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# Linguistic Foundations for L2 Pronunciation Teaching

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Linguistic Society of America

Advancing the Scientific Study of Language

*Taking Linguistics Beyond Linguistics Programs and Departments*

# 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.

# Introduction to Course (cont.)

- **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

Comrie, Bernard (ed.). 1990. *The World's Major Languages*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dauer, Rebecca M. 1993. *Accurate English: A Complete Course in Pronunciation*. Prentice Hall.

Dryer, Matthew S. & Haspelmath, Martin (eds.). 2011. *The World Atlas of Language Structures Online*. Munich: Max Planck Digital Library. Available online at <http://wals.info/>.

The International Phonetic Association. 1999. *Handbook of the International Phonetic Association*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

# Resources (cont.)

Ladefoged, Peter and Ian Maddieson. 1996. *Sounds of the World's Languages*. Wiley-Blackwell.

Lewis, M. Paul, Gary F. Simons, and Charles D. Fennig (eds.). 2013. *Ethnologue: Languages of the World, Seventeenth edition*. Dallas, Texas: SIL International. Online version: <http://www.ethnologue.com>.

Maddieson, Ian. 2009 [originally 1984]. *Patterns of Sounds*. Cambridge Studies in Speech Science and Communication. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

# Resources (cont.)

Namkung, Ju (ed.). 1996. Phonological Inventories of Tibeto-Burman Languages. STEDT Monograph Series No. 3. Berkeley: UC Berkeley.

Pullum, Geoffrey K. and William A. Ladusaw. 1996. Phonetic Symbol Guide, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. University of Chicago Press.

Swan, Michael and Bernard Smith. 2001. Learner English: A Teacher's Guide to Interference and Other Problems, 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Yavaş, Mehmet. 2006. Applied English Phonology. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.



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**THANK YOU**