Stockholm University

Optional Linguistics Module: Phonetics (7.5 credits)
Spring 2025
Teacher: Peter Sundkvist
Email: peter.sundkvist@english.su.se

Module description

The aim of this module is to help undergraduate students develop the skills they have acquired in the English I and II courses for analyzing pronunciation. The module provides students with further specialization in English and general phonetics. Students read texts and do exercises concerning the principles that underlie the phonetic description and classification of human speech sounds, and receive an introduction to the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). Students are given an introduction to practical phonetics and receive training and practice in methods for producing, recognizing, and describing a wide range of human speech sounds. Finally, students also receive an introduction to acoustic phonetics. This module is especially relevant for those who may wish to take future courses or write degree projects in the fields of world Englishes, English accents, sociolinguistics, or second language acquisition.

The module comprises eight two-hour seminars, all of which involve active participation from the students. The students will read texts and do exercises related to the topic of the module. In the seminars the students will discuss the texts and exercises, and do further tasks. The examination will be comprised of oral and written assignment(s).

Intended learning outcomes

Upon completion of the module, the student is expected to be able to:

- account for the contents of the course literature;
- display the ability to use basic theoretical concepts, analytical models and methods in the field;
- apply these concepts to authentic texts or other language material;
- analyse language material from a theoretical perspective applicable to the field;
- motivate their own analyses in writing in a manner relevant to the field;
- demonstrate a good understanding of written English;
- express themselves in academic English.

Grading

The module adopts the 7-grade SU scale (A–F).
To receive a final grade, students must have completed all the examination assignments [not completed all examination assignments=no grade].
To receive a passing grade (A to E), students must complete and pass all the examination assignments, and thus demonstrate that they achieved all the learning outcomes at least at the minimum level (see "Module grading" below).

Module activities

The module consists of the following activities:

- Seminars (pre-seminar instructions for each seminar will be posted on Athena);
- Before each seminar, students are expected to:
  1. read the text assigned (see schedule below);
  2. attempt the practical exercises ('experiments') in the relevant chapter(s) of Catford (2001);
  3. complete the pre-sessional exercise. Pre-sessional exercises will be posted on Athena. Please bring your completed exercises to class and be prepared to discuss them in pairs and with the rest of the class.
- Students are expected to complete all the tasks assigned by the teacher.

Examination

Students are required to complete the following:

- One final written assignment (70% of grade)
- Two written assignments (each 15% of grade)
- One oral presentation (Pass/Fail)

Module format

The module will take place in the form of seminars, where students discuss the readings as well as the tasks completed at home. Seminars are intended to be active, hands-on opportunities for students to practice the skills they learn throughout the module.

Required reading

Books

Catford, J. C. 2001. *A Practical Introduction to Phonetics, second edition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Davenport, M. & Hannahs, S. J. 2010/2020. *Introducing Phonetics and Phonology, third or fourth edition*. London: Routledge. [Book used in Ling 2A; 3 copies available as course literature at SUB; placement: kurslitteratur 'Davenport']

Handbook of the International Phonetic Association: A Guide To The Use Of The International Phonetic Alphabet. 1999. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [4 copies available as course literature at SUB; placement: kurslitteratur 'handbook']

Compendium

Notes on experiments in Catford (2001). ©Peter Sundkvist [Available on Athena]

Articles

Collins, B. S. & Mees, I. M. 1995. Daniel Jones, Paul Passy, and the Development of the Cardinal Vowel System. *Historiographia Linguistica: International Journal for the History of the Language Sciences/Revue Internationale pour l'Histoire (HL)*, 12(1–2): 197–216.

Honeybone, P. 2012. Lenition in English. In T. Nevalainen, & E. Traugott (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of the History of English*. Oxford Handbooks Online. 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199922765. 013.0064

Rutter, B. 2011. Acoustic analysis of a sound change in progress: The consonant cluster /stɹ/ in English. *Journal of the International Phonetic Association*, 41(1): 27–40.

Sundkvist, P. 2012. Pulmonic ingressive speech in Shetland English. *World Englishes*, 31(4): 434–348.

Wikström, J. 2013. An acoustic study of the RP English LOT and THOUGHT vowels. *Journal of the International Phonetic Association*, 43(1): 37–47.

Audio-visual material: Audio and audio-visual training material available online; links provided via Athena.

Schedule

Sem.	Topic	Reading	Tasks
Sem 1 Wed 3/26 13:00-15:00	Course introduction; Review of phonetics; Introduction to The IPA	• Catford: ch. 1 • Handbook*: chs. 1-2, Appendix 1	• Review phonetics material from ENG I or other lower level phonetics courses
Sem 2 Wed 2/4 13:00-15:00	Basic components of speech; vowels and Cardinal Vowels	• C: chs. 2, 7 • Handbook: chs. 3-7 • Sundkvist 2012 • Compendium: notes on Experiments in chs 2,7, 8, Basic components	• Pre-sessional exercise • Experiments C chs. 2, 7 • Presentation on Sundkvist 2012
Sem 3 Wed 9/4 13:00-15:00	Acoustic phonetics	• Davenport & Hannahs: ch. 5 • Handbook: chs. 8-10	• Pre-sessional exercise • **Submit written assignment 1 by Mon 14/4**
Sem 4 Wed 30/4 13:00-15:00	Cardinal Vowels; central vowels and additional vowels	• C: ch. 8 • Collins & Mees 1995 • Compendium: notes on Experiments in chs. 2,7, 8, vowels	• Pre-sessional exercise • Experiments C ch. 8 • Presentation on Collins & Mees 1995
Sem 5 Wed 7/5 13:00-15:00	Phonation	• C: ch. 3 • Wikström 2013 • Compendium: notes on Experiments in ch. 3	• Pre-sessional exercise • Experiments C ch. 3 • Presentation on Wikström 2013
Sem 6 Wed 14/5 13:00-15:00	Articulation: Stricture	• C: ch. 4 • Honeybone 2012 • Compendium: notes on Experiments in ch. 4	• Pre-sessional exercise • Experiments C ch. 4 • Presentation on Honeybone 2012
Sem 7 Wed 21/5 13:00-15:00	Articulation: Location	• C: ch. 5 • Rutter 2011 • Compendium: notes on Experiments in chs. 2, 7, 8	• Pre-sessional exercise • Experiments C ch. 5 • Presentation on Rutter 2011 • **Submit written assignment 2 by Mon 26/5**
Sem 8 Wed 28/5 13:00-15:00	Co-articulation, secondary articulation; Review	• C: chs. 6, 11; ch. 2: pp. 22-29, ch. 3: pp. 47-49	• Pre-sessional exercise • Review course content • **Post review question on Athena by Monday 26/5**
Final written assignment		• **Submit by Wednesday 11/6 17:00** • **Resubmission by Wednesday 20/8 17:00**	

*: The chapters in *Handbook of the International Phonetic Association: A Guide to the Use of the International Phonetic Alphabet* are very short.

Please note that there may be occasional changes to seminar dates and times. Check Time Edit and Athena regularly for updates.

Module grading criteria

Written assignments grading criteria

Grade	Criteria
A: Excellent	The student shows excellent ability to: - account for the contents of the course literature; - display the ability to use basic theoretical concepts, analytical models and methods in the field; - apply these concepts to authentic texts or other language material; - analyse language material from a theoretical perspective applicable to the field; - motivate their own analyses in writing in a manner relevant to the field; - demonstrate a good understanding of written English; - express themselves in academic English.
B: Very good	The student shows very good ability to: - account for the contents of the course literature; - display the ability to use basic theoretical concepts, analytical models and methods in the field; - apply these concepts to authentic texts or other language material; - analyse language material from a theoretical perspective applicable to the field; - motivate their own analyses in writing in a manner relevant to the field; - demonstrate a good understanding of written English; - express themselves in academic English.
C: Good	The student shows good ability to: - account for the contents of the course literature; - display the ability to use basic theoretical concepts, analytical models and methods in the field; - apply these concepts to authentic texts or other language material; - analyse language material from a theoretical perspective applicable to the field; - motivate their own analyses in writing in a manner relevant to the field; - demonstrate a good understanding of written English; - express themselves in academic English.
D: Adequate	The student shows adequate ability to: - account for the contents of the course literature; - display the ability to use basic theoretical concepts, analytical models and methods in the field; - apply these concepts to authentic texts or other language material; - analyse language material from a theoretical perspective applicable to the field; - motivate their own analyses in writing in a manner relevant to the field; - demonstrate a good understanding of written English; - express themselves in academic English.
E: Minimally adequate	The student shows minimally adequate ability to: - account for the contents of the course literature; - display the ability to use basic theoretical concepts, analytical models and methods in the field;

	- apply these concepts to authentic texts or other language material; - analyse language material from a theoretical perspective applicable to the field; - motivate their own analyses in writing in a manner relevant to the field; - demonstrate a good understanding of written English; - express themselves in academic English.
Fx: Fail (Inadequate)	The student has displayed some, but not all, of the skills of the level of the criteria for E.
F: Fail	The student's work does not demonstrate the achievement of the learning outcomes of the module.

Oral presentations grading criteria

Criteria	**Pass**	**Fail**
Content	The presentation introduces the topic of the presentation in a clear and concise manner demonstrating the student's understanding of the linguistic research issues discussed. Research aims, methods and results of the study under discussion are presented and discussed in a lucid manner.	In the presentation the student does not demonstrate a sufficient understanding of the linguistic issues under discussion. Research aims, methods and results of the study under discussion are not presented in an adequate manner.
Organisation and language	The presentation is well structured and easy to follow. The language used is academic and does not contain any severe mistakes.	The organisation of the presentation is poor, and the language used contains several mistakes.