

LING 1578 Phonetics and Phonemics
Class Number 31103 – Fall 2025

Meeting Times: MW 4:30 – 5:45 pm
Location: CL 349

Instructor: Dr. [REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED]@pitt.edu
Office Location: CL [REDACTED]
Office Hours: Wednesdays 1-2pm & by appointment

Textbook: Phonetics and Speech Science
MacKay (2023); Cambridge University Press.
Additional readings & materials posted to Canvas.

Software: Praat: doing phonetics by computer
Developed by Paul Boersma & David Weenink
Download from: <http://www.fon.hum.uva.nl/praat>

Course description and course goals. This course is an introduction to the study of sound as it relates to speech and sound systems in the world's languages. We will examine speech sounds in terms of their production mechanisms (articulatory phonetics), propagation mechanisms (acoustic phonetics), and perception mechanisms (auditory/perceptual phonetics). You will gain practice in (1) using the IPA to transcribe English and non-English sounds, (2) using your own articulators to produce accents and sounds that you may never have produced before, (3) using specialized computer software to perform acoustic analysis of speech, and (4) understanding some of the applications of phonetics in the real world. You will also probably break out of your comfort zone a little and maybe even have some fun! :)

Grading. Your grade will be calculated based on the following elements:

4 Homework Assignments	20%
Praat Lab	15%
Applying Phonetics Reflection Paper	20%
Exam #1	25%
Exam #2	20%

The following scale will be used to convert percentages to letter grades:

97 – 100%	A+	87 – 89	B+	77 – 79	C+	67 – 69	D+	< 60	F
93 – 96	A	83 – 86	B	73 – 76	C	63 – 66	D		
90 – 92	A-	80 – 82	B-	70 – 72	C-	60 – 62	D-		

In converting percentages to letter grades, a .5% will be rounded up to the higher full percentage point. A .49% will be rounded down. That is, an 89.5% will be an A-, but an 89.49% will be a B+.

Homework Assignments. You will be assigned 4 homework problem sets this semester. For each assignment, you will have approximately one week to complete it. Do not leave your homework until the night before it's due. You are strongly encouraged to work with classmates on your assignments. If

you work with classmates, you can either submit your work individually or in groups. However, the **maximum** number of group members is 4, and you must list all collaborators at the top of the page.

Praat Lab. You will complete a Praat Lab assignment this semester. This assignment is designed to develop your understanding of and skills in using Praat, a software program for acoustic-phonetic analysis. It will also help you apply what you have learned in your reading to analyzing speech data. You are strongly encouraged to work with classmates on this assignment. If you work with classmates, you can either submit your work individually or in groups. However, the **maximum** number of group members is 4, and you must list all collaborators at the top of the page.

Late policy/how and when to turn in your assignments. **Assignments must be turned in electronically via Canvas before the beginning of class on the assigned due date.** Assignments turned in after the beginning of class will have 5 percentage points deducted. Homework turned in the next day will have 10 percentage points deducted and so on and so forth. The only exception to this policy is when you have informed me about circumstances that prevent you from submitting the assignment on time BEFORE the deadline, and I have given you permission to turn it in late.

Applying Phonetics Reflection Paper. Throughout the second half of the semester, you will have the opportunity to learn about and explore real world applications related to phonetics. You will be able to select multiple readings (out of a set provided to you) to discuss in class. The main readings will come from: Applying Phonetics: Speech Science in Everyday Life, Murray J. Munro (2020), Wiley Blackwell. Near the end of the semester, you will write a brief reflection paper. More details will be provided in class as the semester progresses.

Exams. There will be two exams that take place in person during the semester. They will be closed book, and you may be asked questions about any of the material or readings we have covered up until that point. Exam #1 will take place during our regular class session on October 22nd, and Exam #2 will take place during our regular class session on Dec 3rd.

Participation. All students are expected to actively participate in class. Additionally, students are expected to do all of the readings before class, and to make every effort to contribute meaningfully to class discussions. Oftentimes mini practice exercises will be assigned for you to complete before class. You should complete these before class and be ready to ask questions.

Academic integrity. Students in this course will be expected to comply with the [University of Pittsburgh's Policy on Academic Integrity](#). Any student suspected of violating this obligation for any reason during the semester will be required to participate in the procedural process, initiated at the instructor level, as outlined in the University Guidelines on Academic Integrity. This may include, but is not limited to, the confiscation of the examination of any individual suspected of violating University Policy. Furthermore, no student may bring any unauthorized materials to an exam, including dictionaries and programmable calculators.

To learn more about Academic Integrity, visit the [Academic Integrity Guide](#) for an overview of the topic. For hands-on practice, complete the [Academic Integrity Modules](#).

Disability resources and services. If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact both your instructor and [Disability Resources and Services](#) (DRS), 140 William Pitt Union, (412) 648-7890, drsrecep@pitt.edu, (412) 228-5347 for P3

ASL users, as early as possible in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course.

No Use of Generative AI Permitted. Intellectual integrity is vital to an academic community and for my fair evaluation of your work. All work completed and/or submitted in this course must be your own, completed in accordance with the University's Guidelines on Academic Integrity. You may not engage in unauthorized collaboration or make use of ChatGPT or any other generative AI applications at any time.

Email Policy. You are responsible for checking your email on a daily basis and for keeping up with any announcements made via Canvas. I will set aside time daily for responding to student emails, such that you should typically receive a response from me within 24 hours of sending your message. This policy does not apply to weekends and holidays. Note that if you have a question about a homework assignment, you should send it at least 48 hours before the homework is due to ensure that you receive a response in time to implement it.

Schedule. The following schedule of topics will be our starting point for the class. I reserve the right to adjust the schedule as necessary and will post any updates to Canvas. Chapters from the MacKay textbook are listed as "MK" and should be completed by class time on the date they are listed. Other readings will be uploaded to Canvas. In addition to class readings, you will likely have class preparation activities to complete before we meet. These will be announced in class and posted to Canvas.

Fall 2025 LING 1578 Tentative Schedule

<i>Week</i>	<i>Day</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Reading</i>	<i>Important Dates</i>
1	M	8/25/2023	Course Introduction	MK Ch. 1	
	W	8/27/2023	IPA review, broad transcription	MK Ch. 2	
2	M	9/1/2023	<i>No class: Labor Day</i>		
	W	9/3/2023	The Vocal Tract	MK Ch. 3	
3	M	9/8/2023	Voice in English & other languages	MK Ch. 8	
	W	9/10/2023	Place in English	MK Ch. 7	
4	M	9/15/2023	Place in other languages	MK Ch. 5	HW 1 due
	W	9/17/2023	Transcription practice	Ladefoged (pdf)	
5	M	9/22/2023	Manner in English	Review MK Ch. 5	
	W	9/24/2023	Manner in other languages		
6	M	9/29/2023	<i>No class: Dr. [REDACTED] at SLRF</i>	MK Ch. 6	
	W	10/1/2023	Vowels of English		HW 2 due
7	M	10/6/2023	Vowels in other languages		
	W	10/8/2023	Intro to Praat	Intro to Praat (pdf)	
8	M	10/13/2023	Praat Practice		
	W	10/15/2023	<i>No class: Dr. [REDACTED] at PSLLT</i>		HW 3 due
9	M	10/20/2023	Review		
	W	10/22/2023	Exam 1		
10	M	10/27/2023	Basic acoustics	Ladefoged Ch. 8 (pdf)	
	W	10/29/2023	Applying Phonetics #1	See Canvas	
11	M	11/3/2023	Resonance and Formants	Rogers Ch. 9 (pdf)	Praat Lab due
	W	11/5/2023	Spectrogram Reading		
12	M	11/10/2023	Applying Phonetics #2	See Canvas	
	W	11/12/2023	Airstream Mechanisms	MK Ch. 9	
13	M	11/17/2023	Applying Phonetics #3	See Canvas	HW 4 due
	W	11/19/2023	Catch up day		
14	M	11/24/2023	Thanksgiving-No Class		
	W	11/26/2023	Thanksgiving-No Class		
15	M	12/1/2023	Review		Reflection Paper due
	W	12/3/2023	Exam 2		