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Linguistic Foundations for L2 Pronunciation Teaching

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Introduction to Course

The course *Linguistic Foundations for L2 Pronunciation Teaching:*

- Is designed for students preparing for language-teaching careers (especially TESOL).
- Provides **key linguistic foundations in phonetics and phonology** in order to:
  - Analyze the linguistic source of pronunciation errors accurately
  - Provide second-language students with clear explanations and effective, individualized coaching.
• Strengthens the pronunciation of students who are not native speakers of the language they will be teaching (e.g. Korean students preparing to teach English).

• Draws on my experience as a linguist and phonetician teaching a pronunciation course for international students, 16 terms.

• Proposed as a MA TESOL elective (with reach to Modern Languages majors); now piloted (2-week course with MA TESOL prog, Mongolia)
Rationale: Linguistic Needs

A variety of cross-linguistic differences give rise to pronunciation issues when learning a second language, including differences in:

• inventory
• phonemic and allophonic relationships
• phonotactic patterns in syllables and words

Additional linguistic factors for the classroom:

• Functional load and sociolinguistic status of forms in L2 for determining classroom priorities
• Typological framework for making predictions
• Articulation of sounds in L1 to build from
Rationale: Professional Gap

My observations:

• Functionally, *Linguistics is an appropriate home for TESOL*, a critical basis and “launching pad” for TESOL and other applications of linguistics (the root for the vine)

• Professionally, *Linguistics and TESOL tend to occupy different worlds* (conferences, names, publications, norms) with few professional connections.
Rationale: Professional Gap (cont.)

- **Linguists themselves** may feel subtle professional pressure to focus on ‘pure’ linguistics and not associate with creative applications of linguistics out of professional concern for career trajectory (given the professional split above)

- As a result, the **TESOL world may be missing critical core linguistic strength otherwise available** for spectacularly effective TESOL work, in TESOL student training, faculty hiring, textbook writing, theory and methodology refinement, and dissemination of professional work.
Rationale:
Recognition of Benefit

In my experience, **MA TESOL majors** recognize the value of solid linguistic grounding for pronunciation teaching.

• MA TESOL majors have often chosen my pronunciation course for their observations.

  “Thank you so much for your pronunciation class....Your clear pronunciation and explanation is surely helpful to them...” 
  --- Carol, from Korea

• Non-native-speaking MA TESOL majors have requested independent study arrangements with me on pronunciation for their TESOL teaching.
Rationale:
Recognition of Benefit (cont.)

In my experience, **attendees at TESOL conferences** recognize the value of solid linguistic grounding for pronunciation teaching.

- A session “Intensive Phonetics Refresher for Teachers of Pronunciation” I presented at a California TESOL conference was well-attended and well-received, with interest in further training.
Rationale: Recognition of Benefit (cont.)

In my experience, ESL Pronunciation students recognize the value of the help they receive, when the instruction is linguistically well-grounded.

“She...has a unique ability to identify the problems of pronunciation and the way to fix the problem.”

-- Shin, Taiwan

“Thank you for your help for this semester. I learned exact pronunciation and your passion.”

-- Sarah, Korea

“I was looking for someone who can help w/my English pronunciation...and they told me you are the best of the best...can you be my tutor?”

-- Talbot student, Korea
Rationale: Benefit to Linguistics

A course such as this can help:

• **Reestablish Linguistics as an appropriate home** for TESOL and related applications of linguistics (the root for the vine)

• **Make clear contributions** beyond linguistics programs via the unique strength of Linguistics.

• **Increase the perceived value of Linguistics in TESOL training**, also leading to better employment options

• **Raise the profile** of Linguistics on a campus
Course Goal 1

**Core Linguistics:** Develop core phonetic and phonological knowledge and skills based on the world’s languages, to be able to:

- Describe and accurately pronounce sounds from a variety of languages
- Transcribe sounds and words using the International Phonetics Alphabet for use in instruction
- Analyze data from a variety of languages to determine basic relationships: phonemic and allophonic relationships, and phonotactic patterns in syllables and words.
Course Goal 2

Linguistics of English and Other Languages:
Develop in-depth understanding of the phonetics and phonology of English (and other major languages as may suit the needs of the class), to be able to:

• Describe the phonetic and phonological patterns of English and other major languages
• Identify likely pronunciation issues between a given L1 and L2, based on differences in phonetics and phonological patterns
• Determine effective linguistically-based pedagogical responses to these issues
Course Goal 3

**Guided Hands-On Practice:** Develop skill at impromptu analysis and effective coaching via on-the-ground work with actual L2 learners. Specifically, be able to:

- Quickly identify the linguistic source of pronunciation issues in the speech of actual L2 learners
- Quickly determine linguistically-based strategies to address these issues with actual L2 learners
- Offer clear explanations and effective, flexible, individualized coaching to actual L2 learners
Sequence of Topics

Phonetics (World’s Languages)
  Parts, places, features, vowels, IPA, typological claims (with booklist, practice exercises, quizzes)

ESL Phonetics
  Phonetics of English, with materials as designed for my ESL pronunciation class

Applied Phonetics
  Practice comparing phonetic inventories and developing strategies for teaching
Sequence of Topics (cont.)

ESL Teaching
  Samples of various pronunciation teaching materials I use, and linguistic rationale
Phonology (World’s Languages)
  Phonemes/allophones, phonotactics, syllable (with much practice with data)
ESL Phonology
  Phonology of English, with materials as designed for my ESL pronunciation class
Applied Phonology
  Practice comparing languages for sound patterns and developing teaching strategies
Resources


Resources (cont.)


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THANK YOU