

The Pronunciation of English

Spring 2025

Code

BBNAN11700/D5, BBNAN11700/D6, BBNAN11700/D7

Time and place

D5: Wed 14:30–16:00, D 214; D6: Wed 16:15–17:45, D 214; D7: Wed 18:00–19:30, D 214

Value, type

3-credit seminar

Host

Institute of English and American Studies (IEAS)

Instructor

Péter Óri

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Course description

This course will discuss the phoneme system of (current Standard Southern British) English, along with the phonetic properties of the sound segments, and some of the most important phonological rules of the language. We will be practicing phonemic transcription, using the CUBE system. Special emphasis will be placed on letter-to-sound rules so that the spelling of English words will become a more reliable guide in guessing their pronunciation. This is planned to be a practical course with a lot of exercises for you to gain an in-depth knowledge of the material. Therefore, everybody will be encouraged to actively participate in the class work and required to regularly do their home assignments.

Course material and communication

The syllabus, the course materials, the home assignments and your results will be made available on the platform of the course (in the MS Teams group), where announcements will also be posted, so it is your responsibility to check it for updates on a regular basis.

Readings

Besides the shared course materials and the online readings mentioned in the slides, selected chapters from the following textbook are recommended for the course:

Nádasdy, Ádám. 2006. Background to English pronunciation (phonetics, phonology, spelling). Budapest: Nemzeti Tankönyvkiadó.

Assessment

Assessment will be based on a midterm test (40%) and an end-term test (60%), which will be modified by the weekly assignments submitted and potentially by your in-class participation. There will be about 10 assignments during the semester, each of which will contribute 0.5% to your final score in the following way: 0 assignments: -2.5%, 1 assignment: -2% ... 5 assignments: +0% ... 10 assignments: +2.5%.

Grading policy:

0–59.99% → 1; 60–69.99% → 2; 70–79.99% → 3; 80–89.99% → 4; 90–100% → 5

Attendance

Regular attendance is necessary; a maximum of three absences can be tolerated.

*Syllabus**

<i>Feb. 12</i>	Introduction 1. Phonetics vs. phonology; short vowels in SSBE
<i>Feb. 19</i>	2. Phonemic transcription, IPA symbols and the CUBE system; n and ŋ
<i>Feb. 26</i>	3. Diphthongs in SSBE; articulation of vowels, phonetics of SSBE vowels; vowel contrasts: / a / vs. / ɛ / and / əw / vs. / o /
<i>Mar. 5</i>	4. Distribution of / r / in SSBE; long vowels in SSBE
<i>Mar. 12</i>	5. R-influence and vowel categories
<i>Mar. 19</i>	6. Vowel contrasts: / ʌ / vs. / ɔ / vs. / ɑ /; letter-to-sound rules, graphic positions (1)
<i>Mar. 26</i>	7. Letter-to-sound rules, graphic positions (2)
<i>Apr. 2</i>	MIDTERM TEST 8. Vowels in unstressed syllables, weak forms of function words
<i>Apr. 9</i>	9. Shortening rules, lengthening environments
<i>Apr. 16</i>	<i>No class (Easter break)</i>
<i>Apr. 23</i>	<i>No class (Easter break)</i>
<i>Apr. 30</i>	10. Articulation and categorization of consonants; phonotactics: geminates and nasal+plosive clusters; morpho-phonological alternations: allomorphs of -s and -ed
<i>May 7</i>	11. Allophonic variations: aspiration, L-darkening and flapping
<i>May 14</i>	END-TERM TEST

* The syllabus is subject to change; please check it regularly for updates.