Stockholm University

> **Optional Linguistics Module:**
> **Accents of English** (7.5 credits)
> Autumn 2024
> **Teacher**: Peter Sundkvist
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Module description

The aim of this module is to enable undergraduate students to gain familiarity with and an overview of the formidable variation in how the English language is pronounced across the world, and to acquire skills in analyzing such variation in a scholarly fashion. Exposure and insight into variation is provided through readings and analysis of audio and audio-visual material, and arguably the most influential framework for the classification of accent differences is introduced (Wells, 1982). The course offers a review of the principles that underlie the phonetic description and classification of human speech sounds and an introduction to the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). Students are then given the opportunity to practice phonetic analysis and the application of Wells's (1982) framework in the analysis of multiple English accents, based on audio-visual material. While of interest to anyone wanting to know more about global variation in English, this module is perhaps particularly relevant for future teachers, who will need to address questions regarding norm and variability in English pronunciation, and for those considering writing degree projects on English accents, dialectology, world Englishes, sociolinguistics, etc.

The module comprises eight two-hour seminars, all of which involve active participation from the students. The students will read texts and complete listening and other exercises related to the course content. In the seminars students will discuss the texts and exercises, and give oral groups presentations relating to the topic of individual seminars. The examination consists of one oral assignment and three written assignment.

Intended learning outcomes

Upon completion of the module, the student is expected to be able to:
-   account for the contents of the course literature;
-   display the ability to use basic theoretical concepts, analytical models and methods in the field;
-   apply these concepts to authentic texts or other language material;
-   analyse language material from a theoretical perspective applicable to the field;
-   motivate their own analyses in writing in a manner relevant to the field;
-   demonstrate a good understanding of written English;
-   express themselves in academic English.

Grading

The module adopts the 7-grade SU scale (A–F).
To receive a <u>final grade</u>, students must have completed all the examination assignments [not completed all examination assignments=no grade].
To receive a <u>passing grade</u> (A to E), students must complete and pass all the examination assignments, and thus demonstrate that they achieved all the learning outcomes at least at the minimum level (see "Module grading" below).

Module activities

The module consists of the following activities:

-   Seminars (pre-seminar instructions for each seminar will be posted on Athena);
-   Before each seminar, students are expected to:
    1. Read the text assigned (see schedule below);

2. Complete pre-sessional exercises or tasks assigned. Pre-sessional exercises will be posted on Athena. Please bring your completed exercises to class and be prepared to discuss them in pairs and with the rest of the class.
- Students are expected to complete all the tasks assigned by the teacher.

Examination
Students are required to complete the following:

- One final written assignment: essay on an accent of English (80% of grade, A-F)
- Two written assignments: (a) phonetics and phonology (b) profiling an accent (each 10% of grade, A-F)
- One oral group presentation (Pass/Fail)

Module format
The module takes place in the form of seminars, where students discuss the readings as well as the tasks completed at home. Seminars are intended to be active, hands-on opportunities for students to practice the skills they learn throughout the module.

Required reading

Books

Hayes, B. 2009. *Introductory Phonology*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell. [Available as e-book at SUB, and only chapters 1–2 assigned].

Melchers, G., Shaw, P., & Sundkvist, P. 2019. *World Englishes, 3rd ed*. London: Routledge.

Wells, J. C. 1982. *Accents of English: 3 volumes*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. [Vols. 2 and 3 are available as e-books at SUB; vol. 1 has never been released as e-book but is needed for reference]

Articles

Edwards, W. F. 2004[2008]. African American Vernacular English: phonology. In: Kortmann, B., Schneider, E. W., Burridge, K., Mesthrie, R. & Upton, C. A Handbook of Varieties of English: A Multimedia Reference Tool. Volume 1: Phonology, 383–392. [Available as e-book at SUB]

Gargesh, R. 2004[2008]. Indian English: phonology. In: Kortmann, B., Schneider, E. W., Burridge, K., Mesthrie, R. & Upton, C. A Handbook of Varieties of English: A Multimedia Reference Tool. Volume 1: Phonology, 992–1002. [Available as e-book at SUB]

Hickey, R. 2004[2008]. Irish English: phonology. In: Kortmann, B., Schneider, E. W., Burridge, K., Mesthrie, R. & Upton, C. A Handbook of Varieties of English: A Multimedia Reference Tool. Volume 1: Phonology, 68–97. [Available as e-book at SUB]

Horvath, B. M. 2004[2008]. Australian English: phonology. In: Kortmann, B., Schneider, E. W., Burridge, K., Mesthrie, R. & Upton, C. A Handbook of Varieties of English: A Multimedia Reference Tool. Volume 1: Phonology, 625–644. [Available as e-book at SUB]

Kretzschmar, W. A. 2004[2008]. Standard American English pronunciation. In: Kortmann, B., Schneider, E. W., Burridge, K., Mesthrie, R. & Upton, C. A Handbook of Varieties of English: A Multimedia Reference Tool. Volume 1: Phonology, 257–269. [Available as e-book at SUB]

Sundkvist, P. 2011. 'Standard English' as spoken in Shetland's capital. *World Englishes*, 30(2), 166–181.

Thomas, Erik R. 2004[2008]. Rural Southern white accents. In: Kortmann, B., Schneider, E. W., Burridge, K., Mesthrie, R. & Upton, C. A Handbook of Varieties of English: A Multimedia Reference Tool. Volume 1: Phonology, 300–324. [Available as e-book at SUB]

Audio-visual material

Audio and audio-visual training material available in Melchers, Shaw, & Sundkvist and online; web links provided on Athena.

Schedule

Sem.	Topic	Reading	Tasks
Sem 1 Wed 6/11 10:00-12:00	• Course introduction • Review of phonetics and phonology • Kachru's Three circles model	• Melchers, Shaw, and Sundkvist [=**MSS**]: Chs. 1–3 • Hayes: Ch. 1	• Review phonetics material from ENG I, II or other lower level phonetics courses
Sem 2 Wed 13/11 10:00-12:00	• Theory I: The ways in which accents vary • Reference accents: RP and GA	• MSS: Ch. 4 • Wells: Sections 1.3.1–1.3.5; 2.1; 4.1 • Hayes: Ch. 2 • Kretzschmar, 2004	• Pre-sessional exercise: Listening task • Student presentation 1 on RP
Sem 3 Wed 20/11 10:00-12:00	• Theory II: Wells's Standard Lexical sets • The British Isles I	• MSS: 4.1–4.3 • Wells: 2.1	• Pre-sessional exercise: Listening task • Student presentation 2 on Wells's Standard lexical sets • **Submit written assignment 1 [Theory and Wells's framework] by Sunday 24 November**
Sem 4 Wed 27/11 10:00-12:00	• The British Isles II • Ireland	• MSS: 4.4 • Sundkvist, 2011 • Hickey, 2004	• Pre-sessional exercise: Listening task • Student presentation 3 on Sundkvist, 2011 • Student presentation 4 on Hickey, 2004
Sem 5 Wed 4/12 13:00-15:00	• North America	• MSS: 4.5–4.6 • Wells: 6.1–6.2 • Thomas, 2004 • Edwards, 2004	• Pre-sessional exercise: Listening task • Student presentation 5 on Thomas, 2004 • Student presentation 6 on Edwards, 2004 • **Submit written assignment 2 [Analysis of an accent] by Sunday 8 December**
Sem 6 Wed 11/12		• MSS: 4.7–4.9 • Wells: 8.1–8.3	• Pre-sessional exercise: Listening task

10:00-12:00	• Australia, New Zeeland, and South Africa	• Horwath, 2004	• Student presentation 7 on Horwath, 2004
Sem 7 Wed 18/12 10:00-12:00	• India and Africa ('Outer circle')	• MSS: Ch. 5 • Wells: 9.1–9.2 • Gargesh, 2004	• Pre-sessional exercise: Listening task • Student presentation 8 on Gargesh, 2004
Sem 8 Wed 8/1 13:00-15:00	• East Asia, etc. ('Expanding circle') • Review of selected parts of course content • Discussion of topics for final assignment	• MSS: Ch. 6 • Wells: 9.3	• Review course content • Pre-sessional exercise: Listening task
Final written assignment	• **Submit by 19 January, 23:59** • **Resubmission: 23 February, 23:59.**	

Please note that there may be occasional changes to seminar dates and times. Check Time Edit and Athena regularly for updates.

Module grading criteria

Written assignments grading criteria

Grade	Criteria
A: Excellent	The student shows excellent ability to: - account for the contents of the course literature; - display the ability to use basic theoretical concepts, analytical models and methods in the field; - apply these concepts to authentic texts or other language material; - analyse language material from a theoretical perspective applicable to the field; - motivate their own analyses in writing in a manner relevant to the field; - demonstrate a good understanding of written English; - express themselves in academic English.
B: Very good	The student shows very good ability to: - account for the contents of the course literature; - display the ability to use basic theoretical concepts, analytical models and methods in the field; - apply these concepts to authentic texts or other language material; - analyse language material from a theoretical perspective applicable to the field; - motivate their own analyses in writing in a manner relevant to the field; - demonstrate a good understanding of written English; - express themselves in academic English.
C: Good	The student shows good ability to: - account for the contents of the course literature; - display the ability to use basic theoretical concepts, analytical models and methods in the field;

	- apply these concepts to authentic texts or other language material; - analyse language material from a theoretical perspective applicable to the field; - motivate their own analyses in writing in a manner relevant to the field; - demonstrate a good understanding of written English; - express themselves in academic English.
D: Satisfactory	The student shows adequate ability to: - account for the contents of the course literature; - display the ability to use basic theoretical concepts, analytical models and methods in the field; - apply these concepts to authentic texts or other language material; - analyse language material from a theoretical perspective applicable to the field; - motivate their own analyses in writing in a manner relevant to the field; - demonstrate a good understanding of written English; - express themselves in academic English.
E: Adequate	The student shows minimally adequate ability to: - account for the contents of the course literature; - display the ability to use basic theoretical concepts, analytical models and methods in the field; - apply these concepts to authentic texts or other language material; - analyse language material from a theoretical perspective applicable to the field; - motivate their own analyses in writing in a manner relevant to the field; - demonstrate a good understanding of written English; - express themselves in academic English.
Fx: Fail (Inadequate)	The student has displayed some, but not all, of the learning outcomes of the module.
F: Fail (Totally inadequate)	The student's work does not demonstrate the achievement of the learning outcomes of the module.

Oral presentations grading criteria

Criteria	Pass	Fail
Content	The presentation introduces the topic of the presentation in a clear and concise manner demonstrating the student's understanding of the linguistic research issues discussed. Research aims, methods and results of the study under discussion are presented and discussed in a lucid manner.	In the presentation the student does not demonstrate a sufficient understanding of the linguistic issues under discussion. Research aims, methods and results of the study under discussion are not presented in an adequate manner.
Organisation and language	The presentation is well structured and easy to follow. The language used is academic and does not contain any severe mistakes.	The organisation of the presentation is poor, and the language used contains several mistakes.