

Homework #1: Phonetics on the Web

Due in section Fri. Jan. 13

To do the homework, it would be a good idea either to own a decent pair of headphones or go to the “CLICC” lab (computers for undergraduate use) in Powell Library. The point of this homework is to get you started early on in using your ears on unfamiliar languages, and to illustrate web resources that will help you learn to be a phonetician and write a good term paper.

1. Visit <http://www.phonetics.ucla.edu/>. Click to go to **A Course in Phonetics, 5th ed.** Then click on **2. Phonology and Phonetic Transcription** and then on **Unstressed Vowels**. Listen to how the British speaker and the American speaker pronounce the second vowel in *pity*. Use IPA symbols to describe this difference.

British: _____ American: _____

2. Same web site. Navigate back to where you started, and click on **Index of Languages**. Then click on **Montana Salish**.

This is a Native American language that probably sounds quite different from whatever languages you can speak! You probably won't recognize some of the symbols at this point, but don't let it worry you. Click on all the words and listen to them.

a. Make sure you understand why these words were selected and arrayed into two parallel columns, then answer this question: what did the site author do to make the two columns *as clear a comparison as possible*? (Hint: look at neighboring sounds.) You'll be doing the same yourself later on.

b. Now listen carefully to the recording for “grass fire”. There is a fairly clear transcription error. Say what this error is, then write down a better transcription.

3. Click your way back to the start page. Now click on **Index of Sounds**, then **Vowels**, then **Front Rounded Vowels in Norwegian**. Click on all the words and listen.

a. Just to show you were here, write down the IPA for the Norwegian word meaning “shack”.

b. Now say the word “boo” in your own English. Draw a little mark on this line, showing where your “boo” is relative to Norwegian “shack” and “live”.

“shack” _____ “live”

4. Click your way back to the main page. Now click on Index of Sounds, then on Labial, then on **Bilabial and labiodental fricatives in Ewe**.

a. Although the layout of the page isn't very helpful, it's clear what the designer of the page meant the data to be arranged in four pairs. What are these four pairs? Explain your answer.

b. If you were instructing another student how to hear the difference between [ɸ] vs. [f], what would you suggest they listen for?

5. Ear training I: tones. This simply requires you to identify when two tones are the same. (In fact, they will be the very same recordings, not repetitions of the same word). *This is a new question type for me and I welcome feedback on whether it is useful/too easy/too hard.*

Still at the <http://www.phonetics.ucla.edu/> site, navigate back to the Index of Sounds. Find and visit **Tones in Mpi**. Then open another browser window and visit <http://www.linguistics.ucla.edu/people/hayes/103/homeworks/usingaudioresources/>. Try to make both of these windows visible at the same time on your computer screen.

Question: what words is the Mpi speaker saying? Answer by giving the English translation. (Hint: they all have "regular voice", on the left side of the page.)

File1 _____

File2 _____

File3 _____

File4 _____

6. Ear training II: Dutch vowels and diphthongs. Still at the <http://www.phonetics.ucla.edu/> site, navigate back to the Index of Sounds. Find and visit Front Rounded Vowels in Dutch. In a second browser window view <http://www.linguistics.ucla.edu/people/hayes/103/homeworks/usingaudioresources///>. Try to make both of these windows visible at the same time on your computer screen.

Question: what words is the Dutch speaker saying? Answer by giving the English translation.

File5 _____

File6 _____

File7 _____

File8 _____

File9 _____

File10 _____

File11 _____

File12 _____

File13 _____

File14 _____

File15 _____

7. Fieldwork sample. Visit the UCLA Phonetics Lab Archive at <http://archive.phonetics.ucla.edu/>. Click on Language Database, then A, then Avatime, then on [avn word-list 1962 01.html](http://archive.phonetics.ucla.edu/avn_word-list_1962_01.html) and also on the mp3 link. Listen to the sound file, which is from the field notes and recordings of the late Peter Ladefoged, working in 1962. Question: some of the vowels don't have a tone mark on them. But this is bad IPA — they *do* have a tone. What tone is it? There are two ways you can answer this question. For both, you should look at your textbook, p. 337. One method is just to listen carefully. For the other, trying clicking in various places on the Avatime page.

list the missing tone here:

The remaining questions are meant to give you a bit of pre-training for your term project.

8. Ethnologue. Visit <http://www.ethnologue.com/>, click on Browse the Web Version. Find this information:

- a. How many people can speak Avatime?
- b. What did Peter Ladefoged's speaker call his language?

9. UCLA library catalog. UCLA apparently has one book about Avatime. Visit the UCLA library catalog at <http://catalog.library.ucla.edu> and find this book.

a. List the author by full name:

b. Where on the UCLA campus would you go if you wanted to hold this book in your hands?

10. Try Google Scholar (<http://scholar.google.com/schhp?hl=en&tab=ws>) for Avatime. There is one source that is the obvious one you'd turn to for a term paper. List author and title.