Ling 105a: Phonetics
Fall 2016

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Course time and location: MWTh 12-12:50pm, TBD

1 Description

This course will provide an introduction to phonetics [fəˈnɛrɪks], the study of the sounds of human speech, with an emphasis on the production and perception of the sounds of the world’s languages. Using audiovisual materials and hands-on projects, we will cover the transcription of speech, articulatory phonetics (the anatomy and physiology of speech), acoustic phonetics (how speech is transmitted), and auditory phonetics (how we perceive speech).

2 Learning goals

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Transcribe, and produce orally based on a transcription, speech in a variety of the world’s languages, using the International Phonetic Alphabet;

2. Communicate, clearly and effectively, key concepts and theories in articulatory, acoustic, and auditory phonetics;

3. Perform acoustic analysis of typical and atypical speech, from speakers of different languages, using contemporary computational tools;

4. Develop and complete experimental research projects that integrate phonetics into the study of language in a meaningful way.

3 Prerequisites

Ling 100A (Introduction to Linguistics) is recommended. Students with a strong interest in linguistics (and/or, specifically, phonetics or speech pathology) or who are engaged in the advanced study of a language are also welcome to take the course but may need to do additional background readings at the beginning of the semester.
4 Readings

Our textbook will be Ladefoged, Peter & Keith Johnson. A Course in Phonetics. 7th ed. If you use the 6th ed. of the textbook, please note that readings and exercises will be assigned from the 7th ed. and you will be responsible for the content in the 7th ed.

Additional recommended and required readings will be made available on the course LATTE site from time to time.

5 LATTE

Please check the course LATTE site frequently. The course schedule, additional/supplemental readings, assignments, and other materials will be posted on the site as we progress through the semester.

6 Requirements and grading

Homework assignments 30%
Language project 15%
Participation and attendance 10%
Quizzes and exams 25%
  Quizzes 20%
  Final exam 20%
*Final percentage grade 100%

6.1 Assignments

There will be approximately 8 homework assignments during the semester. Assignments are due at the beginning of class and will be graded on a 10-point scale. The lowest homework grade will be dropped.

Late homework will be accepted only for 4 days after an assignment's due date, provided that one point will be deducted for each day the assignment is late, up to a maximum deduction of 4 points off. Please note that homework submitted on the date it is due but after the beginning of class will be deemed one day late.

All homework must be typed and submitted in hard copy; due to the many issues that can occur with fonts, assignments may not be submitted by email. If you do not currently use an IPA font, you should check the font resources linked to the course LATTE page. You should feel free to use any IPA font that you prefer so long as it contains all of the characters and diacritics that you need. (I especially recommend the SIL Doulos Unicode font.)

Success in this four-credit course is based on the expectation that students will spend a minimum of 9 hours of study time per week in preparation for class (readings, papers, discussion sections, preparation for exams, etc.).

6.2 Language project

During the semester, each student will work toward the production of a final project involving the phonetic investigation of a language of his or her choice using data from a native speaker. Students will begin by identifying a language or dialect and a native speaker who is willing to serve as his or her
consultant. As part of several homework assignments, students will be required to research the phonetics of the chosen language or dialect using secondary sources, identify an area that the student would like to explore with phonetic analysis, and design and conduct an experiment to perform the phonetic analysis. At the end of the course, students will submit a 7-10 page (double-spaced) write-up of the research they conducted and briefly present their research and results to the class.

6.3 Participation and attendance

Class attendance is required and participation in class is expected. Please come to class each day on time and ready to discuss the readings for that day.

You may miss up to three classes for any reason. Each additional class missed will result in a reduction of your final percentage grade for the course by 0.25%, up to a maximum of 10% lost.

6.4 Quizzes and exams

There will be a short quiz every 2-3 weeks, along with a longer midterm quiz, which will count as two quizzes; all of the quizzes together will comprise 25% of your final grade. The final exam will take place at the date and time scheduled by the Registrar. I will provide more details on each as the dates approach.

7 Electronic devices

No electronic devices (including laptops, tablets, and cellphones) may be used in class without my prior permission. Please keep all cellphones put away (and turn them off completely if the thought of a new message is irresistible).

8 Disabilities

If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see me immediately.

9 Academic integrity

You are expected to be honest in all of your academic work. Please consult Brandeis University Rights and Responsibilities for all policies and procedures related to academic integrity. Students may be required to submit work to TurnItIn.com software to verify originality. Allegations of alleged academic dishonesty will be forwarded to the Director of Academic Integrity. Sanctions for academic dishonesty can include failing grades and/or suspension from the university. Citation and research assistance can be found at LTS - Research Guides - Citing Sources.
10 Topics and general schedule

The topics that will be covered in the course and general schedule are as follows (subject to minor change based on class progress and interests):

**Week 1 - 3: Introduction to the course, articulatory phonetics, and phonetic transcription**

- L&J ch. 1: Articulation and acoustics
- **Mon., Sept. 5 - No class**
- **Thurs., Sept. 8 - Brandeis Monday**
- L&J ch. 2: Phonology and phonetic transcription
- Manner of articulation
- Vowels

**Weeks 4-9: Consonants and vowels**

- L&J ch. 3: The consonants of English
- **Quiz** (tentatively sched. for Mon., Sept. 29)
- L&J ch. 4: Vowels
- L&J ch. 7: Consonantal gestures
- L&J ch. 6: Airstream mechanisms and phonation types
- **Tues., Oct. 25 - Brandeis Monday**
- **Midterm** (tentatively sched. for Mon., Oct. 31)

**Weeks 10-13: Acoustic phonetics**

- L&J ch. 8: Acoustic phonetics
- L&J ch. 9: Vowels and vowel-like articulations
- **Quiz** (tentatively sched. for Mon., Nov. 21)
- Thanksgiving recess Nov. 23-25

**Weeks 14-15: Auditory phonetics**

- Ladefoged: Vowels around the world
- Ladefoged: How we listen to speech
- Johnson: Basic audition
- Johnson: Speech perception

**Final exam** on date and time scheduled by Registrar