

B.A. (Honours) in Contemporary English Studies

Course Title	: Practical Phonetics
Course Code	: ENG2102
Recommended Study Year	: 2 nd Year
No. of Credits/Term	: 3
Mode of Tuition	: Lecture-tutorial mode
Class Contact Hours	: 2-hour lecture per week 1-hour tutorial per week
Category	: Required Course
Prerequisite(s)	: Nil
Co-requisite(s)	: Nil
Exclusion(s)	: Nil
Exemption Requirement(s)	: Nil

Brief Course Description

Phonetics is the systematic study of human speech sounds. It is concerned with how speech sounds are produced and perceived. It provides means to classify and transcribe these sounds. While phonetics can be studied in various ways, we will adopt an articulatory approach in this course, with a practical emphasis. As an introduction to phonetics, this course assumes no prior knowledge of this field. The purpose of the course is to introduce students to some basic phonetic concepts and to deepen their understanding of the importance of phonetics in language studies. Students will learn how the sounds of English are classified and transcribed, and by the end of the course will be able to recognize and produce the most important contrasts. They will also gain insights into how their first languages influence their perception and pronunciation of English sounds.

Aims

The course aims to achieve the following:

1. to introduce students to the basic concepts in phonetics;
2. to explore human articulatory capabilities;
3. to promote students' awareness of the importance of phonetics in language studies;
4. to study some of the differences between the English and Cantonese sound systems;
5. to enhance students' ability to discriminate various English sounds;
6. to improve students' pronunciation of English;
7. to develop their ability to read and write transcriptions in the International Phonetic Alphabet;
8. to lay a solid foundation for higher courses, such as ENG3271 English Phonology.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Transcribe words using phonemic symbols, including the use of stress marks where appropriate;
2. Read words accurately from phonemic transcriptions;
3. Classify English speech sounds according to their place and manner of articulation;
4. Understand and recognise the operation of connected speech processes such as weak forms and linking;
5. Apply their learning to the analysis of short video or audio passages, and present their findings appropriately.

Indicative Contents

- An overview of phonetics
- Consonant sounds
- Vowel sounds
- Consonant clusters
- The syllable
- Word stress
- Weak forms
- Aspects of connected speech

Teaching Method

One two-hour lecture and a one-hour language laboratory session per week.

Measurement of Learning Outcomes

1. The group presentation and written assignment will assess students' ability to apply course concepts to the analysis of short video or audio passages (outcomes 4 and 5);
2. The mid-term test will assess students' knowledge of articulatory phonetics, including the use of symbols and articulatory labels (outcomes 1, 3 and 4);
3. The final written test will assess students' knowledge of various aspects of the English sound system (outcomes 1, 3, 4 and 5).

Assessment

- Group presentation: analyzing a video or audio clip (20%)
- Individual written assignment: analyzing a different video or audio clip (20%)
- Mid-term test (20%)
- Final test (30%)
- Attendance and participation (10%)

Required Readings

Roach, P., *English Phonetics and Phonology: a Practical Course*, 4th edition, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Recommended Readings

Carr, P., *English Phonetics and Phonology: An Introduction*, Oxford, Blackwell, 1999.

Collins, B. and Mees, I. M., *Practical Phonetics and Phonology*, 2nd edition, London & New York, Routledge, 2008.

Gimson, A. C., *An Introduction to the Pronunciation of English*, London, Edward Arnold, 1994.

Reference Materials

Roach, P., Hartman, J. and Setter, J., *Cambridge English Pronouncing Dictionary*, 18th edition, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Roach, P. *A Little Encyclopedia of Phonetics*. Available at: <http://www.personal.rdg.ac.uk/~llsroach/encyc.pdf>

Important Notes:

- (1) Students are expected to spend a total of 9 hours (i.e. 3 hours of class contact and 6 hours of personal study) per week to achieve the course learning outcomes.
- (2) Students shall be aware of the University regulations about dishonest practice in course work, tests and examinations, and the possible consequences as stipulated in the Regulations Governing University Examinations. In particular, plagiarism, being a kind of dishonest practice, is “the presentation of another person’s work without proper acknowledgement of the source, including exact phrases, or summarised ideas, or even footnotes/citations, whether protected by copyright or not, as the student’s own work”. Students are required to strictly follow university regulations governing academic integrity and honesty.
- (3) Students are required to submit writing assignment(s) using Turnitin.
- (4) To enhance students’ understanding of plagiarism, a mini-course “Online Tutorial on Plagiarism Awareness” is available on <https://pla.ln.edu.hk/>.