



COURSE UNIT (MODULE) DESCRIPTION

Course unit (module) title	Code
English Phonetics and phonology: from Sound to Meaning / Anglų kalbos fonetika ir fonologija: nuo garso iki prasmės	

Lecturer(s)	Department(s) where the course unit (module) is delivered
Assoc. Prof. Dr Giedrė Balčytė	Department of English Philology

Study cycle	Type of the course unit (module)
BA	

Mode of delivery	Period when the course unit (module) is delivered	Language(s) of instruction
Seminars	Autumn semester	English

Requirements for students	
Prerequisites: English B2	Additional requirements (if any):

Course (module) volume in credits	Total student's workload	Contact hours	Self-study hours
5	91	48	43

Purpose of the course unit (module): programme competences to be developed
<p>The purpose of this course unit is to develop the students' communicative competence in English, along with generic and subject-specific competences of the study programme.</p> <p>Generic Competences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analytical, critical, logical, and creative thinking. • Decision-making and problem-solving. • Academic integrity and professional ethics. • Quality orientation. • Ability to use IT skills effectively. • Ability to retrieve, evaluate, and handle information from a variety of sources. • Ability to work autonomously, design strategies, manage time, and meet deadlines. • Ability to engage in discussions and develop oral communication. • Responsibility: the ability to set goals, plan, and take responsibility for outcomes. • Co-operation: ability to work successfully in a team. • Intercultural competence: openness and respect for other cultures, and ability to work in multicultural environments. • Openness to change: the ability to recognize the need for change and pursue self-improvement. <p>Subject-Specific Competences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to comprehend dialectal and accentual variation of English. • Ability to explain and understand the process of sound production and the articulatory mechanism. • Ability to understand the English sound system, classification of phonemes, and key allophonic attributes. • Ability to analyse sounds and sound-changing processes, both systemic and functional. • Ability to analyse and describe prosodic units such as syllables, stress patterns, metrical feet, and their phonetic/phonological consequences. • Ability to understand prosodic representation, processing, and perception of larger units. • Ability to pronounce English sounds correctly.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to transcribe and read phonetic/phonological transcriptions of texts. • Ability to perceive, phonetically and phonologically analyse, and interpret authentic audio sources. • Ability to organize, carry out, and develop phonological and phonetic research. 		
Learning outcomes of the course unit (module)	Teaching and learning methods	Assessment methods
<p>Learning outcomes resulting from generic competences On completion of the course, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – acquire the ability to use information technologies effectively in academic and professional contexts; – develop the capability to plan, organise, and manage their work autonomously, including goal-setting and monitoring of progress; – acquire time-management skills and consistently meet deadlines; – demonstrate the ability to advance systematically in academic and professional work with independence and initiative; – critically evaluate their own achievements and identify areas for further improvement. <p>Learning outcomes resulting from subject-specific competences On successful completion of the course, students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – acquire theoretical and practical knowledge of phonological segments and suprasegmental features (stress, rhythm, intonation, tone); – understand sound systems and sound-changing processes, both systematic and functional; – analyse prosodic units (syllables, metrical feet, stress patterns, intonation) and define their properties, processing, and phonetic consequences; – recognise and interpret tones and melodic contours as elements of sentence structure and meaning; – demonstrate accuracy in English pronunciation, with awareness of accentual and dialectal variation; – transcribe, read, and analyse phonetic and phonological representations of authentic spoken data; – evaluate and phonologically analyse authentic audio sources; – design, organise, and conduct small-scale phonological and phonetic research. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Lectures and demonstrations supported by visual and audio aids; – Practical transcription and pronunciation exercises; – Listening and analysis of authentic audio materials; – Group and pair discussions, collaborative projects, and problem-based learning; – Use of phonetic and phonological software and digital platforms; – Guided research projects and independent study; – Reading and analysis of theoretical and scholarly literature; – Reflective tasks and self-assessment exercises. 	<p>Continuous assessment through tests, oral performance (pronunciation and transcription tasks), and written homework assignments; participation in discussions and collaborative work.</p>

Content: breakdown of the topics	Contact hours							Self-study work: time and assignments	
	Lectures	Tutorials	Seminars	Exercises	Laboratory work	Internship/work placement	Contact hours	Self-study hours	Assignments
English Phonetics									
Sounds and Voices of English: What Phonetics and Phonology Study (the object of study, varieties of English, dialect, accent, RP)			4			3			Task 1. Balčytytė (2014: 9–12). Unit 1. Roach (2009: 1–7). Optional: Trudgill (1999: 1–14), Collins & Mees (2003: 23–29).
Building Blocks of Meaning: Phoneme, Allophone, and Minimal			4			4			Task 2. Balčytytė (2014: 13–18). Unit 2.

Pairs (branches of phonetics, distinctive sounds in communication)							Roach (2009: 31–38). Optional: Clark & Yallop (1992: 37–42).
The Sound Alphabet of English: IPA and the 44 Phonemes (learning the IPA, vowels, consonants, sonorants)		6			6		Tasks 3–4. Balčytytė (2014: 19–30). Unit 4. Roach (2009: 8–10, 22–24, 39–55). Optional: Collins & Mees (2003: 65–72), Underhill (1994: 29–47).
Shaping Sound: How Vowels and Consonants Create English (articulatory phonetics, classification, sound production)		6			6		Tasks 5–6. Balčytytė (2014: 31–45). Units 5–6. Roach (2009: 11–19, 24–30, 39–55). Optional: Gimson & Cruttenden (2008: 35–39), Carr (2013: 17–21), Clark & Yallop (1992: 83–88). Assessment: Test 1 (Units 1–6, transcription, terminology, sound description).
From Beats to Words: The Syllable and Stress in English (syllable structure, syllabification, stress patterns)		6			6		Tasks 7–9. Balčytytė (2014: 46–55). Unit 8. Roach (2009: 56–68, 82–88). Optional: Gimson & Cruttenden (2008: 91–95).
The Music of English: Rhythm, Strong and Weak Forms (stress-timing, reduction, rhythm in speech)		6			5		Tasks 10–11. Balčytytė (2014: 56–63). Unit 9. Roach (2009: 89–97). Optional: Collins & Mees (2003: 101–107).
Meaning in Melody: Intonation, Tone, and Prominence (intonational phrases, nuclear tones, communicative functions)		6			5		Tasks 12–13. Balčytytė (2014: 64–71). Unit 9. Roach (2009: 120–140). Optional: Wells (2006: 187–193).
English in Flow: Connected Speech in Real Communication (reduction, elision, assimilation, clipping, natural flow)		4			4		Task 14. Balčytytė (2014: 72–76). Unit 10. Roach (2009: 141–151). Optional: Collins & Mees (2003: 212–218).
Beyond Words: Extralinguistic and Vocal Features (voice quality, individuality, paralinguistic cues)		4			2		Task 15. Balčytytė (2014: 77–81). Unit 11. Roach (2009: 152–157). Optional: Abercrombie (1967: 65–72). Assessment: Test 2 (Units 7–11, rhythm, intonation, extralinguistics, transcription).
From Sound to Meaning: Tools, Research, and Application (instrumental phonetics, analysis, applying theory in practice, course round-up)		2			2		Task 16. Balčytytė (2014: 82–88). Unit 12. Roach (2009: 158–165). Optional: Ladefoged (2001: 201–210). Final assessment: Oral performance (reading transcription aloud; comprehensive evaluation).
Total		48			43		*All Tasks are given in emokymai.lt

Assessment strategy	Weight,%	Deadline	Assessment criteria
Cumulative assessment	100%		Continuous evaluation across written homework, homework records, tests, and oral performance.

Homework in writing (10 tasks: Nos. 1–6, 8–9, 11, 14)	20% (2% each)	Throughout semester	Accuracy and completeness of written tasks; phonetic transcription; theoretical understanding applied in practice.
Homework record (Tasks 10, 12, 13)	30% (10% each)	Throughout semester	Demonstrated ability to pronounce correctly; application of connected speech phenomena (linking, assimilation, reduction) and suprasegmental features (stress, rhythm, intonation).
Test I (written) (Task 7)	20%	Mid-semester	1. Terminology check and study questions (Balčytytė 2014: Units 1–6). 2. Theory check (Roach 2009: 1–55). 3. Transcription of monosyllabic words. Obligatory attendance.
Test II (written) (Task 15)	20%	End of semester	1. Terminology check and study questions (Balčytytė 2014: Units 7–11). 2. Theory check (Roach 2009: 56–157). 3. Transcription of polysyllabic words and sentences. Obligatory attendance.
Final oral task (Task 16)	10%	Last seminar	Reading transcription aloud (10 words + 2 sentences); accuracy of pronunciation; appropriate use of strong/weak forms. Obligatory attendance.

*All Tasks are given in emokymai.lt

Additional rule:

Students must be prepared at each seminar to discuss the theory from the previous session(s). Failure to participate in the discussion results in a minus; two minuses lower the final grade by one point.

Use of Vilnius University electronic learning system

All of the seminar texts, compulsory and optional reading materials, handouts and other relevant course materials will be made available on the webpage of Vilnius University Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) at <https://emokymai.vu.lt>. It is students' responsibility to refer to the course website on a regular basis to be able to access course materials and submit assignments as requested. Unless indicated otherwise by the course instructor, all home assignments must be uploaded in due time on the course website. In the case of written mandatory assignments, students must submit them prior the deadline as the system will not accept any submissions once the deadline has passed. No email submissions are accepted as the VLE of Vilnius University is the only platform to turn in all the written tasks instructed by the course instructors.

Academic integrity

All assignments must be completed independently by the students complying with the requirements of academic conventions of fair citing, paraphrasing and referencing. In accordance with the university regulations (see article 53.2 of Study Regulations of Vilnius University (<https://www.vu.lt/en/studies/academic-info-for-students/regulations>)), a student who commits an act of academic dishonesty (such as plagiarism or any other form of cheating) shall receive a failing grade on the work in which the dishonesty occurred. In addition, any act of academic dishonesty shall result in the failure of the whole module and the student who has committed the act may be subject to the expulsion from the University.

Requirements for passing the course

To get a passing grade for the whole module, students must get a positive grade (4.5 and above).

Final grade calculation policy

The final assessment is based on a cumulative grade which is calculated in accordance with the proportions established in the description of this course unit (module) (see Section on Assessment Strategy above). The scores granted for each mandatory assignment (Test) are not rounded up or down. Only the sum of the grades of all mandatory assignments (with the proportions established in the description above) is rounded.

Lateness of task completion

All of the mandatory assignments are obligatory for all the students and are carried out only once. The course instructor informs the students beforehand about the time and date of the assessed assignments. In the case of missed seminars, it is the student's responsibility to find out the time and the requirements of relevant tasks and to complete them until the set deadline. Failure to submit an assignment for the course in time results in failing it (marked 0). Failing to show up in the tests or any other mandatory in-class task at the assigned time with no justifiable reason results in failing the task (marked 0) with no chance of make-up. To be able to make up for the missed assignment, the student is fully responsible for notifying the course instructor of his/her absence and provide a justifiable reason for it.

Course policy regarding the use of electronic devices in class

The usage of electronic devices (laptops, tablets, etc.) during class is only allowed for study and research purposes, when it is required for in-class activities (assigned by the course instructor). All the electronic devices must be put away at all times to facilitate the study process for all participants and to maintain favourable learning environment. Taking photos, videos and making sound recordings in class are forbidden, unless instructed otherwise by the professor or unless students provide documents which outline the requirements for necessary accommodations of the use of electronic devices due to disability or other diagnosed health issues.

List of the learning and teaching resources				
Author	Year of publication	Title	Issue of a periodical or volume of a publication	Publishing place and house or web link
Compulsory reading				
Balčytytė, G.	2014	<i>A Course in English Phonetics for EFL University Students</i>		http://www.flf.vu.lt/mokslas/elektroniniai-istekliai#vadoveliai-mokymo-priemonės
Roach, P.	2009	<i>English Phonetics and Phonology</i>	4th edition	Cambridge: CUP
Tench, P.	2011	<i>Transcribing the Sound of English</i>		Cambridge: CUP
Optional reading				
Ashby, M. and J. Maidment	2005	<i>Introducing Phonetic Science</i>		Cambridge: CUP
Carr, Ph.	2008	<i>A Glossary of Phonology</i>		Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press
Carr, Ph.	2013	<i>English Phonetics and Phonology. An Introduction</i>	2nd edition	Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell
Collins, B. and I. M. Mees	2003	<i>Practical Phonetics and Phonology</i>		London: Routledge
Cruttenden, A.	2014	<i>Gimson's Pronunciation of English</i>	8th edition	London: Routledge
Crystal, D.	2003	<i>English as a Global Language</i>		Cambridge: CUP
Crystal, D. & C. L. Alan	2023	<i>A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics</i>	6th edition	Oxford: Blackwell Publishers
Daggaso, E. & F. Warda	2024	<i>The Phonology of English Second Foreign Language learning</i>		Cambridge: CUP
Gimson, A. C. and A. Cruttenden	2008	<i>Gimson's Pronunciation of English</i>	7th edition	London: Edward Arnold
Hannah, S. J. and M. Davenport	2025	<i>Introducing Phonetics & Phonology</i>		Taylor & Francis
Jone, T & M. Reed	2023	<i>Phonetics in Language Teaching</i>		Cambridge: CUP
MacKay, I.	2022	<i>Phonetics and Speech science</i>		Cambridge: CUP
Trudgill, P.	1999	<i>The Dialects of England</i>		Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

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