Linguistic Portfolios

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Phonetic Portfolio (Tsai)

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PHONETIC PORTFOLIO

PEI-FEN TSAI

1.0 Biography

My name is Pei-Fen Tsai. I was born in Taiwan in 1985. Female. I did not start officially learning English until junior high school. English was one of the mandatory subjects in the junior high school curriculum, which is one of the subjects that students will be tested in the high school and college entrance exam. Before officially studying English, my parents introduced English to me when I was at preschool age. By listening to the English children's songs, I was able to memorize all the lyrics even though I did not understand the meaning of the lyrics. I believe this is the foundation of English pronunciation was formed.

When I was in junior high, most of the English teachers were not trained well enough to speak fluent and authentic English. Fortunately, my parents taught me 'Kenyon and Knott' (an informal name for *A Pronouncing Dictionary of American English*) to increase my English competence before entering junior high school. Because of the entrance tests, students were forced to emphasize on writing and reading skills rather than listening and speaking. Therefore, teachers tend to neglect the importance of speaking skills and pronunciation. Besides, there was nearly no opportunity to apply those learned English knowledge inside or outside classroom. Basically, I hardly speak English before coming to the United States.

2.0 Phonetic Transcription

[æn ɪntɹ̩ədʌkʃən tu maɪsɛlf]

An Introduction to Myself

[aɪ wɑnt tu bɪkʌm ə titʃɚ so aɪ kæn falo maɪ pɛɹənts futstɛps ænd kəntɪnju ðɛr laɪflɔŋ

I want to become a teacher so I can follow my parents footsteps and continue their lifelong

tæsk ʌv ɛdʒəketɪŋ tʃɪldɹən ænd ɪnspaɪɹɪŋ ðɛm tu ətʃiv ðɛr mæksəməm pətɛnʃəl. æz ə jʌŋ

task of educating children and inspiring them to achieve their maximum potential. As a young

gɚl ɪn taɪwan, aɪ gru ʌp wɑtʃɪŋ maɪ pɛɹənts wɚk hɑrd ɛvɹɪ de ænd wɪtnɪs fɚsthænd ðə əmezɪŋ

girl in Taiwan, I grew up watching my parents work hard every day and witness firsthand the amazing

pɑzətɪv ɪnfluənsɪs ðe wɚ ebl tu mek ɑn tʃɪldɹən ɪn ðɛr kəpæsəti æz titʃɚz. maɪ fɑðɚ

positive influences they were able to make an children in their capacity as teachers. My father

stɑrtɪd hɪz on praɪvet tjutɚŋ skul ænd aɪ wɑtʃt hɪm spɛnd kaʊntlɪs aʊrz bɪfor ænd

started his own private tutoring school and I watched him spend quantities hours before and

æftɚ skul pɹɪpɛrɪŋ fɔr hɪz klæs ɪz ænd wɚkɪŋ wɪð ðə stjudəns. θru hɪz ɛfɚts, hi wɑz

after school preparing for his classes and working with the students. Through his efforts, he was

ebl tu hɛlp njumərəs tʃildrən ɪmpruv ðɛr ækədɛmɪk pəˈfɔrməns ænd hɪz tjutəˈŋ skul wɑz

able to help numerous children improve their academic performance and his tutoring school

kənsɪdəˈd tu bi wʌn ʌv ðə priɛmɪnənt fəsɪlətɪs ɪn taɪwɑn. maɪ mʌðəˈ hæz bɪn æn ɛləmɛntərɪ

was considered to be one of the preeminent facilities in Taiwan. My mother has been an elementary

skul titʃəˈ fɔr ovəˈ θɜˈtɪ jɪrz ænd hæz æn aʊtstændɪŋ rɛpjətɛʃən fɔr kwɑlətɪ ænd ɪnəveʃən.

school teacher for over thirty years and has an outstanding reputation for quality and innovation.

hwaɪl aɪ gretlɪ ədmaɪr ænd rɪspɛkt ðə mɛnɪ dɪfərənt wez maɪ mʌðəˈ wɑz ebl tu mek ləˈnɪŋ

While I greatly admire and respect the many different ways my mother was able to make learning

ɪntərɪstɪŋ tu ðə tʃildrən, pəˈhæps hwɑt aɪ wɑz most ɪmprɛst wɪð ɪz hwɑt ʃi dɪd fɔr ðə tʃildrən

interesting to the children, perhaps what I was most impressed with is what she did for the children

aʊtsaɪd ʌv ðə klæsrʊm. dju tu həˈ ɪkstɛnsɪv ɪkspɪriəns ænd ɪmpɛkəbl rɛpjətɛʃən,

outside of the classroom. Due to her extensive experiences and impeccable reputation,

mɛnɪ pɛrənts ænd titʃəˈz kʌm tu həˈ fɔr ədvaɪs ænd fɔr hɛlp mɛntɔrɪŋ ðɛr tʃildrən. ɪt meks mi

many parents and teachers come to her for advice and for help mentoring their children. It makes me

rɪəlɪ wɑnt tu bi ə titʃəˈ baɪ wɑtʃɪŋ ðɛr səksɛs ɪn ɛdʒʊkeʃənl fild.

really want to be a teacher by watching her success in educational field.

ovəˈ ðə jirz, aɪ hæv sin ðə pɑzətɪv tʃɛndʒs maɪ mʌðəˈ wɑz ebl tu mek ɪn mɛnɪ

Over the years, I have been seen the positive changes my mother was able to make in many

sdjudntsɪz laɪvz ænd aɪ bɪliv æn ɑpəˈtjunətɪ tu du ðə sem wʊd mek mi fil kɑntɛnt ænd fʊlfild.

students' lives and I believe an opportunity to do the same would make me feel content and fulfilled.

gɪvən ðə hɛvɪ ɛmfəsɪs ɪn ɪŋglɪʃ æz ə sɛkənd læŋgwɪdʒ ɪn taɪwɑn, aɪ gru ʌp wɪð ə sɑlɪd

Given the heavy emphasis in English as a second language in the Taiwan, I grew up with a solid

faʊndeʃən ɪn ðə ɪŋglɪʃ læŋgwɪdʒ ænd ɪmidiətlɪ rɪəlaɪzd haʊ ɪmpɔrtənt ɪŋglɪʃ wɪl bi fɔr ə

foundation in the English language and immediately realized how important English will be for a

dɪvɛləpɪŋ kʌntrɪ sʌtʃ æz taɪwɑn wɪð ɪts ɛvəˈ ɪnkrizɪŋ dɪpɛndəns ɑn ɪntəˈnæʃənl tred.

developing country such as Taiwan with its ever increasing dependence on international trade.

prəfɛʃənəlɪ, aɪ hæv ɪkspɪriəns wəˈkɪŋ æz ə sʌbstətjut ɛləmɛntərɪ skul titʃəˈ ænd æz ə

Professionally, I have experience working as a substitute elementary school teacher and as a

trænsletɚ ɪn ə trænsleʃən kʌmpənɪ. maɪ ækədɛmɪk ænd wɚk ɪkspɪrɪəns riəfɚm maɪ ɪntərɪst

translator in a translation company. My academic and work experience reaffirmed my interest

ɪn ɪŋglɪʃ ænd titʃɪŋ ænd aɪ no ðæt aɪ wɑnt tu titʃ ɪŋglɪʃ tu taɪwəniz stjudnts ænd prɪpɛr

in English and teaching and I now know that I want to teach English to Taiwanese students and prepare

ðɛm fɔr ðə fjutʃɚ.]

them for the future.

3.0 Vowel Project

Normalization
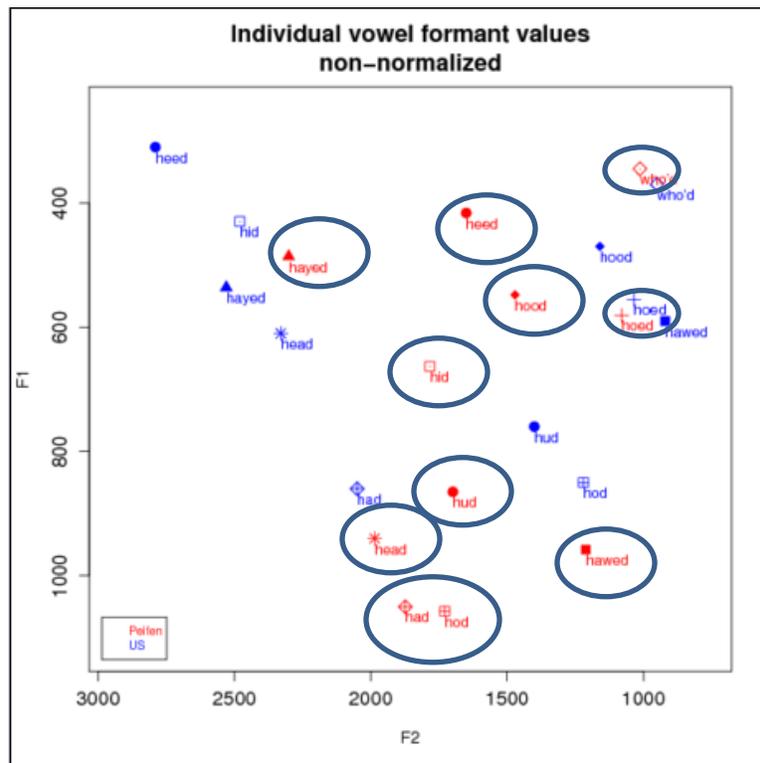
Observation

1. My pronunciation of front vowels /I/ and /e/ are more similar to GAE than /ɪ, ɛ, æ/.
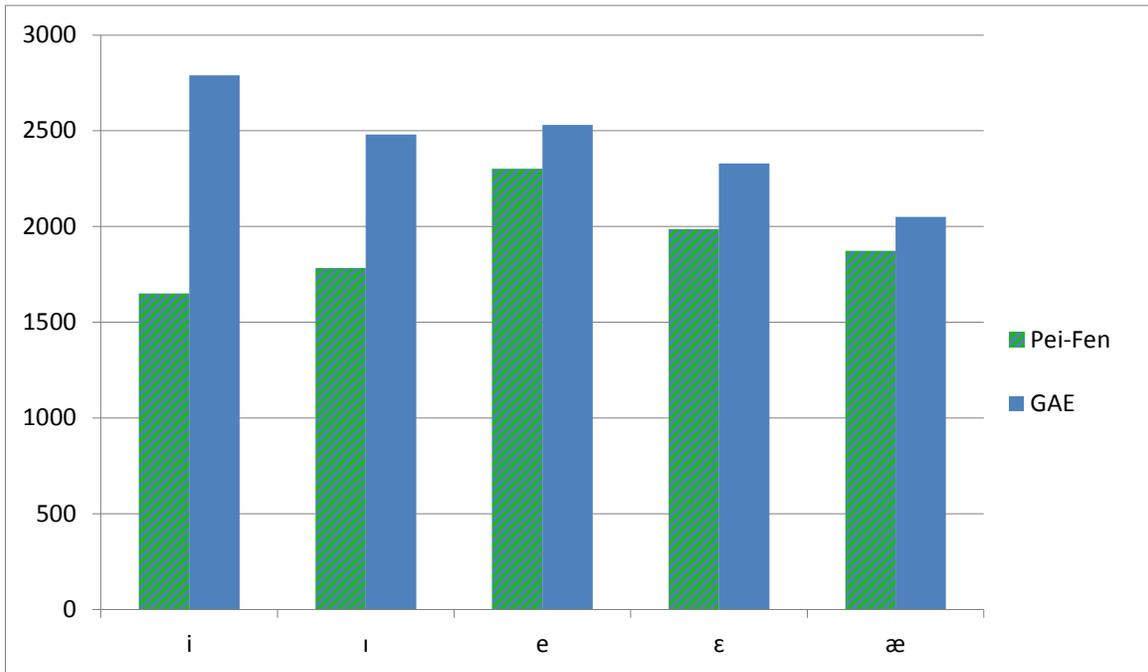2. For back vowels, /ɔ, ɑ/ have prominent difference with GAE.
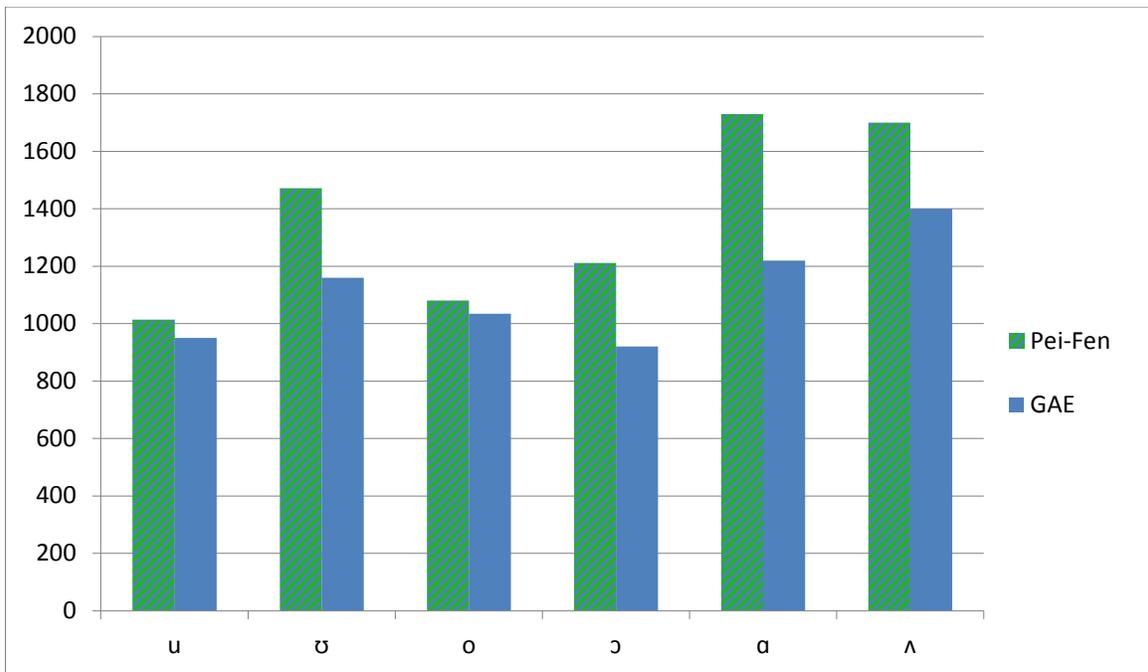
F1 Front Vowel
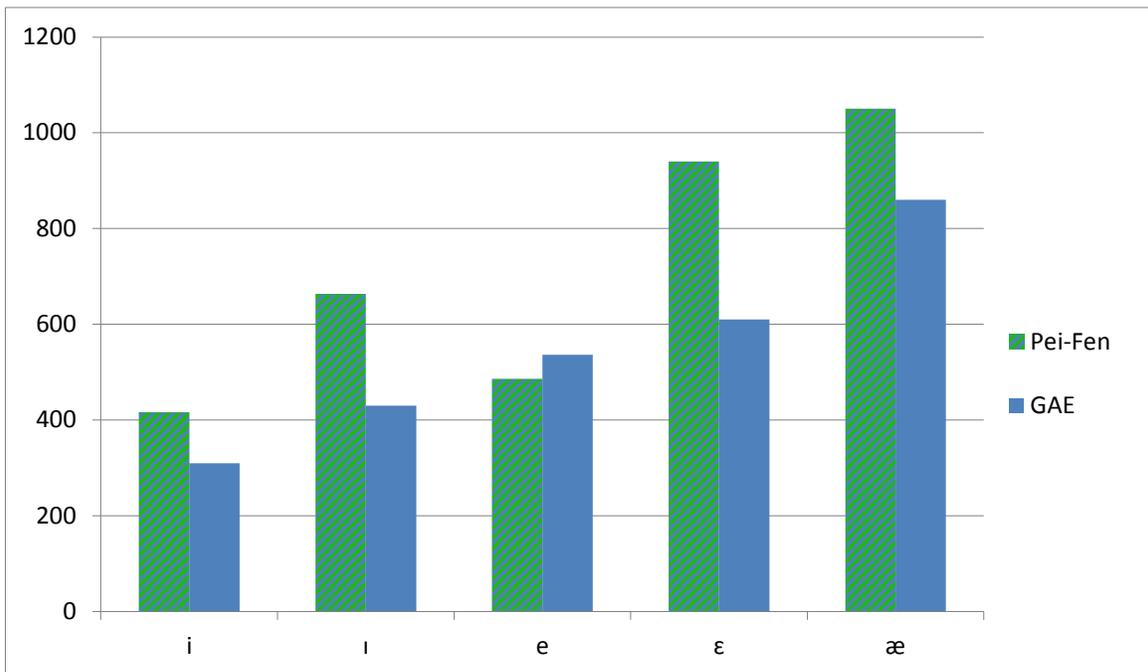
F1 Back Vowel
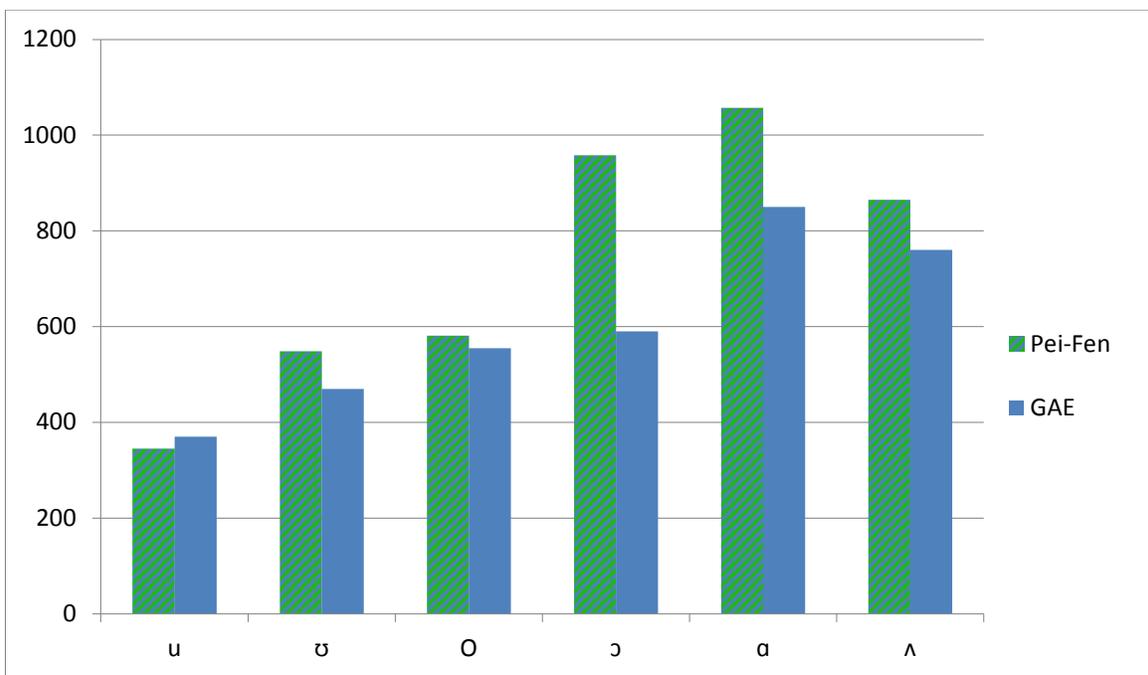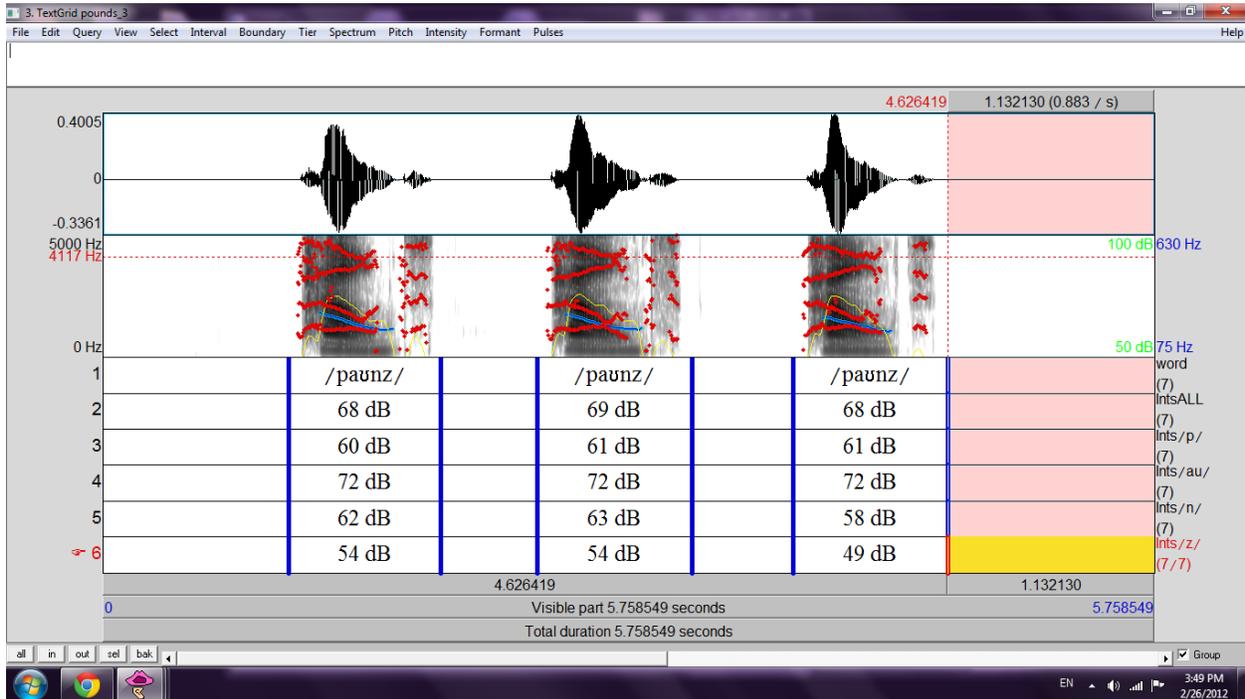
F2 Front Vowel

F2 Back Vowel

4.0 Consonant Project

Sonority Analysis of <Pounds>

Mean Sonority Data

1. Tier 1: phonetic transcription of the word
2. Tier 2: Mean sonority for the whole word: 68.3 dB
3. Tier 3: Mean sonority of /p/: 60.6 dB
4. Tier 4: Mean sonority of /aʊ/: 72 dB
5. Tier 5: Mean sonority of /n/: 61dB
6. Tier 6: Mean sonority of /z/: 52.3dB

The loudest sound is /aʊ/, its mean is 72dB. /aʊ/ is a dipthong. The quietest sound of pounds is /z/, its meant is 52.3dB.

Pitch Analysis of <Pounds>
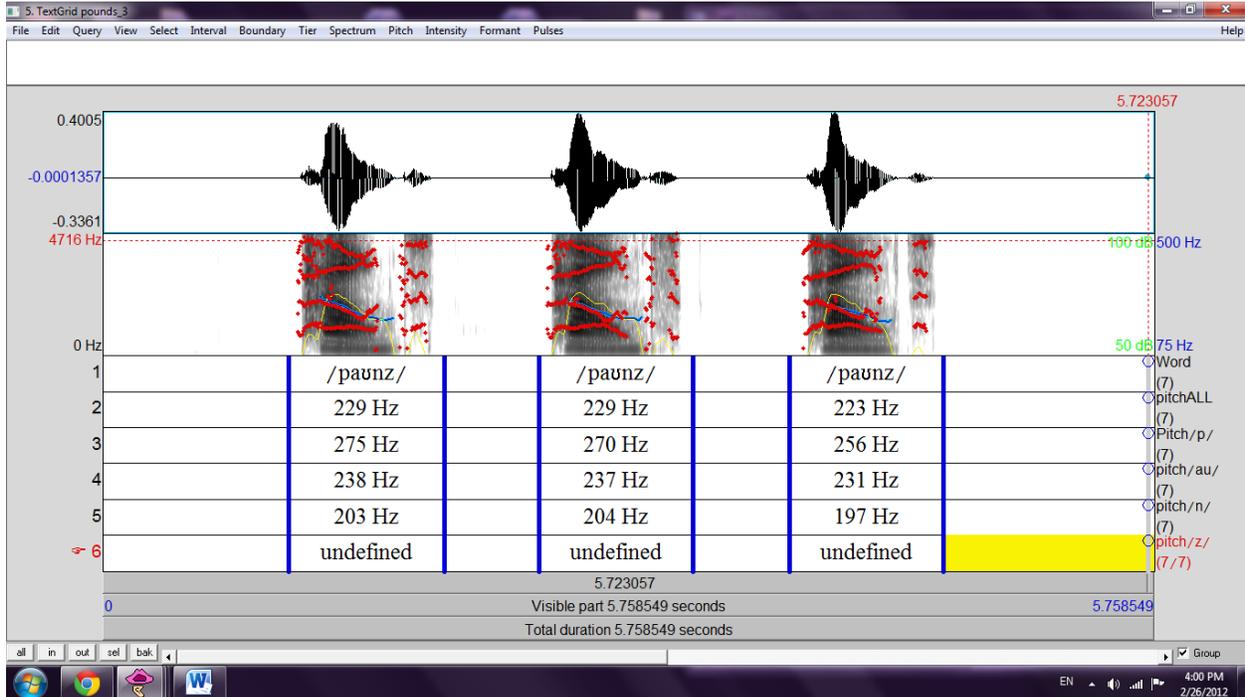
Mean Pitch Data

1. Tier 1: phonetic transcription of the word
2. Tier 2: Mean pitch for the whole word: 227 Hz
3. Tier 3: Mean pitch of /p/: 267Hz
4. Tier 4: Mean pitch of /aʊ/: 235.5 Hz
5. Tier 5: Mean pitch of /n/: 201.3Hz
6. Tier 6: Mean pitch of /z/: undefined, that is between 20 Hz and 75 Hz

The highest pitch of pounds is /p/, and its mean is 267 Hz. The lowest pitch of pounds is /z/. Its mean is undefined, and that means the pitch of /z/ is between 20 Hz~75 Hz.

Duration Analysis of <Pounds>
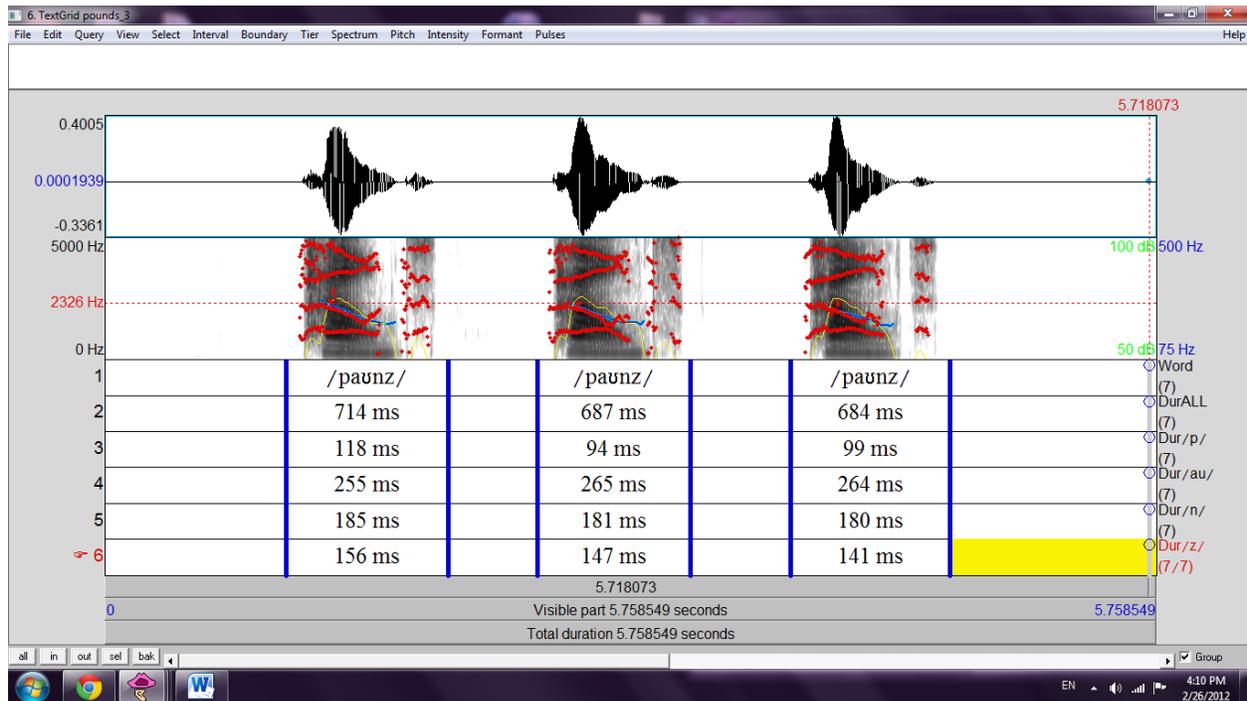
Mean Duration Data

1. Tier 1: phonetic transcription of the word
2. Tier 2: Mean duration for the whole word: 695ms
3. Tier 3: Mean duration of /p/: 104ms
4. Tier 4: Mean duration of /aʊ/: 261ms
5. Tier 5: Mean duration of /n/: 182ms
6. Tier 6: Mean duration of /z/: 148ms

/aʊ/ sound has the longest duration. It lasts for 261ms. The shortest duration of sound is /p/. Its mean is 104ms, and /p/ is a stop consonant.

5.0 Conclusion

Taking this class made me have opportunity to explore linguistic world. To me, Linguistics was a profound and difficult subject before taking the class of Introduction to Phonology. Now, I found it interesting and meaningful. Learning of linguistic field should be considered as a long-term study. I believe that I am willing to pay more attention and put more efforts on it if I have opportunity in the future.