This course provides an overview of the legal system of Hong Kong and familiarises students with trial procedures, characteristics of legal English, common terms pertaining to trial proceedings, as well as principles and protocols associated with interpreting in the judicial system. Students will practise sight-translating of legal texts and other court-related documents, and interpreting—consecutively or simultaneously as appropriate—courtroom speeches, including witness testimony, submissions by counsel, jury instructions and court judgments. This is a workshop-based course supplemented by lectures, a mock trial and a court visit to observe court interpreters at work.
DEMONSTRATION VIDEO OF LEGAL INTERPRETING IN THE CONSECUTIVE MODE
CHIN2343—LEGAL INTERPRETING
COURSE INFORMATION

• Elective advanced translation course offered from 2009/2010

• Use of authentic court proceedings as teaching material (9 criminal trials; permission obtained from High Court Registrar)

• Supported by Leung Kau Kui Research and Teaching Endowment Fund (2009; HKD40,000), two TDGs (2014 & 2016; HKD226,440 & HKD126,609), and Education Plan of RGC (ECS) project (2017; HKD50,000)
COURSE STRUCTURE

Lectures

Essay

Final test

Mock trial

Workshops

Court visits

Mock trial

Final test

Essay

Workshops

Court visits

Lectures
LECTURES

• Legal system of Hong Kong
• Common-law adversarial system versus Civil-law inquisitorial system
• Structures of Courts in Hong Kong
• Terms linked with Criminal Proceedings
• Practice of court interpreting in Hong Kong
• Characteristics of Legal Language and Spoken Legal Language in the Courtroom
• Prerequisites for Court Interpreting and Ethical Standards and Responsibilities of the Court Interpreter
COURTROOM COMMUNICATION

• The law is a profession of words (Mellinkoff 1964)
• A common law trial is a battle fought not with swords but with words (Maley 1994)
• Oral tradition of the common law system
• Strategic use of language in witness examination
• Ability for students to differentiate ISQs from CSQs, real questions from rhetorical questions, or to reproduce sarcasm etc. in the target language.
WORKSHOP IN THE LANGUAGE LAB

• Students practise interpreting court documents/speeches in three modes of interpreting, CI, SI, ST

• Interpretation of individual students audio recorded

• Teacher monitors student performance in class

• Discussion and comments from teacher and peers in class
EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING – COURT VISITS

• Visits to the High Court to observe court interpreters at work
EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AND INTERDISCIPLINARITY IN COLLABORATION WITH FACULTY OF LAW

Mock trials in the moot court (video-recorded)
EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING AND INTERDISCIPLINARITY IN COLLABORATION WITH FACULTY OF LAW

Mock trial in the High court (video recorded)
ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

- Accuracy & completeness
- Fluency of delivery
- Language - grammar, syntax & diction
- Voice, articulation & poise
ASSESSMENT METHODS

Formative assessment

• In-class assessment during workshops, instant feedback to students in class in every workshop.
• Review of video footage of mock trial with individual students

Summative assessment

• Mid-term assessment of audio recordings collected from workshops with assessment reports given back and explained to individual students
• Final test – oral
• Essay
ASSESSMENT RATIO

• In-class practice: 35%
• Term paper: 10%
• Self-practice: 5% (10 hours)
• Final test: 50%
ONLINE LEARNING TOOLKITS TO ENHANCE T&L

A WEBSITE AND A MOBILE APP