

# CH 770

## LITERARY LANGUAGE IN MODERN CHINESE

Instructor: TBA  
Credit: 5  
Time: TBA  
Room: TBA  
Office Hour: TBA

### Course Description

This course aims at familiarizing the learners with a difficult but frequently encountered discourse strategy in contemporary China: the employment of literary language in spoken discourse among professionals—unscripted spoken discussions by experts on topics in the related domains such as education, business, government, etc. “Employment of literary language” in this course specifically refers to the following three areas: the insertion of written classical Chinese (文言文) vocabularies and structures, various ways of employing chéngyǔ (成语)—proverbs or standardized expressions, and the basic metaphorical fields utilized in these discussions. The course treats the above mentioned practices not just as some “add-on” rhetorical techniques that merely make a speech sound better, but to treat them as discourse strategies that serve basic functions such as to conceive and communicate concepts, to build desirable images of the speakers, to bring closer or to expand farther the distance between the speakers and their listeners, etc. The goal of the course is to train the learners to be familiar with a body of Chinese literary language as well as the purposes, functions, and structures of various applications of these languages in modern spoken Chinese.

### The Rationale

In reality, an overwhelmingly large portion of activities a foreign language learner encounters in the target culture is unscripted spoken discourse. Learners possess true advanced level skills must be able to follow unscripted discussions by professionals on topics of the related domains. Most currently available courses focus on the study of printed materials (fictions, essays, commentaries) and/or scripted audio materials (dialogues and narratives from movies as well as news broadcast from television and/or radio). It’s time for us to bring unscripted spoken discourse into the playing field.

While the existing course “Tell It Like It Is” (TILIS) provides general introduction and training on various aspects of spontaneous spoken Chinese discourse, this course differs in the following two areas: 1) the materials being studied present more professional discussions on more “serious” issues (How do Chinese companies compete internationally? How to present an official version of a modern China? Re-examining the new economy, etc.) as oppose to “TILIS”’s more folksy arguments on general cultural and social topics (child spanking, playing vs. studying, quitting smoking, etc.); 2) it focuses on the strategy of applying literary language in spoken

discussion—a frequently encountered practice that remains one of the most difficult obstacles to non-native speakers.

The instructional materials chosen for this course consists of five episodes from the talk show *Dialogues* (《对话》) created by China Central Television from 2001 to present. The general format of the talk show is that, for the first half of the show, the host conducts discussions with one or two main guests a few more secondary guests, all established experts in their respective domains, on topics that are considered crucial in their fields; during the second half of the show, the floor opens to all in the studio mostly in the form of the main guests answering questions from the audiences. The chosen five episodes cover a very useful range of topics, personas, levels and discourse strategies—all within the general framework of discussing economic and political issues as professionals in the fields at the same time present enough diversity to see how people of different social, political, economical and educational backgrounds and status employ different approaches towards the issues.

### **Textbooks/Instructional Materials**

《MBA与职业生涯: 谭海音、杨伟强》

(《对话》系列, VCD)

中国国际电视总公司 出版

ISRC: CN-A03-01-321-58/V.J9

Available in the media lab

《中国企业国际竞争力: 俞尧昌》

(《对话》系列, VCD)

中国国际电视总公司 出版

ISRC: CN-A03-01-321-52/V.J9

Available in the media lab

《新经济的再搜索: 张朝阳》

(《对话》系列, VCD)

中国国际电视总公司 出版

ISRC: CN-A03-01-321-14/V.J9

Available in the media lab

《告诉你一个当代的中国: 孙家正、赵启正》

(《对话》系列, VCD)

中国国际电视总公司 出版

ISRC: CN-A03-01-321-38/V.J9

Available in the media lab

《龙永图谈人才: 龙永图》

(《对话》系列, VCD)

中国国际电视总公司 出版  
ISRC: CN-A03-01-321-39/V.J9  
Available in the media lab  
新华成语词典  
商务印书馆辞书研究中心 编  
商务印书馆2003年11月  
ISBN: 7100034132  
RMB: ¥39.00

成语故事精选  
鲁旭 苏恩 编写  
中国少年儿童出版社2004年5月  
ISBN: 7500768648  
RMB: ¥24.00

### **Course Structure/Procedure**

The emphasis of the course is not the historical development and artistic merits of literary Chinese but the familiarization of a body of such language presented in the materials and why and how they are used in these circumstances. While the instructor's function is to provide linguistic and cultural analysis of what is being studied and to create culturally authentic contexts within which the students perform assigned tasks, the students are expected to do a large amount of memorization, listening and speaking, in and outside the classrooms. Again, students are not graded on how well they can talk or write about literary Chinese, but how properly they can interpret and apply literary Chinese in unscripted spoken discourse. Students will be asked to respond to audio-video materials consist of unscripted spoken Chinese discourse such as introduction, interview, debate, and be critiqued closely on their interpretations of the intents, functions and presentations of inserted literary languages. Students will also be asked to perform oral introductions, interviews and debates unscripted and be critiqued closely on their employment of literary languages—how proper and effective it is as far as helping to establish the students' intentions is concerned.

The class meets one hour a day, five days a week for 10 weeks. In general, the first four days of the week are used for discussions and performances and the last day of the week is reserved for review and quiz.

The course grade (100%) consists of:

40%—10 weekly performance grades (4% each);  
40%—10 weekly quiz grades (4% each);  
20%—final project.

### **Course Schedule**

Week 1      MBA Education and Professional Careers in Business (I)

Day 1 Discussion and Performance: Segment 1 of  
《MBA与职业生涯: 谭海音、杨伟强》

Day 2 Discussion and Performance: Segment 2 of  
《MBA与职业生涯: 谭海音、杨伟强》

Day 3 Discussion and Performance: Segment 3 of  
《MBA与职业生涯: 谭海音、杨伟强》

Day 4 Discussion and Performance: Segment 4 of  
《MBA与职业生涯: 谭海音、杨伟强》

Day 5 Review and Quiz

Week 2 MBA Education and Professional Careers in Business (II)

Day 1 Discussion and Performance: Segment 5 of  
《MBA与职业生涯: 谭海音、杨伟强》

Day 2 Discussion and Performance: Segment 6 of  
《MBA与职业生涯: 谭海音、杨伟强》

Day 3 Discussion and Performance: Segment 7 of  
《MBA与职业生涯: 谭海音、杨伟强》

Day 4 Discussion and Performance: Segment 8 of  
《MBA与职业生涯: 谭海音、杨伟强》

Day 5 Review and Quiz

Week 3 How Do Chinese Companies Compete Internationally? (I)

Day 1 Discussion and Performance: Segment 1 of  
《中国企业国际竞争力: 俞尧昌》

Day 2 Discussion and Performance: Segment 2 of  
《中国企业国际竞争力: 俞尧昌》

Day 3 Discussion and Performance: Segment 3 of  
《中国企业国际竞争力: 俞尧昌》

Day 4 Discussion and Performance: Segment 4 of  
《中国企业国际竞争力: 俞尧昌》

Day 5 Review and Quiz

Week 4 How Do Chinese Companies Compete Internationally? (II)

Day 1 Discussion and Performance: Segment 5 of  
《中国企业国际竞争力：俞尧昌》

Day 2 Discussion and Performance: Segment 6 of  
《中国企业国际竞争力：俞尧昌》

Day 3 Discussion and Performance: Segment 7 of  
《中国企业国际竞争力：俞尧昌》

Day 4 Discussion and Performance: Segment 8 of  
《中国企业国际竞争力：俞尧昌》

Day 5 Review and Quiz

Week 5 Returning Students and the Exploration of the New Economy (I)

Day 1 Discussion and Performance: Segment 1 of  
《新经济的再搜索：张朝阳》

Day 2 Discussion and Performance: Segment 2 of  
《新经济的再搜索：张朝阳》

Day 3 Discussion and Performance: Segment 3 of  
《新经济的再搜索：张朝阳》

Day 4 Discussion and Performance: Segment 4 of  
《新经济的再搜索：张朝阳》

Day 5 Review and Quiz

Week 6 Returning Students and the Exploration of the New Economy (II)

Day 1 Discussion and Performance: Segment 5 of  
《新经济的再搜索：张朝阳》

Day 2 Discussion and Performance: Segment 6 of  
《新经济的再搜索：张朝阳》

Day 3 Discussion and Performance: Segment 7 of  
《新经济的再搜索：张朝阳》

Day 4 Discussion and Performance: Segment 8 of  
《新经济的再搜索：张朝阳》

Day 5 Review and Quiz

Week 7 Presenting a Modern China: The Orthodox Government Official (I)

Day 1 Discussion and Performance: Segment 1 of  
《告诉你一个当代的中国：孙家正、赵启正》

Day 2 Discussion and Performance: Segment 2 of  
《告诉你一个当代的中国：孙家正、赵启正》

Day 3 Discussion and Performance: Segment 3 of  
《告诉你一个当代的中国：孙家正、赵启正》

Day 4 Discussion and Performance: Segment 4 of  
《告诉你一个当代的中国：孙家正、赵启正》

Day 5 Review and Quiz

Week 8 Presenting a Modern China: The Orthodox Government Official (II)

Day 1 Discussion and Performance: Segment 5 of  
《告诉你一个当代的中国：孙家正、赵启正》

Day 2 Discussion and Performance: Segment 6 of  
《告诉你一个当代的中国：孙家正、赵启正》

Day 3 Discussion and Performance: Segment 7 of  
《告诉你一个当代的中国：孙家正、赵启正》

Day 4 Discussion and Performance: Segment 8 of  
《告诉你一个当代的中国：孙家正、赵启正》

Day 5 Review and Quiz

Week 9 Discovering New Talents: The Charismatic Government Official (I)

Day 1 Discussion and Performance: Segment 1 of  
《龙永图谈人才：龙永图》

Day 2 Discussion and Performance: Segment 2 of  
《龙永图谈人才：龙永图》

Day 3 Discussion and Performance: Segment 3 of  
《龙永图谈人才：龙永图》

Day 4 Discussion and Performance: Segment 4 of  
《龙永图谈人才：龙永图》

Day 5 Review and Quiz

Week 10 Discovering New Talents: The Charismatic Government Official (II)

Day 1 Discussion and Performance: Segment 5 of  
《龙永图谈人才：龙永图》

Day 2 Discussion and Performance: Segment 6 of  
《龙永图谈人才：龙永图》

Day 3 Discussion and Performance: Segment 7 of  
《龙永图谈人才：龙永图》

Day 4 Discussion and Performance: Segment 8 of  
《龙永图谈人才：龙永图》

Day 5 Review and Quiz

Week 11 Final Project Presentation

*Academic misconduct statement  
Disability statement*