

Southeast Missouri State University

Department: Department of Theatre & Dance **Course No.:** TH 429

Title of Course: Accents and Dialects for the Actor **New**

I. Catalogue Description and Credit Hours:

Studio course designed to develop skills for dialect acquisition for the stage, as well as proficiency in several of the most commonly used stage dialects. (3 credit hours)

II. Prerequisite(s): TH 417; or consent of Instructor

III. Purposes and Objectives of the course:

- To achieve proficiency in commonly used stage dialects
- To develop ear training for analyzing dialects and accents
- To further develop skills for transcribing dialects in International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA)
- To develop skills for describing and communicating key sounds to others
- To incorporate dialects and accents into character work
- To develop personal methods for finding resources for further dialect work

IV. Student Learning Outcomes

- Students will research, analyze, create, and transcribe—using IPA—roles from plays requiring various dialects and accents from around the world.
- Students will present exercises and scenes consistent with fourth-year National Association of Schools of Theatre (NAST) standards.
- Students will critique, examine, and defend their creative choices.

V. Expectations of Students:

- On-time attendance at all classes is required
- Full participation and professionalism is expected at all times
- Appropriate shoes should be worn when doing scene work (no flip flops)
- A recording device or recording capability on your computer is necessary as well as the ability to listen to sound samples on your computer or other device

VI. Course Outline:

A. Unit 1 - IPA Review (2 weeks) -- Review of the IPA with a focus on dialect analysis, acquisition, and scoring text

- ❖ Assignment: Transcribe a piece of recorded General American using broad transcription (5%)

B. Unit 2 - Dialect Acquisition. Each dialect covered in this unit will include class exploration and exercises of the key traits of the dialect. Scenes will be assigned and graded for sound scoring and success of execution.

- Scoring text (20%)
- Execution of dialect in scene work (40%)
- ❖ (2 weeks) Received Pronunciation (BBC) / Standard British and Estuary-

London

- Additional Assignment: In order to develop source research skills and ear training, each student will find a sound sample of an RP speaker and identify what sounds for that speaker differ from General Estuary-London.
 - ❖ (2 weeks) Cockney (or what is now most associated with Shoreditch and Essex)
 - ❖ (2 weeks) General (U.S. American) Southern
 - ❖ (2 weeks) General Irish
 - Additional Assignment: In order to develop source research skills and ear training, each student will find a sound sample of an Irish speaker and identify what sounds for that speaker differ from General Irish.
 - ❖ (2 weeks) General French (Or Australian/New Zealand/Standard Canadian – whichever dialect with which the instructor is most comfortable)
- C. Unit 3 - Independent Dialect Presentations (20%)**
- ❖ (3 Weeks) Continuing ear training, transcription skills, communicating and executing dialects, students will work in pairs to research and present a dialect of their choosing to the class. Final projects will be graded on:
 - Source material research (sound samples, native speakers)
 - Written materials explaining the key sound changes and traits of the dialect
 - Live presentation of the dialect to the class
 - Use of Technology

VII. Textbook(s) and/or Other Required Materials or Equipment:

- *Dialects and Accents for the Stage*, by Paul Meier
- *Longman Pronunciation Dictionary* (online)
- *International Dialects of English Archive* (online)

- **Additional Materials:**
 - A hand held mirror
 - A 3-ring binder
 - Erasable pencils
 - Water

VIII. Basis for Student Evaluation

On an ongoing basis, students will be evaluated on class participation and personal progress. The breakdown for grading will be:

Participation / Growth / Professionalism	15%
Unit 1: IPA / General American Transcription	5%
Unit 2: Dialect Acquisition - Scoring text	20%
Unit 2: Dialect Acquisition - Execution of dialect in scene work	40%
Unit 3: Final Dialect Presentations	20%