. Students are expected to uphold HKUST's Academic Honor Code and to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. The University has zero tolerance of academic misconduct. Please refer to [Academic Integrity | HKUST – Academic Registry](#) for the University's definition of plagiarism and ways to avoid cheating and plagiarism.