

LT3212: PHONETICS

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Phonetics

Subject Code

LT - Linguistics and Translation

Course Number

3212

Academic Unit

Linguistics and Translation (LT)

College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

LT2201 Introduction to Linguistics or LT2229 Fundamentals of Linguistics or LT2290 Introduction to Language Studies

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

CTL3212 Phonetics

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

The course aims to introduce to students: (i) the basic concepts of phonetics, (ii) the articulatory and prosodic properties of human speech sounds, (iii) the International Phonetic Alphabet (or the IPA symbols) for transcribing speech sounds, and (iv) the phonetic characteristics of English and Chinese.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if DEC-A1 app.)		DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Apply the knowledge of phonetics to understanding speech sounds.		x	x	x
2	Apply the knowledge of the IPA symbols to transcribing and recording speech sounds.			x	x
3	Analyse speech sound data and describe phonetic phenomena for research and practical purposes.		x	x	x

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs		Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Lectures	Students will engage with (i) presentation of phonetic properties of speech sounds in languages and the nature of IPA symbols; (ii) video demonstration of (a) the structure of the vocal apparatus and voice box and (b) the articulatory gestures during the production of speech sounds; and (iii) audio demonstration of sounds of different languages.	1, 2, 3	3 hours

2	In-class practice and discussion	Students will participate in (i) practices of transcribing speech sounds using the IPA symbols; and (ii) discussions of solutions to the problems of phonetic data analysis.	1, 2, 3	
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Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- " for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Three bi-weekly take-home assignments: practices of phonetic data analysis and IPA transcription of speech sounds. (15% x 3)	1, 2, 3	45	Students can use GenAI tools to brainstorm, gather information, solve problems, format references, and edit language. Students should give proper acknowledgment to all the contents from GenAI tools that they incorporated into the assignments and keep a journal of their GenAI conversations. Students should not present texts generated or translated by GenAI tools as their own original work.	Yes

2	Term paper: description of the phonetic characteristics of the sounds and sound system of a language.	1, 2, 3	25	Students can use GenAI tools to brainstorm, gather information, solve problems, format references, and edit language. Students should give proper acknowledgment to all the contents from GenAI tools that they incorporated into the Term Paper and keep a journal of their GenAI conversations. Students should not present texts generated or translated by GenAI tools as their own original work.	Yes
3	Final quiz: (i) application of the phonetic theories and concepts to the study of human speech sounds; (ii) description and comparison of the phonetic characteristics of different speech sounds; and (iii) transcription of speech sounds using the IPA symbols.	1, 2, 3	30	This is a summative assessment task.	No

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

Take-home assignments

Criterion

(a) Capacity for self-directed learning to perform phonetic analysis.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Excellent performance in phonetic analysis.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Good performance in phonetic analysis.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Average performance in phonetic analysis.

Marginal (D)

Passable performance in phonetic analysis.

Failure (F)

Poor performance in phonetic analysis.

Assessment Task

Take-home assignments

Criterion

(b) Application of the knowledge of the IPA symbols to phonetic transcription.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Full knowledge of the IPA symbols and excellent skill in phonetic transcription.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Good knowledge of the IPA symbols and good skill in phonetic transcription.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Some knowledge of the IPA symbols and average skill in phonetic transcription.

Marginal (D)

Minimal knowledge of the IPA symbols and limited skill in phonetic transcription.

Failure (F)

No knowledge of the IPA symbols and poor skill in phonetic transcription.

Assessment Task

Term paper

Criterion

(a) Ability to make lucid and effective presentation of the phonetic characteristics of the sounds and sound system of a language

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Excellent writing skill in presenting ideas and arguments.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Good writing skill in presenting ideas and arguments.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Average writing skill in presenting ideas and arguments.

Marginal (D)

Limited writing skill in presenting ideas and arguments.

Failure (F)

Poor writing skill in presenting ideas and arguments.

Assessment Task

Term paper

Criterion

(b) Application of the phonetic knowledge to carry out analysis of the speech data of a language.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Profound phonetic knowledge of the language being described.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Good phonetic knowledge of the language being described.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Some phonetic knowledge of the language being described.

Marginal (D)

Minimal phonetic knowledge of the language being described.

Failure (F)

No phonetic knowledge of the language being described.

Assessment Task

Final quiz

Criterion

(a) Application of the phonetic theories and concepts to the study of human speech sounds.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Excellent competence in the application of phonetic knowledge.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Good competence in the application of phonetic knowledge.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Average competence in the application of phonetic knowledge.

Marginal (D)

Limited competence in the application of phonetic knowledge.

Failure (F)

No competence in the application of phonetic knowledge.

Assessment Task

Final quiz

Criterion

(b) Demonstration of command of the subject matter and course content.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Excellent command of the subject matter and course content.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Good command of the subject matter and course content.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Average command of the subject matter and course content.

Marginal (D)

Limited command of the subject matter and course content.

Failure (F)

No command of the subject matter and course content.

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Speech sounds - consonants, vowels, glides; tones; syllables and syllable structure; speech prosody; production, acoustics, perception of speech sounds; transcription of speech sounds; International Phonetic Alphabets (IPA symbols); speech analysis.

Reading List**Compulsory Readings**

Title	
1	Ladefoged, Peter and Keith Johnson (2015). A Course in Phonetics (7th ed.). Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning.
2	IPA (1999). Handbook of the International Phonetic Association: A Guide to the Use of the International Phonetic Alphabets. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
3	Pullum, Geoffrey. K. and William A. Ladusaw (1996). Phonetic Symbol Guide (2nd ed.). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Ladefoged and Sandra Ferrari Disner (2012). Vowels and Consonants (3rd ed.) Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell
2	Ladefoged, Peter and Ian Maddieson (1996). The Sounds of the World's Languages. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
3	Catford, John C. (2001). A Practical Introduction to Phonetics (2nd ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press.
4	UCLA Phonetics Lab's data on the sounds of the world's languages http://www.phonetics.ucla.edu/index/sounds.html
5	Website of the International Phonetic Association http://www.internationalphoneticassociation.org
6	Journal of the International Phonetic Association https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/journal-of-the-international-phonetic-association