

ALI 252 Advanced Pronunciation

Instructor: Tessy Tzoytzoyrakos

Class Meetings: T/TH: 12:30-1:50pm

Email: tzoytzoy@usc.edu

Location: THH 219 , Office Hour:by appointment

PREREQUISITES: Students are placed into ALI 252 based on the results of a previous ALI oral skills course, the International Student English (ISE) Exam¹, or the International Teaching Assistant (ITA) Exam². In addition, international students who want to fine-tune their pronunciation or modify their accent can enroll in this course.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Good pronunciation involves much more than the correct pronunciation of individual letters and sounds; it's also about mastering the stress, rhythm, and flow of your speech. ALI 252 offers tools to help grasp the “music” of English, raises awareness, and gives nonnative speakers a greater sense of confidence in their academic and professional interactions. This course is for international students who want to achieve more “native-like” pronunciation. **We will use acting techniques, theater, film and TV content to help achieve course objectives.**

We will be working on the following areas of pronunciation:

- Segmentals (vowels and consonants)
- Syllables (combinations of vowels and consonants)
- Word stress
- Intonational units or “thought groups”
- Prominence (sentence stress)
- Intonation
- Rhythm
- Connected speech

These language areas will be addressed and practiced through various drilling exercises, acting-related activities and discussions about the selected study scenes from popular plays, movies, and/or TV sitcoms. Students will perform scenes in class throughout the semester to showcase their progress.

Accurate, fluent pronunciation will be addressed in four stages:

1. Knowledge: understanding how sounds and patterns of sounds are made (both physical and non-physical features)
2. Comprehension: being able to decipher the difference between similar sounds and patterns
3. Production: producing accurate sounds and patterns while concentrating on the physical and non-physical features necessary to produce them

¹ <http://ali.usc.edu/ise/>

² <http://ali.usc.edu/ita/>

4. **Automaticity:** comprehension and production of sounds and patterns without thought, as a fluent second language speaker (or native speaker with a modified accent).

GRADING: Upon completion of this course, students will receive a grade of Credit (CR) or No Credit (NC). The final grade will be based on the following criteria:

- **Participation and Teamwork:** Grades are based on the quality of participation such as attendance (10%), active engagement in scene study, class exercises, projects (15%), enthusiasm for learning and improvement (15%); this is a performance-based class and your attendance is mandatory not only for your own presentations, but also in support of your classmates.
- **Scene and Performance Work:**
 - Exercises (improv, warm-ups, drills, discussions) – 20%
 - Scene Presentations (Monologues, Partner and/or Group Scenes)– 20%
 - Final Assignments – 20%

COURSE MATERIALS: All handouts will be made available in class and on Blackboard.

ALI ATTENDANCE POLICY: More than **3** hours of absence will be reported to the ALI Student Advisor. More than **6** hours of absence will result in a course grade of **NC** (no credit). Absence is counted for *any* reason, including tardiness, illness, emergencies, and conference attendance. You will be marked **ONE** hour absent, if you are 10 or more minutes late, or if you leave class early without prior instructor approval. You will also be marked absent for the **ENTIRE** class time if you use your cell phone or any other electronic device during class time, unless otherwise instructed.

ITAs ONLY: Students must complete ALL course-related assignments, attend ALL meetings with their uSC, and not exceed the maximum number of allowable absences for the course. Students who do not meet these requirements will be at risk of receiving a No Credit and will have their department notified. Failure to attend the scheduled ITA exam may also result in a No Credit for the course.

Please note: This is a credit/no credit (CR/NC) class, which means that you will not receive a final letter grade (A/B/C/F) on your USC transcript. Since this is a proficiency-based course designed to help improve your oral skills, your proficiency in these oral skills at the end of the course or the ITA exam determines whether you will be advised to take an additional class or not.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: ALI and USC are very diligent in keeping students honest about their assignments and tests. Obviously, this is not so much of an issue in a

pronunciation class since you cannot have someone else speak for you. However, occasionally a student may be tempted to cheat on a test, or copy another's words from the Internet for a presentation. While these "shortcuts" may make passing a test or preparing a presentation easier, they do not help you learn or improve; therefore, it really is in your best interest to do your own work.

CONFERENCING AND OFFICE HOURS: During the semester, I will be meeting with you individually and/or in groups to listen to your production of sounds, discuss your progress in your scene study and overall pronunciation, and strategize with you to help you reach your personal goals in English communication.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: Any student requiring accommodation based on a disability is required to register with the Disability Services and Programs office (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved recommendations can be obtained through DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the session as possible.

CLASSROOM COURTESY:

- Use of technology (e.g., smart phones, iPads) is NOT ALLOWED during class time, unless I specifically instruct you to do so.
- If you need to take a quick break to use the restroom, etc., you do not need to ask permission; just quietly leave and return to class promptly.

ZOOM ETIQUETTE (for online class meetings)

- **You will keep your microphone ON**, unless there is unexpected background noise. That way, you can easily and actively participate in class discussions and activities.
- **You will need to have your video ON** during class. This is not only important for effective interaction in class, but also particularly helpful in an oral skills class, which includes a pronunciation component. Being visible on the screen also allows your instructor to see your mouth/jaw movements as you speak, an essential component to proper pronunciation of some challenging American English sounds.

Synchronous session recording notice: All synchronous Zoom class sessions will be recorded and can be provided asynchronously.

Sharing of course materials outside of the learning environment

USC has a policy that prohibits sharing of any synchronous and asynchronous course content outside of the learning environment. *SCampus Section 11.12(B)*

Distribution or use of notes or recordings based on university classes or lectures without the express permission of the instructor for purposes other than individual or group study is a violation of the USC Student Conduct Code. This includes, but is not limited to, providing materials for distribution by services publishing class notes. This restriction on unauthorized use also applies to all information, which had been distributed to students or in any way had been displayed for use in relationship to the class, whether obtained in class, via email, on the Internet or via any other media. (See Section C.1 Class Notes Policy).

USING ACTING TECHNIQUES TO TEACH PRONUNCIATION: You may be wondering how pronunciation and theater can be combined in helping improve communication skills. Effective communication is achieved by precise and strategic use of language structures, clear pronunciation, and the understanding of pragmatic knowledge in specific settings. Using acting techniques helps students with their cultural and oral interactions as well as with confidence building. Learning how to “imitate” characters portrayed in theater, film, or television gives students the opportunity to emulate successful communication behaviors in various contexts and situations. It allows students the chance to explore and experiment with language they may not normally be familiar with.

USC’s GRADUATE ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS

The American Language Institute adheres to the following USC Graduate Admissions English Language Requirements:

The ability to communicate effectively in English—to read, write and speak the language fluently—is vital to your success as a university student. USC graduate applicants are therefore expected to demonstrate English-language proficiency as part of the application process.

<https://gradadm.usc.edu/lightboxes/international-students-english-proficiency/>

Academic Conduct:

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” <https://policy.usc.edu/files/2020/07/SCampus-Part-B-2.pdf>. Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

Support Systems:

Student Health Counseling Services - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call

engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling

Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call

suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call

studenthealth.usc.edu

Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) | Title IX - (213) 740-5086

equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu

Information about how to get help or help a survivor of harassment or discrimination, rights of protected classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants.

The university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following protected characteristics: race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status, genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and governmental regulations.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776

dsp.usc.edu



Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Support and Advocacy - (213) 821-4710

studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa

Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101

diversity.usc.edu

Information on events, programs and training, the Provost's Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu

Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call

dps.usc.edu