

SPAN 676 – Advanced Spanish Phonology

Course description

SPAN 676 is designed to build on what you already know about the sounds and sound patterns of Spanish. The fields of phonetics and phonology have evolved rapidly in recent years due to advances in technology that have made speech analysis more accurate and more accessible and to innovations in theory that have changed our understanding of how sounds pattern in language. This course will introduce you to methods of analysis and theoretical approaches in these fields that help us to better understand the sounds and sound systems of Spanish and other languages.

Specific topics explored in the course include methods of phonetic analysis; syllables, phonemes and features as units of analysis; concepts related to stress and intonation; autosegmental and constraint-based frameworks in phonology, and the interface between phonology and morphology. The focus will be on data from Spanish, though examples from other languages will be incorporated to illustrate certain concepts.

Course goals and objectives

- Understand and explain key concepts and theories in phonetics and phonology;
- Analyze phonetic and phonological phenomena in Spanish using a variety of methods and theoretical approaches;
- Evaluate theories in phonetics and phonology in terms of their descriptive and explanatory adequacy, and apply these methods of critical evaluation to other areas of inquiry;
- Apply an understanding of phonetics and phonology to drafting a proposal for original research in the field.

Course readings and materials

The main textbook for the course is *Fonología generativa contemporánea de la lengua española, 2nd edition* (2014), ed. by Rafael Nuñez-Cedeño, Sonia Colina and Travis Bradley. New and used copies of this book are available on Amazon and elsewhere, but be sure to buy the 2nd edition.

All other course readings and supplemental materials will be available online through Sakai. For students interested in pursuing further research in this area, a bibliography with recommended readings will also be provided through Sakai.

Evaluation and Grades

Class preparation and participation: 20% (undergraduates), 10% (graduates)

Homeworks/Problem sets (6): 30%

Article discussion: 10% (graduates)

Final project/paper: 15%

Midterm exam: 15%

Final exam: 20%

<i>Undergraduates</i>			<i>Graduates</i>
A = 92-100	B- = 80-81	D+ = 68-69	H = 90-100
A- = 90-91	C+ = 78-79	D = 60-67	P = 80-89
B+ = 88-89	C = 72-77	F = 0-59	L = 70-79
B = 82-87	C- = 70-71		F = 0-69

Preparation and Participation: In a graduate-level class such as this one, it is absolutely essential that you come to each class having done the assigned readings and activities and that you are prepared to discuss the topic at hand. It is suggested that as you do the readings, you

take notes on points of interest and also make a list of questions you have about the reading itself and the topic more generally.

Students will be allowed **2** unexcused absences without this affecting their grade. For every absence past 2, students will lose 5 points (out of 100) from their final participation grade in the class. You should notify your instructor in advance about any excused absences for university organized and sponsored activities or religious observances, and absences for documented medical reasons should be reported as soon as possible.

Homeworks/Problem Sets: The homework/problem set assignments for this class make up a substantial portion of the final grade and students are expected to put a significant amount of time and thought into completing these assignments; it may help to think of them as take-home tests. The due dates for problem sets (“tareas”) are indicated on the tentative course calendar, and students will receive the homework assignment in class approximately one week before it is due. If a student misses class on the day that a homework is handed out, he or she can get the assignment on the next class day, or can download and print out the assignment in PDF format from our Sakai site. A student’s absence on the day that homework is assigned does NOT excuse the student from turning in the homework on time. It is fine for you to work with your classmates on homework, though in some cases the assignment may specify that you are to answer a question in your own words, in which case your work should be entirely your own. Late homework will be accepted, but for each day past the original due date, 10 points will be deducted from the homework grade. For example, if a student gets an 88 on a homework assignment but turns the homework in 2 days late, that grade automatically becomes a 68. In order to get credit for late homework, you must turn it in to me in person or email me a scanned PDF file; I will consider homework that is left in my box or under my door to have been turned in whenever I get it, which may be several days after it was originally left.

Final project: Your final project for this class involves two related elements: a research paper and a class presentation, each of which will be graded separately. We will discuss the exact format of each of these elements in greater detail later in the semester. Briefly, however, for the research proposal you will first turn in a list of five specific topics/questions related to Spanish phonetics/phonology that you would be interested in doing further research on. After getting feedback on these from the instructor, you will choose one and begin to search for published materials related to your chosen topic, which will form the basis for your bibliography and article discussion. Once you have reviewed the available literature, you will then draft a brief proposal for your own original research on the topic.

Article discussion in class (Graduate students): The article discussion assignment will require you to select an academic article related to the area on which you are focusing in your research and lead a 20-30 min. class discussion of the article. Your classmates will be expected to read over the article and to ask questions, but you will be the expert who helps guide the entire class to a better understanding of the phenomenon or study that the article describes; this sort of critical explanation is sometimes referred to in linguistic circles as an “exegesis.” Again, we will discuss the exact requirements for this assignment later in the semester.

Midterm exam: The midterm exam for this course will cover all topics discussed up to the midpoint of the semester. On this exam you will be expected to define and explain terms and concepts, explicitly describe the phonological attributes of Spanish as asked, and apply theories to new problem sets.

Final exam: The final exam for this course will be cumulative, with a somewhat greater emphasis on topics covered during the second half of the semester (after the midterm). You can

expect the format of the final exam to be very similar to that of the midterm, differing primarily in length. Important: except in cases of scheduling conflicts as described by the University Registrar or extreme emergencies, the final exam will not be given on a date other than when it is scheduled.

University & Instructor Policies

Honor Code: All students should familiarize themselves with and abide by the UNC Honor Code, which covers issues such as plagiarism, unauthorized assistance or collaboration, cheating, and other acts of academic dishonesty. Violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the appropriate university bodies.

A special note on the use of **Online Translators:** The use of online programs such as Google Translate to translate entire sentences from English to Spanish for homework assignments and other written coursework is considered plagiarism and will result in a grade of 0 (zero) for the given assignment. It is highly recommended that students make use of online resources such as <http://www.wordreference.com> to find the appropriate translations for unfamiliar phrases and vocabulary. If you have any questions as to what this means and how to avoid inadvertent plagiarism, please come speak to me after class or during office hours.

Reasonable Accommodations Policy: Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent him or her from fully demonstrating his or her abilities should contact *UNC Accessibility Resources and Service* as soon as possible to discuss accommodations.

Laptop computers may be used in class provided that they do not prove distracting. If use of laptops becomes a hindrance to productive discussion, I will ask that they be put away. Students needing an accommodation in this regard must go through Disability Services for the requisite documentation. **Cell phones** and other portable electronics should be set to silent and should not be used in class unless an activity requires their use.

Office Hours and Email: I encourage you to stop by my office if you have any questions or concerns about the class. My office hours are listed above, and you are welcome to make an appointment to meet with me at another time. I am also available via email and generally check my email at least once a day, so if you contact me during the week you should hear back within 24 hours. On weekends I do not check email as frequently and may not check it at all. At certain times during the semester I do get a very large volume of email, so if you do not get a response to your email within 48 hours please feel free to email me again as a reminder.

Attendance policy (repeated from above): Students will be allowed **2** unexcused absences without this affecting their grade in the course. For every absence past 2, students will lose 5 points (out of 100) from the final participation grade in the class. You should notify your instructor in advance about any excused absences for university organized and sponsored activities or religious observances, and absences for documented medical reasons should be reported as soon as possible.

Instructor Absence: If I am unable to come to class for any reason, I will email the entire class as soon as possible to set up alternate class activities. Please check your UNC email account frequently in order to receive course announcements.

Calendario Tentativo / Tentative Course Calendar

FGC = *Fonología generativa contemporánea de la lengua española*.

Semana 1: Introducción al curso. Repaso de conceptos fundamentales: la lingüística

Semana 2: Repaso de conceptos fundamentales: la fonética y la fonología

Lectura(s) para esta semana: FGC: *La fonología* (PDF en Sakai; leer para martes)

Semana 3: Repaso de conceptos fundamentales: la fonética y la fonología

Lectura(s) para esta semana: FGC: *De la fonética descriptiva a los rasgos distintivos* (PDF en Sakai; leer para martes)

Semana 4: Teorías fonológicas: la fonología autosegmental

Lectura(s) para esta semana: FGC: *Fonología autosegmental*, 2.0-2.5

Semana 5: Teorías fonológicas: la subespecificación

Lectura(s) para esta semana: FGC: *Teoría de la subespecificación*, 4.0-4.9

Semana 6: Conceptos fonológicos: La sílaba y la acentuación

Lecturas para esta semana: FGC: *La silabificación en español, El acento*

Semana 7: Introducción a la teoría de la optimidad

Para el martes: *Conflicts in Grammars*, 1.1-1.4 (de Kager 1999; PDF en Sakai)

Para el jueves: *Conflicts in Grammars*, 1.5-1.9 (de Kager 1999; PDF en Sakai)

Semana 8: La teoría de la optimidad en la fonología del español

Para el martes: FGC: *La teoría de la optimidad en la fonología del español*

Para el jueves: *Introduction*, Colina 2009 (PDF en Sakai)

Semana 9: Repaso y examen parcial de midterm

Semana 10: La sílaba y la teoría de la optimidad

Para el martes: *Syllable types and phonotactics*, Colina 2009 (PDF en Sakai)

Para el jueves: *Glossary of constraints & Summary of constraint rankings*, Colina 2009 (PDF en Sakai)

Semana 11: Métodos y herramientas para las descripciones fonéticas

Lectura(s) para la semana: FGC: *Fonología de laboratorio* 10.0-10.5

Semana 12: Métodos y herramientas para las descripciones fonéticas

Para el martes: Exploración del programa PRAAT <http://www.fon.hum.uva.nl/praat/>

Para el jueves: Lectura(s)/Actividades a determinar

Semana 13: La morfofonología

Para el martes: *Main morphophonological alternations*, 12.1-12.6 (PDF en Sakai)

Para el jueves: *Main morphophonological alternations*, 12.7-12.9 (PDF en Sakai)

Semana 14: La morfofonología

Para el martes: FGC: *La fonología léxica*

Para el jueves: *Plural Epenthesis & Epenthesis in diminutives*, Colina 2009 (PDF en Sakai)

Semana 15: Presentaciones/Discusión de proyectos finales

Semana 16: Presentaciones/Discusión de proyectos finales

Examen final

TBD