Applied Phonetics

Through our readings, homework assignments, class discussions, and computer demonstrations, we will examine in detail the sound system of Modern English. This class will help you to uncover a subset of the linguistic knowledge that all native speakers of English possess. The topics to be discussed include: acoustic phonetics (the study of the sound energy of speech, and how we listen to it); articulatory phonetics (how sounds are made in the mouth); syllable structure (discovering how and why single sounds combine to form English-approved syllables); word stress (how we know which syllable takes relative prominence); segmental phonology (how the sounds in a word can change); and orthographic theory (how our spelling system is phonologically based). During many of these discussions we will be comparing and contrasting English phonetic and phonological structures with structures from other languages.

At the completion of this class, you will possess and be able to discuss a thorough knowledge of some of the most interesting surface phenomena of English phonetics and phonology. Equipped with this knowledge, you will be able to relate these English data to general phonological theory. Although this class will not concentrate on second language pronunciation teaching by advocating direct application of the theoretical constructs, you will nevertheless be able to draw indirect implications for classroom second language learning.

Requirements

You are responsible for the weekly reading assignments and should be prepared to discuss them in class. There will be frequent written homework problems assigned. These problems will allow you to analyze a set of English data and derive a descriptive generalization from them. Keep in mind whether or not these generalizations have any implications for applied concerns. You are allowed to discuss and work on these problems with your classmates, but I expect individual work to be handed in. Quizzes are to be done without any consultation. Homeworks must be typed.

For a special recording project, groups of students will seek out a non-native speaker of English and carefully record a specific set of data. The recording will be phonetically transcribed, analyzed, and presented to the class. Recordings will be placed on the internet for others to hear and analyze. See some of these examples in the Speech Accent Archive at: http://accent.gmu.edu. In this project, groups of 3 students will perform 7 tasks:

You will select and solicit a non-native speaker of English for suitable inclusion in the archive. You will then learn field recording skills and digitally record this non-native speaker. As you learn phonetic theory, you will collaboratively transcribe the recorded speech. You will analyze the transcribed speech and formulate a set of phonological generalizations that characterize the speech pattern of your speaker. You will then attribute these generalizations to a given set of principles, such as language transfer, language universals, etc. You will select one of these phonological generalizations for teaching intervention, presenting a very short lesson plan in instruction.

More information about this project will be given in class.
Final grades will be based on the following percentages:

- homeworks: 20%
- quizzes (3): 50%
- recording project: 20%
- class participation: 10%

There are two required texts:

Course Outline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEETING</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>READING</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>part 1. phonetic theory</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>30 August</td>
<td>English spelling and pronunciation</td>
<td><em>TAEP</em>, ch. 1</td>
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<td>introduction to language sounds: articulation and acoustics</td>
<td><em>ACIP</em>, ch. 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 September</td>
<td>Phonology and phonetic transcription</td>
<td><em>ACIP</em>, ch. 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>13 September</td>
<td>English consonants</td>
<td><em>TAEP</em>, ch. 2, p. 11-27; <em>ACIP</em>, ch. 3 (to p. 71)</td>
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<tr>
<td>20 September</td>
<td>English vowels</td>
<td><em>TAEP</em>, ch. 2, p. 28-35; <em>ACIP</em>, ch. 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 September</td>
<td>Other consonants and vowels in the world</td>
<td><em>ACIP</em>, ch. 6, 7, 9</td>
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<td><strong>quiz 1</strong></td>
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<td>4 October</td>
<td>Syllable structure</td>
<td><em>TAEP</em>, ch. 4</td>
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<td><em>ACIP</em>, p. 237-242</td>
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<td>11 October</td>
<td>Connected speech and phonetic processes</td>
<td><em>ACIP</em>, p.71-76, p. 107-110; <em>TAEP</em>, ch. 3, ch. 6, p. 81-89</td>
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<td>18 October</td>
<td>Stress, rhythm, and intonation</td>
<td><em>TAEP</em>, ch. 5, ch. 6, p. 73-76; <em>ACIP</em>, ch. 5, p. 110-128; ch. 10, p. 243-254</td>
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<tr>
<td>25 October</td>
<td>Acoustic phonetics</td>
<td><em>ACIP</em>, ch. 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 November</td>
<td>Acoustic speech analysis</td>
<td><em>ACIP</em>, ch. 8</td>
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<td><strong>quiz 2</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
part 2: pronunciation teaching

8 november: preliminaries to pronunciation teaching  
common pronunciation problems
TAEP, p. xi-xvi

15 november: language specific problems  
assessing learner pronunciation
TAEP, ch. 8; speech accent archive
TAEP, ch. 10

22 november: no class—holiday vacation

29 november: meet with your group

6 december: pronunciation teaching techniques  
speech accent project reports
TAE, ch. 13

quiz 3  (due 13 december @ 5:00 pm, robinson a-429)

Last day to drop the class: 29 september

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703.993.2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

Please abide by the University Honor Code. A description of the honor code is found at:
http://www.gmu.edu/departments/unilife/honorcode.html

SUGGESTED READINGS


**FILMS**

on the oral tract:
*The Singer’s Voice*. 1993. By Joan Wall and Robert Caldwell. Dallas TX: Pst... Inc. (23 min.) (on reserve)

on American dialects:

**SOFTWARE**

3. Unicode IPA font for windows and mac: Doulos SIL font.
   you MUST use this font

All of this software can be made available for your use on machines located in the computer lab in the English Department (Robinson a411)
There is more at http://mason.gmu.edu/~weinberg