

BOSTON UNIVERSITY - COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES  
LINGUISTICS PROGRAM

**LX383/683 LS507 – The Sounds of Spanish – Fall 2019**

<b>Time:</b>	Tues and Thurs 9:30-10:45a	<b>Location:</b>	CAS B06A
<b>Professor:</b>	Daniel Erker	<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:danerker@bu.edu">danerker@bu.edu</a>
<b>Office:</b>	718 Commonwealth Ave Room 501a	<b>Office hours:</b>	T 2-3p, R 11a-12p, F 12-1p Also by appointment

*Course website:* The course is hosted on Blackboard Learn

*Instructor website:* <http://blogs.bu.edu/danerker/>

**Course objectives:**

The goal of this course is to introduce students to the linguistic analysis of speech, with a focus on the Spanish language. We will examine the vowels and consonants of Spanish from the perspective of articulatory and acoustic phonetics. In addition, the course will introduce core concepts in phonological analysis, surveying the phonemic inventory and phonological organization of Spanish. We will also investigate a range of regional variation demonstrated by so-called *dialects* of Spanish, with an emphasis on the historical and social significance of such variation in Spain, Latin America, and the United States. In summary, this course aims to examine the sounds of Spanish as physical, mental, and social phenomena.

**Prerequisites for the course:**

CAS LX 250 Introduction to Linguistics and CAS LS 303 or a higher level Spanish course, or permission of the instructor.

**Students completing this course will learn:**

- To describe and classify speech sounds in terms of their phonetic properties
- To transcribe the sounds of Spanish using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA/AFI)
- To discuss variation in the realization of speech sounds according to phonological context
- To explain basic phonological processes
- To demonstrate an understanding of the spectrographic analysis of vowels and consonants
- To discuss the principal differences in pronunciation among regional varieties of Spanish
- To discuss the historical and social significance of such variation

**Required Reading:**

- Schwegler, Armin, Kempff, Juergen, & Ameal-Guerra, Ana. (2018). *Fonética y fonología españolas*. John Wiley and Sons: 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. (*nb*: The 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition is actually substantially different, please don't purchase it. There is also a 5<sup>th</sup> edition as of this year). ISBN-10: 0470421924

**Required computer program:**

- Praat – available at [www.praat.org](http://www.praat.org) (a free acoustic phonetic analysis application)

**Course requirements and grading:**

	<b>CAS LS 507, LX 383</b>	<b>GRS LX 683</b>
Classroom participation	10%	10%
Weekly quizzes	30%	20%
Midterm examination	20%	20%
Final examination	20%	20%
Transcription	20%	15%
Additional transcription and speaker report	NA	15%

Weekly quizzes will be given during Thursday lecture (unless otherwise noted). Quizzes will cover reading and lecture material from the previous week. These quizzes, which will take roughly 15 minutes to complete, encourage you to complete the weekly readings, review lecture notes and keep on top of the course material. There will be 11 quizzes in total, the first of which will be practice (on Tuesday 9/10) and will not count towards your course grade. The lowest quiz grade of the remaining 10 will be dropped, making the quiz grade the result of your 9 best quizzes.

Transcription All students will complete a) a take home transcription assignment in week 7 and b) a supplemental transcription component to the quizzes in weeks 10 through 14.

Graduate students will complete an additional assignment for the course. This will consist of two components: a phonetic transcription of a sociolinguistic interview conducted with a native Spanish speaker (interviews will be provided by the instructor) and a 7-10 page report on a phonetic feature of prominence in the interview. Detailed guidelines for this assignment will be distributed to graduate students in week 8, and it will be due the last day of classes.

**Course policies:**

Late assignments are not accepted.

Missing the midterm or final examination without receiving explicit verbal permission from me beforehand automatically drops your grade 10%, and makeups will be given *only* at my discretion and convenience, provided that there is a good and compelling reason for your absence. Leaving a message on my voice mail or sending me e-mail does not constitute receiving verbal permission unless I have responded to you.

Procedures. Class time will be devoted to presenting information that the textbook reinforces and will regularly offer another viewpoint. Many topics will be covered in greater detail in class than in your textbook. It is your responsibility to (1) read material from the text(s) *before* coming to class, (2) to attend class promptly and regularly, (3) to obtain any class notes for sessions you miss, and (4) print class notes (if desired) which will be posted on Blackboard by 8 pm the night before class. I encourage you to talk to me outside of class if you are having particular difficulties and/or have comments about the course.

Other matters. No cell phones, no extra credit, no non-course related computer use.

Attendance. I will take attendance every time we meet. More than two unexcused absences will result in a failing 'Classroom Participation' grade. Please feel free to speak with me regarding any and all absences. It is not my intent to punish students for getting sick or having genuine and compelling reasons for missing a class.

**Academic Integrity.** All students are responsible for understanding and complying with the BU Academic Conduct Code, available at <https://www.bu.edu/cas/current-students/undergraduate/academic-conduct-code-2/>. The academic conduct code specific to GRS can be found here <https://www.bu.edu/cas/files/2017/02/GRS-Academic-Conduct-Code-Final.pdf>

**Grading policies:**

When time permits, we will go over the quizzes immediately after taking them, and I will return graded quizzes the following week. I am committed to grading promptly.

**Grading standards:**

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93-100	A	78-79.99	C+
90-92.99	A-	73-77.99	C
88-89.99	B+	70-72.99	C-
83-87.99	B	60-60.99	D
80-82.99	B-	< 60	F

**Course roadmap (subject to adjustment)**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Quiz</b>	<b>Reading for week</b>	<b>MAIN TOPICS</b>	<b>Sub-topics</b>
1 9-3 9-5		Ch 1 Ch 2 Ch 3	INTRODUCTION <i>Complete Course Survey 1</i> <i>Record and upload passage.</i>	What is phonetics? What is phonology? Phonemes, minimal pairs, IPA Articulatory Phonetics Introduction to Spanish vowels
2 9-10 9-12	Q* Q	Ch 4 Ch 5 (Ch 6 optional)	INTRO TO VOWELS THE SYLLABLE  <i>*Practice quiz</i>	The five vowels of Spanish Linguistic description of vowels Spanish and English vowels compared Introduction to <i>PRAAT</i> Diphthongs Hiatus
3 9-17 9-19	Q	Ch 7	SYLLABLE CONT DIPHTHONGS HIATUS GLIDES	The letters <i>i</i> and <i>u</i> The sounds [j] and [w] Continued study of spectrograms and waveforms
4 9-24	Q	Ch 8 (first half)	FINISH HIATUS/ DIPHTHONGS  INTRO TO CONSONANTS	Consonant inventory of Spanish Place and manner of articulation The vocal folds and voicing Sound classes Preliminaries of regional variation
9-26	<b>NO CLASS - PROFESSOR ERKER AWAY FOR CONFERENCE</b>			
5 10-1 10-3	Q	Ch 8 (second half)	<i>DISTRIBUTE TRANSCRIPTION ASSIGNMENT</i>  INTRO TO PHONETIC TRANSCRIPTION OF CONSONANTS	Orthography and speech The IPA in general Using the phonetic symbols for transcribing Spanish speech Manner+Place+Voicing
6 10-8 <b>10-10</b>		Ch 9 Ch 10	INTRO TO PHONOLOGY  <b>IN CLASS MIDTERM</b>	Allophones, Phonological Rules  <b>TRABAJO DE TRANSCRIPCIÓN DUE</b>
10-15	<b>NO CLASS - BU ON MONDAY SCHEDULE</b>			
7 10-17		Ch 11	PHONEMIC CLASSES	Return MIDTERMS Voiceless Occlusives

8 10-22 10-24	Q	Ch 12	PHONEMIC CLASSES <b>DISTRIBUTE GUIDELINES FOR GRADUATE STUDENT TRANSCRIPTION ASSIGNMENT</b>	Nasals Phonological Processes
9 10-29 10-31	Q	Ch 13 Ch 14	PHONEMIC CLASSES	Voiced Occlusives Transcription of spontaneous speech Phonological Processes
10 11-5 11-7	Q	Ch 15	PHONEMIC CLASSES	Rhotics Liquids Fricatives Phonological Processes
11 11-12 11-14	Q	Ch 18	INTRO TO DIACHRONIC & SYNCHRONIC VARIATION	The historical roots of Spanish Historical sound changes Mergers, splits, and assimilation <i>Seseo, Yeísmo</i>
12 11-19 11-21	Q	Ch 19 Ch 20	VARIATION CONTINUED: <i>Spanish in Iberia</i> <i>Spanish in the Americas</i>	Regional variation within Spain The letters <i>z, c, s, y, ll</i> The phonemes /θ/ and /ɰ/ Regional variation and sociolinguistics Variable production of: /s/, /n/, /ɾ/, /r/, /x/, /j/, /l/
13 11-26		Ch 21	VARIATION CONTINUED: <i>Spanish in the Americas</i>	Spanish in contact with indigenous languages of Latin America
11-28	<b>NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK</b>			
14 12-3 12-5	Q		VARIATION CONTINUED: <i>Spanish in the Unites States</i>	Demographics Spanish in contact in Los Angeles, NYC, Chicago, Boston  <b>GRADUATE STUDENT TRANSCRIPTION AND REPORTS DUE</b>
15 12-10			COURSE REVIEW and WRAP-UP	

**FINAL EXAM: Tues December 17, 9-11a**