**3. Recording yourself reading aloud  
Introduction to Phonetics   Fall 2012**

**Assignment:**   
      Record yourself reading texts in various languages according   
to the instructions below. This recording will be handed in by e-mail to  
the professor. Keep this recording till the end of the semester, when   
you will listen to it again to evaluate your progress.

**Materials required:**   
      This handout, a computer, a computer headset, i.e. earphones   
and a microphone, and a printer. You will need to download and   
install [Audacity](http://audacity.sourceforge.net/) recording software. Export and save your files in MP3   
format. You will need to install an extra [LAME](http://audacity.sourceforge.net/help/faq_i18n?s=install&i=lame-mp3) file to do this.

**Instructions:**     1. First, learn how to use Audacity, then record your name in   
English and Chinese, and your student number. Also say where   
you grew up (e.g. Taipei 台北, Changhua 彰化) and what your   
native language is (e.g. Mandarin and/or Southern Min, aka   
'Taiwanese'). Play back what you have said to check the recording   
quality. Make sure there isn't too much background noise. Your   
voice should not be too loud or too soft, and try to avoid saliva   
sounds ('smacking'; water with a little lemon - but no sugar - helps),   
and 'popping' (噴嘜), which is caused by too much aspiration.

     2. Now record the Mandarin text. Read as naturally as possible,   
just like you talk to your friends. Don't try to sound like a TV or radio   
announcer, i.e. don't make a special effort to retroflex (捲舌), add-r   
endings (兒化韻), or do other things you don't usually do when you   
speak casually. And don't read too fast!   
  
    3. Next record yourself reading the English language text. You   
may practice before you record, so that you are able to read smoothly,   
but use your most usual and natural pronunciation. Do not try to do   
anything "special" or "different" with your pronunciation.

    4. Now read the text in Southern Min 閩南語 (Taiwanese) into a   
new file, if you are a speaker of Southern Min, either natively or if   
you have learned it as a second language. If you speak Hakka 客家語,   
Cantonese 粵語, or other Chinese dialect, record that, too (or 'instead'),   
saying before you start which subdialect you speak (e.g. 四縣 or 海陸   
for Hakka), if you know it.

     5. If you like, you may read any of the remaining 'second foreign   
language' texts according to which languages you have studied,   
using a separate file for each. This part of the assignment is optional,   
but the more you put into this assignment, the more you stand to benefit   
from it. You may add languages not included here, such as Malay or   
Korean, if you know enough of the language to record a sample on   
tape. You can look on the Internet for a suitable text to read, if you wish.

     6. Finally, after you have finished reading all the texts you choose,   
play back and listen to what you have recorded and **write down** how   
you feel about your pronunciation in each language or dialect. E-mail   
your audio (making sure you've exported and saved them in MP3 format)   
and text files to [feathermountain@gmail.com](mailto:feathermountain@gmail.com). Keep a copy of your   
comments in your pronunciation journal for future reference.

**The texts  
  
ROC Ministry of Education** [**Mandarin online dictionary**](http://dict.revised.moe.edu.tw/)     [**漢典字典**](http://www.zdic.net/sousuo/)  
  
**Mandarin:**   
**鸚鵡有人性 被劫傷離情**  
石明啟/桃園報導  
中國時報 2005.04.18

在台北縣土城有一對賣檳榔的黃姓夫妻，他們飼養了一隻鸚鵡，這隻鸚鵡人見人愛，不只是附近小孩的玩伴，還有一些學生下課後 也會來逗牠玩。聰明的鸚鵡，很會學人講話，不時叫著「爸爸」、 「媽媽」、「你好」、「拜拜」，甚至有小孩哭或笑時，鸚鵡也會跟著發聲， 有時哭得比小孩還大聲。 每天晚上如果聽見垃圾車的音樂， 善解人意的鸚鵡總是不停得跳躍，催促主人去倒垃圾。這隻鸚鵡是兩人的生活重心，在家都叫他們爸爸媽媽，感情好到就像是自己的小孩一樣。但是好景不常，上月底有歹徒把鸚鵡搶走，黃太太失魂落魄， 一想到鸚鵡，總是淚流滿面，白天騎著機車到各鳥店尋找， 晚上睡也睡不好，幾天不見鸚鵡，她一度想跟著垃圾車去找鸚鵡， 等待奇蹟出現。

鸚鵡被歹徒搶走後，因為見不到主人，傷心難過，整天不吃不喝，不久，桃園縣警察破獲這個搶奪竊盜集團，暫將鸚鵡寄放在鳥店，鳥店負責人說到，鸚鵡很乖，叫她「阿嬤」，但是拿水果、飼料餵鸚鵡，牠就是不吃，不得已強制灌食，鸚鵡仍然抵死不從。

當黃先生接獲警方通知，和太太飛奔到桃園市鳥店去取回心愛的鸚鵡，牠已瘦了一圈，翅膀也受傷，最令他們心疼的是，鸚鵡脖子下方的羽毛沾滿了飼料，顯示出牠之前寧死也不願進食。原本奄奄一息的鸚鵡，看見了主人，激動地展翅迎接主人，還脫口說出「主人，你好嗎？」黃先生很感動，果然皇天不負苦心人，鸚鵡沒餓死，也沒被賣掉，能夠失而復得，兩夫妻相擁而泣，直說「比中頭彩還高興」。  
[**Merriam-Webster OnLine:**](http://www.merriam-webster.com/home.htm) **Online English dictionary with audio files, General American**[**Howjsay:**](http://www.howjsay.com/) **Online dictionary with Standard British English pronunciation   
  
English:**  
**Parrot Story**  
By Shi Mingqi, Taoyuan  
China Times, April 18, 2005

Mr. and Mrs. Huang, a couple in Taipei county who run a betel nut stand, had a pet parrot. You couldn’t help but love this parrot. He was a friend of the neighborhood children, and a group of students came to visit him every day after school to play with him. This very smart parrot knew how to talk –he would often call out “Mommy”, “Daddy”, “Hello”, and “Bye-bye”. When a child laughed or cried, the parrot would imitate the sound, sometimes crying even louder than the child. Every evening when the garbage truck came by, this very responsible parrot would begin to jump around wildly, urging his master to bring the bags of garbage to the truck.

    The Huangs’ lives revolved around this parrot as though he were their own child, and he called them “Daddy” and “Mommy”. But one day misfortune came to the happy family – the parrot was stolen. Mrs. Huang was miserable to distraction. Every time she thought of the parrot, the tears would stream down her cheeks. During the day she would ride her motorcycle from pet shop to pet shop looking for the bird. She couldn’t sleep at night. After a few days without her beloved parrot, she asked to ride along with the garbage collectors in their truck when they did their route, hoping for a miracle.

The kidnapped parrot became very sad and depressed when he realized that his masters were nowhere to be found. He wouldn’t eat or drink. Some days later, the Taoyuan county police found and arrested the criminal ring responsible for the theft. They brought the parrot to a pet shop for temporary safekeeping. The pet shop owner said the parrot was very well-behaved, and he called her “Grandma”. But he wouldn’t touch the fruit and bird feed she brought him. She tried to force-feed him, but he still refused to accept the food.

When Mr. Huang received notice from the police that their parrot   
had been found, he and his wife immediately rushed over to the   
pet shop in Taoyuan to bring their beloved parrot home. To their dismay,   
they found that the parrot had lost a lot of weight, and his wings were injured. The Huangs’ hearts ached when they saw all the birdseed stuck to his neck, concrete proof that in their absence, he would rather die than accept food.

When he saw his masters arrive, the parrot, who was near death,   
flapped his wings excitedly in greeting, and called out loudly, “Hello, Master!” Mr. Huang was deeply moved. Heaven had not deserted him, his parrot hadn’t starved to death, nor had he been sold. Having gotten their dear pet back, Mr. and Mrs. Huang hugged each other tightly and cried tears of joy. They kept repeating, “We are happier than if we’d won first prize in the lottery.”   
  
[**Taiwanese/Southern Min**](http://twblg.dict.edu.tw/holodict_new/index.html) **online dictionary**[**Hakka**](http://kaihuichang.com/hakka/hdict/hdict.htm) **online dictionary**[**2**](http://hakka.dict.edu.tw/hakkadict/index.htm)[**Cantonese**](http://humanum.arts.cuhk.edu.hk/Lexis/lexi-can/) **online dictionary  
  
Southern Min, Hakka, Cantonese, other Chinese dialects**:     Try to tell the preceding Mandarin story in Southern Min, Hakka,   
Cantonese, or whatever other Chinese dialect you speak, using your   
own words – don't read – as though talking to a friend. You don't have   
to include every detail or tell it in exactly the same way it is written   
above – just tell a fluent, coherent story with your most natural and   
accustomed pronunciation and speaking style.   
  
  
[**Spanish and French online dictionaries**](http://www.wordreference.com/) **at WordReference.com  
  
Spanish:  
Chiste**     Este era un niño de 5 años que estaba con su mamá en la   
parada del autobús y le dice la mamá al niño: Cuando nos subamos   
al autobús le dices al conductor que tienes 4 años, para que no te   
cobre pasaje.  
     Entonces se suben al autobús y le dice el conductor al niño:   
¿Cuantos años tienes?  
     Y le dice el niño: Cuatro.  
     Y el conductor le dice: ¿Y cuándo cumples los 5 años?  
     Y el niño responde: ¡Cuando me baje del autobús!  
From: <http://www.chistes.com/ChisteDelDia.asp>

**French:  
Blague**  
     Le petit Alain était en train de combler un trou dans le jardin   
quand un voisin se pencha au-dessus de la clôture, interessé   
par l'activité du jeune garçon. Il lui dit alors:   
     "Mais que fais-tu donc, mon petit Alain?"   
     "Mon poisson rouge est mort", répondit tristement Alain sans   
lever les yeux, "et je viens juste de l'enterrer."  
     Le voisin fit un commentaire: "Mais c'est un trou terriblement   
grand pour un poisson rouge, non?"   
     Alain finit de tasser la terre et répondit: "C'est parce qu'il est   
à l'intérieur de votre chat."  
From: <http://www.blagues.org/>  
  
  
**LEO** [**German online dictionary**](http://dict.leo.org/) **with audio files**  
 **German:**  
**Schulwitz**  
          Die Schulklasse ist zusammen mit ihrem Lehrer fotografiert   
worden. Der Lehrer empfiehlt seinen Schülern, sich Abzüge machen   
zu lassen. "Stellt euch vor, wie nett es ist, wenn Ihr nach dreißig   
Jahren das Bild wieder zur Hand nehmt und sagt: 'Ach, das ist ja der   
Paul, der ist jetzt auch Lehrer; und das ist doch Fritz Lehmann, der   
ist Bäcker geworden; und da steht doch der Heiner, der ist nach   
Amerika ausgewandert...'" Ertönt da aus der letzten Reihe eine   
Stimme: "Und das war unser Lehrer, der ist schon lange tot!"  
From: <http://www.willis-witze.de/Lehrer-Witze/Die-Schulklasse-ist-zusammen-mit-ihrem-L,witz-15001.html>  
  
 **Jim Breen's** [**Japanese online dictionary**](http://www.csse.monash.edu.au/cgi-bin/cgiwrap/jwb/wwwjdic?1C)   
 **Japanese:**