

“ACCENT & DIALECT TRAINING FOR ACTORS”
TPP 4930 - Special Topics
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA SPRING 2024

Time: Period 4 - 5 (10:40 AM - 12:35 PM)

Days: Mon/Weds

Room: G013

Instructor: Susan Schuld Office: 213a Office Hours: By appt

Email: Sschuld@Ufl.Edu The Recommended Method of Communication Outside of Scheduled Class Time is Email

Course description:

Students engage in important discussions of code-switching, stereotypes, and the many sensitive, personal issues that arise when discussing accent and dialect acquisition. Actors build skills of vocal placement, rhythm, inflection, tonality, stress, and phonemic shifts for ten accents/dialects. The work will culminate in each actor’s study, acquisition, and teaching of a real-life character’s idiolect. Lastly, actors develop character voices, and how to safely perform vocal extremes while learning voice over techniques for video gaming.

Course Statement to Disrupt Race, Class, Sexual Orientation Discrimination:

“Diverse languages and dialects are welcome in this classroom. As we communicate with one another, communication process. This means that we will listen patiently, work to understand one another, seek out clarification when necessary and avoid finishing each other's sentences or correcting grammatical errors unless invited to do so.”

Course Goals

- Engage intellectually in important discussions of code-switching, stereotypes, and the many sensitive, personal issues that arise when discussing dialect while celebrating cultural and regional diversity
- Learn how to vary speech actions with fluency, flexibility, and accuracy.
- Obtain the tools and resources of how to research and prepare for any dialect and accent pattern.
- Continue to practice using the international phonetic alphabet (ipa) and develop phonetic transcription skills for future dialect study and script notation.

Course Outcomes

- To apply Knight-Thompson, Jim Johnson, and Paul Meier’s methodology for dialect and accent acquisition
- To learn some of the most specifically and frequently encountered dialects and accents in our industry.
- To research, teach, and perform a dialect/accnt
- Apply the 5 KTS fundamental steps to learning an accent/dialect
- Post in canvas accent research for each accent studied
- Perform a scored monologue using ipa symbols for each accent/dialect section
- Create and teach an accent/dialect in a solo presentation

Course Overview:

Our first focus in class will be how to research and practice an accent or dialect - *not mastery*. Our second focus will be application of dialect work to voice over genres of gaming and animation.

The first half of the course focuses the tools needed to successfully act in an accent or dialect. Methodology will include studying the main vowel and consonant positions and accurate speech and intonation patterns of a key target accent. Students learn how to write an accent breakdown sheet and learn how to research audio-visual aids. Classes will dedicate approximately one week to each accent, and students will perform a monologue or scene in that accent. Therefore, it is up to the student to integrate the new skills with their acting and performance work.

If time, the section ambition is to continue to practice voiceover acting techniques for animation, and video games. Class will continue to provide information on the industry, professional work and studio etiquette. We will be also be investigating vocal health strategies and rehabilitation techniques to aid us in the vocal extremes of VO for gaming and characters for animation.

The dialect resources include, but are not limited to:

Classically Speaking, Patricia Fletcher
Accents And Dialects For Stage And Screen, Paul Meier
Dialect And Accent Materials, David Alan Stern
African Accents: A Workbook For Actors Beth Mcguire
Stage Dialects, Jerry Blunt
Accents: A Manual For Actors, Robert Blumenfeld
Accenthelp Materials, Jim Johnson
Dialect And Accent Materials, Gillian Lane Plescia
The International Dialects Of English Arichive (Idea) Website

Required materials:

Water bottle, pen or pencil, small hand mirror, recording device, headphones

Course schedule (subject to change at the discretion of the instructor)

Unit 1: People and Cultural Context

- **Mon Jan 8** syllabus, project outlines, Review IPA, SCGA and How to Approach an Accent
- Wed Jan 10 – No class – Homework:
- Mon Jan 15 – No class – MLK Holiday
- **Weds Jan 17** Review IPA, SCGA People: map, historical, geographical, and immigration information that inform the creation of the accent: social and/or political information that leads to attitudes and values, Cultural attributes and stereotypes. Homework: how to work on accents/dialects articles and post answers on Canvas Page

Unit 2: Oral Posture

- **Mon Jan 22** upper RP – present RP cultural attributes and stereotypes
- **Weds Jan 24** upper RP and modern/London RP posture: oral posture (please also include a creative shape/image/or 'as if' for your op analysis): model speaker: springboard line
- **Mon Jan 29** upper RP and modern/London RP Oral Posture continued with placement and/or zone, Hesitation sound, and Direction
- **Weds Jan 31** Cockney: People and Oral Posture for Cockney
- **Mon Feb 5** Cockney and Multi-Cultural London English people and oral posture for MLE
- **Weds Feb 7** Multi-Cultural London English, People and Oral Posture for MLE
- **Mon Feb 12** UK review UK demo scenes
- **Weds Feb 14** UK demonstration – shift between 3 UK oral postures

Unit 3: Prosody

- **Mon Feb 19** Southern Antebellum, Deep South, Standard Southern; Intro To Prosody Tone, Laban Effort, Default Tune, Musical Quality
- **Weds Feb 21** Southern, Tense /R/ Ppalachian, West Texas (Town Hall At 2pm) Prosody: Tone: Laban Effort: Default Tune, Musical Quality
- **Mon Feb 26** Southern Demo Presentations
- **Weds Feb 28** Ny Italian Brooklyneese, Jewish Bronx Prosody Continued: Tone: Laban Effort: Default Tune, Musical Quality Add Pitch, Volume, Rate
- **Mon March 4** New Jersey, Queens, Long Island, Manhattan: Prosody Continued: Tone: Laban Effort: Default Tune, Musical Quality Add Pitch, Volume, Rate

Unit 4: Pronunciation

- **Weds March 6** Ny Long Island, Manhattan: Pronunciation: Pronunciation Targets/Inventory Of Vowel And Consonant Characteristics, Practice Words, Target Sentences For Each Signature Sound SCGA Tongue Twisters, Magnet Sound (Sounds That Appear More Often Than Others) Focal Sounds (These Are The Most Prominent Sounds

That Help You Find The Oral Posture)

SPRING BREAK MARCH 11-15

- **Mon March 18** Ny Demo Pronunciation Continued: Pronunciation Targets/Inventory Of Vowel And Consonant Characteristics, Practice Words, Target Sentences For Each Signature Sound, SCGA Tongue Twisters, Magnet Sound (Sounds That Appear More Often Than Others) Focal Sounds (These Are The Most Prominent Sounds That Help You Find The Oral Posture)
- **Weds March 20** Nigerian/French/Russian Pronunciation: Pronunciation Targets/Inventory Of Vowel And Consonant Characteristics, Practice Words, Target Sentences For Each Signature Sound, SCGA Tongue Twisters, Magnet Sound (Sounds That Appear More Often Than Others) Focal Sounds (These Are The Most Prominent Sounds That Help You Find The Oral Posture)
- **Mon March 25** Nigerian/French/Russian Pronunciation: Pronunciation Targets/Inventory Of Vowel And Consonant Characteristics, Practice Words, Target Sentences For Each Signature Sound, SCGA Tongue Twisters, Magnet Sound (Sounds That Appear More Often Than Others) Focal Sounds (These Are The Most Prominent Sounds That Help You Find The Oral Posture)
- **Weds March 27** Nigerian/French/Russian Pronunciation: Pronunciation Targets/Inventory Of Vowel And Consonant Characteristics, Practice Words, Target Sentences For Each Signature Sound, SCGA Tongue Twisters, Magnet Sound (Sounds That Appear More Often Than Others) Focal Sounds (These Are The Most Prominent Sounds That Help You Find The Oral Posture)
- **Mon April 1** Animation/Character Workshop
- **Weds April 3** Animation/Gaming/Character Workshop
- **Mon April 8** Solo Accent Presentations
- **Weds April 10** Solo Accent Presentations
- **Mon April 15** Review Create Presentation
- **Weds April 17** Review Create Presentation
- **Mon April 22** Performance and Putting It All Together
Weds April 24 Last Class Review and Putting It All Together

Please note:

Our work in the studios is designed to be challenging; physically, intellectually, and emotionally. Voice, movement, and acting classes often involve physical contact. Physical contact may range

from simple touch, to correcting alignment and/or relaxation massage. If you have a related medical consideration or touch makes you uncomfortable, it is your responsibility to notify the instructor.

Student responsibilities:

- Students are expected to participate daily in warm-ups, exercises, and performances
- Students must be dressed in appropriate movement clothing for every class and performance
- Students are expected to hold outside of class rehearsals for all projects
- Students must be supportive and respectful of their fellow classmates
- Students must complete all assignments and performances on their assigned due date
- Students must contribute focused and creative participation in all class exercises, assignments, and discussions

Attendance policies:

Only a university sanctioned absence or medical absence will be excused (a note from your physician or school nurse). No absences of any kind will excuse you from class responsibilities. You, the student, will be held accountable for keeping up with class assignments and projects.

3 unexcused absences = a single letter grade reduction, 4 unexcused absences = a two letter grade reduction, 6 unexcused absences = a three letter grade reduction

Tardiness:

Tardiness is disruptive to a class of this nature and will not be tolerated. Any tardiness will be recorded along with attendance. Attendance will be taken promptly at the start of class. If you enter the room after the role-call has been completed, you will be considered tardy. If you enter the room anytime after 20 minutes of the official start of the class you will be marked absent for that class day.

2 tardies = 1 absence

To be considered “excused” an absence must be accompanied by appropriate official documentation. Religious observances do not require documentation.

Any absence from class for the following reasons must be supported by official acceptable documentation to avoid a grade penalty:

- Illness—doctor's note must be on official letterhead with address and phone number, noting the date and time of visit and diagnosis verifying that an absence from class is warranted, doctor name and signature
- Serious family emergencies
- Special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences)
- Military obligation
- Severe weather conditions (e.g., hurricane-related events)
- Participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate
- Court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena)

To help organize accommodations, students should inform the instructor by the end of the second week of classes of religious observances of their faith that will conflict with class attendance this semester.

Any student that acquires 3 absences (either excused or unexcused) will be required to meet with this course's instructor and/or area faculty to discuss the student's continued participation in the course.

Failure to attend this meeting will result in artistic probation.

Due to the participatory nature of the course that includes in-class collaboration along with partner and ensemble work, if a student acquires more than 2 unexcused absences, the student may be prohibited from participation in partner/group exercises which will affect the student's final grade.

Grading

Class participation/professionalism 20% (*punctuality, communication, attitude*)

Conceptual information 45% (*homework, quizzes, Canvas blogs, papers*)

Solo Presentation 15% (*level of progress in accent skills, application of acting skills, and transcription skills*)

Final performance 20% (*level of progress in accent skills, application of acting skills*)

Here is a link to UF's Grading Policy: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

Class participation and professionalism

20% of your grade for this class is based on your participation and professionalism in discussion and the physical explorations.

Participating in the physical component of the class, means having a positive and rigorous attitude with exploring new work. In other words, resistance to change or negative attitudes towards the work or feedback from the instructor is not participating. It means arriving early, suited up, and ready to move right when class starts.

Participating in discussion does not necessarily mean talking a lot or showing everyone else that you know or have studied a lot. 'good discussion' participation involves trying to build on, and synthesize, the physical experience that has transpired. It also involves showing, respect and appreciation for others' comments and contributions and learning how to "agree to disagree".

If you find yourself talking a lot in the feedback sessions, some of the most helpful things you can do are allow for a quiet interlude. Learning to live with unanswered questions is a valuable skill as an actor/artist.

Skills that define a professional attitude are:

1. Demonstrate empathy, integrity, honesty, good interpersonal skills, curiosity, courage, and desire for change.
2. Ability to adapt to a working environment that is both rigorous and demanding.
3. ability to show flexibility to changes.

4. Ability to function in the face of uncertainties questions and stresses, which are inherent in the training and artistic process, as well as the profession.
5. Ability and willingness to respond physically to appropriate verbal and tactile cues given by their teachers.
6. Acknowledgment that the work in the discipline and self-discipline will lead to the attainment of one's goals.

Mistakes to avoid:

1. Refusing to ask for help
2. Not being able to handle feedback
3. Gossiping
4. Being afraid to make mistakes
5. Not admitting you made a mistake
6. Having a bad attitude
7. Not learning from your classmates
8. Not being prepared
9. Comparing your artistic journey to other's journey's

Email policy

Electronic mail or "email" is considered an official method for communication because it delivers information in a convenient, timely, cost effective and environmentally aware manner. Students are expected to check their official ufl email on a frequent and consistent basis in order to remain informed of university-related communications. The university recommends checking email daily. Students are responsible for the consequences of not reading, in a timely fashion, university-related communications sent to their official student email account. This policy ensures that all students have access to this important form of communication. It ensures students can be reached through a standardized channel by faculty and other staff of the university as needed.

Online course evaluation:

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semesters, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

University policy on accommodating students with disabilities (required): "students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the disability resource center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester."

University policy on academic conduct: ufl students are bound by the honor pledge which states, "we, the members of the university of florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity by abiding by the honor code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the university of florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "on my honor, i have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." the

honor code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or tas in this class.

Class demeanor or netiquette: all members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in all email messages, threaded discussions and chats. [describe what is expected and what will occur as a result of improper behavior [see sample netiquette document](#)]

Getting help:

For issues with technical difficulties for canvas, please contact the uf help desk at:

- [Http://helpdesk.ufl.edu](http://helpdesk.ufl.edu)
- (352) 392-help (4357)
- Walk-in: hub 132

Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues must be accompanied by the ticket number received from the help desk when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You must e-mail your instructor within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up.

University counseling services:

Uf counseling center 3190 radio rd. P.o. box 112662, university of florida gainesville, fl 32611-2662 352-392-1575

www.counsel.ufl.edu other resources are available at <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/getting-help> for:

- Counseling and wellness resources
- Disability resources
- Resources for handling student concerns and complaints
- Library help desk support

Should you have any complaints with your experience in this course please visit <http://www.distance.ufl.edu/student-complaints> to submit a complaint.

Accent/Dialect performance rubric (created by Julia Guichard)

	Outstanding	Good	Fair	Poor	Unacceptable
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Transcription	Excellent transcription: no errors, nuanced use of IPA to make phrasing and pronunciation choices	Clearly understands the use of IPA for transcribing sounds, consistent accuracy with only minor errors	Demonstrates fluency with IPA transcription, but may have repeated minor errors	Clear effort, but contains major errors in transcription	Missing or written as a rap
Accuracy	Sound substitutions, resonance/focus, pitch are played consistently throughout the scene	Most of the dialect elements are played accurately, with only minor errors	Clear demonstration of the basic elements of the dialect; may have frequent minor errors in pronunciation, pitch or placement	Significant difficulty in applying one or more of the basic elements: pitch pattern, sound substitution, resonance/focus	What <i>is</i> that – Fargo?
Integration	Dialect choices are fully integrated into acting choices; demonstrates sophisticated use of the dialect to create character	Dialect choices are appropriate for the character and work well in the scene	Dialect and acting choices are integrated on a foundational level, but need polish or detail	Dialect seems “tacked on” or calls attention to itself	Dialect or acting – which one should i do?
Acting	Creates truthful world; actors are listening/responding, actively pursuing objectives and are compelling to watch	Intelligent, well crafted and active scene, demonstrating most of the hallmarks of an outstanding scene, but a little careful or self-conscious	Overall structure is good, but may lack specificity in choice of objectives or actions	Not fully prepared: significant line problems, didn't read the play, awkward or inappropriate choices of objective or action	Two potatoes talking to one another would be more exciting

Group projects
Lesson plan

	Outstanding	Good	Fair	Poor	Unacceptable
Goals and outcomes	Goals and learning outcomes are clear, specific and connected to each other, sets up an excellent structure for assessment	Goals and outcomes are clearly articulated and specific	Clear effort to connect goals and outcomes, but lacking detail or connection to each other	Goals and/or outcomes are vague, unclear, or so general as to be almost impossible to assess	What's love got to do with it?
Activities	Creative and imaginative solutions to teaching; relate to goals and outcomes; engage students in an active learning process	Appropriate and varied activities that build on each other to achieve goals and outcomes	Good choice of activities, but may be randomly organized or don't clearly connect to stated goals and outcomes	Doesn't use a variety of approaches or doesn't actively engage the class	Why the hokey- pokey?
Handouts	Organized, comprehensive, easy to follow, no "filler"; material reprinted from other sources is identified	Generally helpful; may need a little organization or revision; material reprinted from other sources is identified	Good material, but has problems with organization or has some irrelevant material; material reprinted from other sources is identified	Random; handouts don't support activities or provide background; doesn't cite sources for material directly quoted or reprinted	Handwritten on the back of a napkin

Presentation

	Outstanding	Good	Fair	Poor	Unacceptable
Overall effectiveness	Organized, fully prepared, effectively uses a variety of elements in an integrated way, polished and effective	Organized and prepared; may be occasionally awkward or unpolished, but is effective as a whole	Good ideas and choices, but goes through them methodically without integrating elements together	Inaccurate content and/or gaps. Peers are lost and cannot grasp basics of dialect instruction	Don't quit your day job....
Collaboration	Both team members contribute significantly to the presentation; and communicate	Both team members share the responsibility for presenting, but may have awkward transitions or minor mis-communication	Balanced contributions to presentation, but team members appear to be working independently	One team member dominates the presentation; or working relationship is tense	Civil war....

	effectively with each other				
Presentation skills	Engagingly presented, fun, uses time efficiently, covers all the material but doesn't rush, allows time for questions, stays focused	Engaging and fun; may occasionally rush or misjudges time; occasionally gets unfocused	Clear and adequate presentation, but heads off on tangents frequently; or may be rigid and unable to adjust on your feet; doesn't consistently engage peers	Presentation is hard to follow, unfocused and doesn't engage the class	I'd rather be having a root canal...