

Linguistics 221, Introduction to phonetics and phonology

Monday 8:30-10:20, Wednesday 8:30-9:20, SECB 1011

Contact information

Instructor: Dr. John D. Alderete
Office: 8315 Robert C. Brown Building
Email: alderete@sfu.ca
Office hours: Mondays 2:30-3:30, Wednesdays 1:30-2:30
Prerequisite: Ling 220
Webpage: www.anderei.net (go to Teaching, scroll down to Linguistics 221)

Course description

This course is an introduction to the sound structures of human language and the principles of phonetic and phonological analysis. Topics include: articulatory phonetics, phonetic transcription, English consonants and vowels, cross-linguistic phonetics; phonemic analysis, phonological processes, alternations, phonological rules, rule ordering. Emphasis will be on practical and analytical work with data from a wide range of languages. Careful analysis and clear written expression are important to success in the class.

Required reading:

Textbook:

- Zsiga, Elizabeth C. 2013. *The sounds of language. An introduction to phonetics and phonology*. Wiley-Blackwell. Available at the bookstore.

Supplementary articles:

- van Turenout, Miranda, Peter Hagoort, Colin M. Brown. 1998. 'Brain activity during speaking: From syntax to Phonology in 40 milliseconds'. *Science* 280: 572-574.
- Sapir, Edward. 1925. 'Sound patterns in language'. *Language* 1: 37-51.

Weighting of course assignments

The course grade will be determined based on the following weighting system (detailed explanations are given below of each assignment type):

- Attendance/participation 10%
- Homework assignments: 20%
- Midterm (Feb. 24) 25%
- Article summary (Apr. 2) 10%
- Final exam (Apr. 11) 35%

Please: input the dates of the midterm and final exams in your calendar programs.

Course policies and expectations

1. Attendance and participation: students are expected to attend all classes and be active participants. This involves arriving to class on time, being engaged in lectures, and taking careful notes. Active listening is also key to participating, and it can be demonstrated by asking pertinent questions and incorporating discussion points in written assignments. I take note of in-class participation in my notes on each class, and it is a factor in your Participation grade.

2. Readings and lecture notes: Students are expected to have read all assigned readings before class. Lecture notes based on the reading and the class lecture will also be provided as an aid to understanding the textbook and readings. The lecture notes are just a skeletal treatment of the lecture, however, and are not a substitute for the class lecture. Because many students will be learning about a new field of study in this class, some of the materials and concepts may seem fairly complex. In such cases, students should read assigned readings and go over the lecture notes multiple times. A good principle is to go over all the lecture notes once a week, as they accumulate. Students are expected to bring the assigned textbook to all class sessions and assigned readings on the days that they are discussed.

4. Exams: If you have to miss an exam because of illness, you are required to contact me prior to the exam. You may notify me by e-mail. When you return to class, I will need a note from your medical doctor specifying the date of your absence and the reason. I will call the doctor to confirm the note. Following departmental policy, make-ups for exams will not be given. If you have a doctor's note for the date of one of the exams, the weight of that exam will be added to the other exam and to other assignments. Unexcused absence from an exam will result in a grade of 0 for it. Further, under no circumstances will students be allowed to write exams early. If you have travel or work plans during the semester, you are responsible for ensuring that they do not conflict with the examination schedule.

5. Academic dishonesty: Academic dishonesty in all forms violates the basic principles of integrity and thus impedes learning. More specifically, academic dishonesty is a form of misconduct that is subject to disciplinary action and includes the following: cheating, fabrication, fraud, facilitating academic dishonesty, and plagiarism. For more information on academic honesty and student conduct, please visit the following website:

<http://www.sfu.ca/linguistics/undergraduate/student-resources/department-standards.html>

If a student is found guilty of plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty on a class paper, an assignment, or an exam, an academic dishonesty report will be written for that student. This report is filed in the department. The student receives a grade of zero for the paper, assignment, or exam. If more than one academic dishonesty report has been filed for a student, the case can be presented to the University Board on Student Discipline.

6. Email: I enjoy getting thoughtful questions over email, so students are encouraged to submit questions and comments to me via e-mail. Indeed, this is another way you can participate actively in the class. Because of the large number of e-mail messages that I receive, however, it may be a couple of days before I am able to reply to your message. As a courtesy, please: proof-read your email, provide an informative subject header containing the course number and important keywords, and obey the rules of polite email exchanges.

Coursework

Homework assignments:

- Homeworks are short focused problems designed to develop skills in the content areas of the class. The student is obliged to download each homework from the course website, print out and solve the problems, and bring it to class on the day it is due.
- Homeworks are graded on the basis of completion. That is, full marks are given if it is completed, and no marks are given if they are not. I will check them at the onset of class on the day they are due. The same policy concerning missed exams applies for homeworks.
- Homeworks are extremely useful for test preparation. If you master the homework problems, you will probably do well on the exams.
- The total homework grade is calculated as follows: All students start with a base grade of 90%. 10% points are docked for each missed homework.

The article summary, due April 2 on Sapir 1925:

- The article summary involves summarizing a linguistics article (see the Schedule for the weblink to the article). It will involve reading the article carefully to fully understand the argument, creating an outline, and writing a clear summary of the main points.
- Students may discuss the article together, but may not submit an article as a group. Instead, each student should write original summary independently.
- See the guidelines for writing analytical summaries to get a sense of how to do this assignment.

Participation:

- In-class participation is important to your learning and I take note of the students that respond actively to the questions I pose in class, and respond to other student's comments and questions.
- Participation reports are another mechanism I use to track participation. They are short reports that document your participation during an in-class exercise. They usually involve answering some prearranged set of questions or providing a summary of our discussion on some topic. In sum, it's a way to demonstrate active participation in written form.
- The participation mark is calculated as follows. All students start with a base grade that is an average of the class averages of all three exams. Missed participation reports cause the participation mark to be lowered, and active participation cause the grade to be raised. The exact amount of the grade raises depends on the exam average, but typically active participation is categorized on a scale: 'good', 'very good', 'excellent', and 'outstanding', and carries with it an increase of approximately 5-7 percentage points for the participation mark as you go up the scale (which is 10% of entire grade).

The midterm and final exam, Feb. 24 (midterm), April. 11 (final):

- There is both a midterm and a final exam, which together constitute 60% of your grade. The midterm covers all the material prior to the exam, so it has a focus on phonetics and phonemic analysis. The final is also cumulative, but there will be more of a focus on the second half of the course. You need to know all of the material covered in the course, including the phonetics lectures, but there will be more questions concerning phonology.
- The exams will be evaluated based on the correctness of your answers/analysis and coherence of your argumentation in proper English. Prior to each exam, formats will be explained and a review provided.
- See course expectations above on the departmental policy on missing exams.

Grades

The following table provides a rough estimate of grade breakdowns for the final grade. Due attention will be given to the verbal descriptions listed below. Note that there is no university-wide standard scale; instructors adopt grade scales appropriate to the level and content of the course.

97-100%	A+	85-88%	B+	73-76%	C+	57-64%	D
93-96%	A	81-84%	B	69-72%	C	< 56%	F
89-92%	A-	77-80%	B-	65-68%	C-		

A – extraordinary (A+) or excellent performance (A, A-): a thorough, critical, insightful understanding and application of concepts.

B – good performance: a thorough understanding and application of concepts.

C – satisfactory performance: some understanding and application of concepts, but also some inaccurate recall, recognition, or application of concepts.

D – minimally satisfactory performance: a very limited understanding and application of concepts; considerable inaccuracies in the recall, recognition, or application of concepts.

F – unsatisfactory performance (fail): insufficient understanding of concepts, incomplete assignments, and/or academic dishonesty.

Grade appeals. If a student wishes to contest the marking of an exam or assignment, the instructor can agree to remark his/her entire exam at the instructor's convenience and not in front of the student. A grade reconsideration may raise the grade, lower the grade, or leave the grade unchanged, as stated in Policy T20.01, clause IV.2. The only reason a grade change will be made is if there is an arithmetic error or if it has been determined that the exam deserves a lower grade or a higher grade after it has been remarked.

Tips for success

In general, students who do well in this course follow these principles:

- Attend all classes.
- Review class notes regularly (i.e., before and after each class).
- Do all assignments and exercises on time.
- Ask questions in class or during office hours.
- Keep up with new material.
- Maintain a positive attitude.

Course schedule

Please be advised that the schedule may change if more or less time is need for certain topics.

SOL = Zsiga 2013 'The sounds of language', the course textbook. See the web-enabled version of this schedule for weblinks to the lectures, homeworks, and the non-textbook readings.

Homeworks: The instructor is not responsible for reminding the student when homeworks are due or providing a paper copy. Please download and print out the homeworks below and bring them to class prior to the due date if you have questions.

Jan. 6, Syllabus, Course introduction, Overview of articulatory phonetics
Reading: SOL 1-11

Jan. 8, Overview, cont'd

Jan. 13, Consonants of English
Reading: SOL 14-26

Spring 2014

Homework 1

Jan. 15, Vowels of English

Reading: SOL 26-28

Jan. 20, English consonants and vowels, cont'd

Jan. 22, Phonetic structures beyond English

Reading: SOL 33-45

Jan. 27, Beyond English, cont'd

Homework 2

Jan. 29, Phonemic analysis, Rules of English allophones

Reading: SOL 203-211

Feb. 3, Phonemics, cont'd, Physics and physiology of sound production

Reading: SOL 76-89

Feb. 5, Physics and physiology, cont'd

Reading week Feb. 10-14, no class

Feb. 17, Airstream mechanisms, Phonation type

Reading: SOL 45-47, 79-85 (review)

Homework 3

Feb. 19, Review for midterm

Feb. 24, **MIDTERM EXAM (full two hours, see exam policies)**

Feb. 26, Discussion of article van Turenout et al. 1998. Brain activity during speaking: From syntax to Phonology in 40 milliseconds. *Science* 280: 572-574. Available on the library eJournal website and the Canvass account for this course.

Homework 4: Ask a question about the Turenout et al. article

Mar. 3, Phonological processes

No assigned reading.

Mar. 5, Allophonic rules and levels of representation

Reading: SOL 199-211 (some review), 211-216

Mar. 10, Allophonic rules, cont'd

Homework 5

Mar. 12, Neutralization rules and levels of representation

Reading: SOL 225-232

Spring 2014

Mar. 17, Neutralization, cont'd

Mar. 19, Distinctive features

Reading: SOL 254-272

Mar. 24, Distinctive features, cont'd

Homework 6

Mar. 26, Survey of phonological processes

Reading: SOL 232-250

Mar. 31, Survey of processes, cont'd

Apr. 2, Discussion of Sapir 1925 'Sound patterns of language'. *Language* 1: 37-51. Available on library eJournal site and on Canvass.

Assignment: Article summary of the Sapir article. See Guidelines for writing article summaries on the webpage for instructions.

Apr. 7, Rule ordering

No assigned reading

Homework 7

Apr. 9, The phonetics-phonology interface

No assigned reading.

Apr. 11, **FINAL EXAM** (8:30-10:20am, Location: BLU9660, see exam policy)