

# PHONETICS OF ENGLISH

Lecture I  
Introduction to Phonetics

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## Informacije o predmetu

Fond: 2P+2V  
Slajdovi sa predavanja

*Knjiga: Fonetika i fonologija engleskog jezika (Igor Lakić)*  
*English Pronunciation in Use (Mark Hancock)*

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## Bodovanje

- Test (15 bodova) - transkripcija
  - Dva kolokvijuma (zajedno 42 boda)
  - Prisustvo (3 boda)
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- Ispit (40 bodova) - usmeno

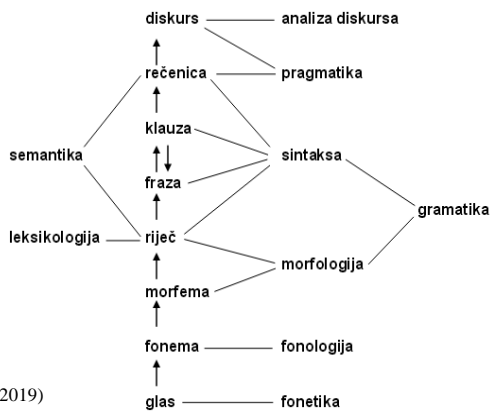
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## Branches of Linguistics

- Phonetics
- Phonology
- Morphology
- Syntax
- Semantics
- Pragmatics
- Discourse Analysis

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Lakić (2019)

## Phonetics

Study of the sounds of speech

- **Articulatory** (production of sounds)
- **Acoustic** (transmission of sounds)
- **Perceptive or auditory** (receiving and decoding sounds)

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## Phonology

The study of the sound patterns in languages

- Prosody (stress, rhythm and intonation)

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## Morphology

- The study of the structure of words

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## Syntax

- The study of the ways in which words combine into units such as

- *Phrase,*
- *Clause and*
- *Sentence*

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## Semantics

- The study of the meaning of words and sentences, their denotations, connotations, implications and ambiguities

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## Pragmatics

- A subfield of linguistics which studies the way in which context contributes to meaning.

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## Discourse Analysis

Discourse: language beyond the level of a sentence

- covers a wide variety of different approaches
- takes into account the social and historical contexts

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## Why do we study phonetics and phonology?

- Of particular importance for learners of *English as a Second/Foreign Language* (ESL/EFL) because it has a **practical application – learning the correct pronunciation and how to write and read transcription**
- English has **many more phonemes** than our language and its spelling can be confusing - 26 letters but 44 phonemes (20 vowels and 24 consonants (RP))

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## English is not a phonographic language

- Many speech sounds have different spellings:  
e.g. *go, though, foe, slow, boat*;  
or *George, Joe, badge, village*
- Many same spellings are pronounced differently:  
*though, thought, cough, bough, through*

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## The problem of pronunciation for ESL/EFL learners

- ESL/EFL learners **cannot rely on the spelling**
- English pupils spend **a lot of time learning to read and to write** and many adults cannot spell well
- To learn to pronounce English correctly, it is of great help to learn to read phonemic transcription and/or use a CD/online dictionary with sound

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Even the predictable combinations in English are different to those of other languages

- <ai> usually corresponds to /ei/, e.g. *pain, paid*, almost never to /ai/
- <ch> usually, but not always, corresponds to / tʃ / at the start of a word, e.g. *cheese* but not *choir*

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## Why is English spelling confusing?

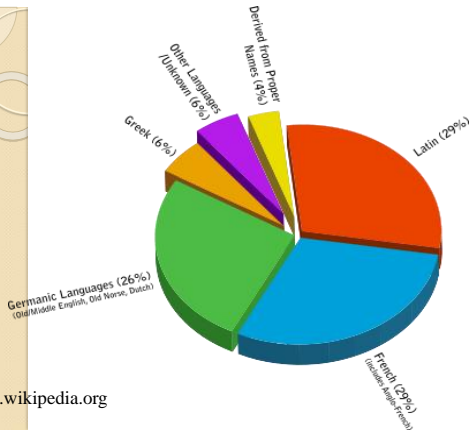
- Over 3/4 of English words have predictable spelling, and the remaining percentage consists of the most commonly used, everyday words
- There are about 400 words whose spelling is completely irregular – these are, however, among the most frequently used words in the language. (Crystal - The English Language)

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## Why is English spelling confusing?

- Not enough vowel letters for vowel sounds
- English spelling reflects many archaic forms of pronunciation - e.g. *night* in the past was pronounced with a fricative / niht /
- English always resisted reforms and academies for setting standards
- English spelling became fixed with the arrival of printing
- English has borrowed many words from other languages and tended to maintain the original spelling

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## What is the difference between phonetics and phonology?

- Phonetics deals with how the sounds are physically produced and their acoustic characteristics
- Phonology is concerned with the systematic organisation of sounds

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## Key terms: the *phoneme*

- The smallest speech sound that has linguistic value – it is an abstract unit. It is the smallest unit that distinguishes one word from another, i.e. the smallest contrasting unit (**pi**g vs. **bi**g).
- When a group of sounds (phones) are similar in articulation and can be distinguished from another group, the group is given a name e.g. /p/. That is a phoneme.
- The phoneme is an abstract term, specific to particular languages.

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## Key terms: the speech sound (*phone*)

- Every time you produce a phoneme it will be slightly different. Phone is the physical realisation of a phoneme
- Phones are concrete, they are produced by speech organs

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## Topics to be covered this semester

- The sound system (speech sounds and pronunciation) and
- The transcription

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## IPA

- The **International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA)** is an alphabetic system of phonetic notation, which is based principally on the Latin alphabet.
- Issued by the **International Phonetic Association** as a standardized representation of speech sounds.
- It is used by: translators, lexicographers, foreign language students and teachers, linguists, speech pathologists, singers, actors, constructed language creators...

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THE INTERNATIONAL PHONETIC ALPHABET (revised to 2005)

CONSONANTS (PULMONIC)

© 2005 IPA

	Bilabial	Labiodental	Dental	Alveolar	Postalveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Pharyngeal	Glottal
Plosive	p b			t d		ʈ ɖ	c ɟ	k ɡ	q ɢ		ʔ
Nasal	m	ɱ		n		ɳ	ɲ	ŋ	ɴ		
Tail				ɾ					ʀ		
Tap or Flap		ⱱ		ɽ							
Fricative	ɸ β	f v	θ ð	s z	ʃ ʒ	ʂ ʐ	ç ʝ	x ɣ	χ ʁ	ħ ʕ	h ɦ
Lateral fricative				ɬ ɮ							
Approximant		ʋ		ɹ			j	ɰ			
Lateral approximant				l			ʎ	ʟ			

Where symbols appear in pairs, the one to the right represents a voiced consonant. Shaded areas denote articulations judged impossible.

omniglot.com

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ɪ	ɪ	ʊ	uː	ɪə	eɪ	John & Sarah Free Materials 1996	
READ	SIT	BOOK	TOO	HERE	DAY		
e	ə	ɜː	ɔː	ʊə	ɔɪ	əʊ	
MEN	AMERICA	WORD	SOFT	TOUR	BOY	GO	
æ	ʌ	ɑː	ɒ	eə	aɪ	aʊ	
CAT	BUT	PART	NOT	WEAR	MY	HOW	
p	b	t	d	tʃ	dʒ	k	g
FIG	BED	TIME	DO	CHURCH	JUDGE	KILO	GO
f	v	θ	ð	s	z	ʃ	ʒ
FIVE	VERY	THINK	THE	SIX	ZOO	SHORT	CASUAL
m	n	ŋ	h	l	r	w	j
MILK	NO	SING	HELLO	LIVE	READ	WINDOW	YES

## Examples

Apple /'æp(ə)l/

Computer /kəm'pjʊ:tə(r)/

Ocean /'eɪʃ(ə)n/

Thing /θɪŋ/

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## World Englishes

- Variations in the pronunciation of English - **accents**
- In sociolinguistics, an accent refers to a **manner of pronunciation specific to a particular individual, location, or nation.**
  - a regional or geographical accent
  - social accent (depending on the social status/class)
  - a foreign accent
- Accents differ in quality of the voice, pronunciation, distinction of vowels and consonants, stress, and prosody.
- Although grammar, semantics, vocabulary, and other language characteristics often vary together with accent, the word 'accent' refers to the differences in pronunciation, whereas the word "**dialect**" comprises the **broader set of linguistic differences.**
- "**Accent**" is a subset of "**dialect**".

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Languages have different **accents**: they are pronounced differently by people from different geographical places, from different social classes, of different ages and different educational backgrounds. The word "accent" is often confused with **dialect**. We use the word "dialect" to refer to a variety of a language which is different from others not just in pronunciation but also in such matters as vocabulary, grammar and word-order. Differences of accent, on the other hand, are pronunciation differences only.

- Roach (p. 12)
- The second meaning of *accent* – **phonetic prominence** of a particular syllable in a word, or to a particular word within a phrase. (do not confuse the two)

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## Accents of English - native, nativised, foreign

- native: UK, Australia, South Africa New Zealand, USA, Canada
- 'nativised': where English is a second language (e.g. India)
- foreign: where English is a foreign language (e.g. Europe, China)

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Two standards of pronunciation  
(compare the BBC and CNN  
News):

**RECEIVED PRONUNCIATION (RP),  
OR BBC ENGLISH**

**GENERAL AMERICAN  
PRONUNCIATION (GAP)**

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'sister' 'car' 'work'  
RP /sɪstə/ /kɑː/ /wɜːk/  
GA /sɪstə-/ /kɑː/ /wɜːk/

Word	British English	American English
Box	[bɒks]	[bɑːks]
Hot	[hɒt]	[hɑːt]
Job	[dʒɒb]	[dʒɑːb]
Lot	[lɒt]	[lɑːt]
bath	/bɑːθ/	/bæθ/

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## Questions

- What accent(s) do you speak English with?
- What accent(s) is the best model to learn? Why?
- Which model should we adopt in this course?

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## Received Pronunciation

Received Pronunciation (RP) is the speech model used in Roach (2009) because

1. it has often been the standard accent for foreign learners learning British English (BrE);
2. it is the most fully described BrE accent;
3. it is most frequently used as the basis for textbooks and pronouncing dictionaries for overseas learners of BrE
4. it used to be used by most announcers and newsreaders on serious national and international BBC broadcasting channels. (p.4-5)

There is, of course, no implication that other accents are inferior or less pleasant-sounding.

In this story, there are 12 incorrect words. The correct word is pronounced the same as the incorrect one, but the spelling is different. Correct them using words from the box.

son some meat way threw pears sent week buy piece road two

Last <sup>week</sup> week, I cent my sun Jamie to the shops to bye sum food. He got a peace of meet and too pairs. On the weigh home, the bag broke. The food fell onto the rode and got dirty. In the end, Jamie through the food in the bin.



- The exercises were taken from Hancock (English Pronunciation in Use).

How many sounds are there in each word? Write the order of consonant sounds (C) and vowel sounds (V).

EXAMPLE

night CVC (three sounds: first a consonant, then a vowel and finally another consonant)

1 dog \_\_\_\_\_

4 gorilla \_\_\_\_\_

2 rabbit \_\_\_\_\_

5 snake \_\_\_\_\_

3 frog \_\_\_\_\_

6 bee \_\_\_\_\_



Listen to these possible names of cartoon animals. Do they have the same first sounds? (Write A.)  
Do they rhyme? (Write B.)

EXAMPLE Sam the lamb B

- |                         |                           |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 Phil the fox _____    | 5 Polly the parrot _____  |
| 2 Mary the canary _____ | 6 Deborah the zebra _____ |
| 3 Ida the spider _____  | 7 Myrtle the turtle _____ |
| 4 Claire the bear _____ | 8 Kitty the cat _____     |



Listen to these sounds. Do you have a similar sound in your language? If you do, write a tick (✓).

- |                     |                     |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| 1 /f/ (shoe) _____  | 5 /dʒ/ (June) _____ |
| 2 /ɜ:/ (girl) _____ | 6 /sə/ (soap) _____ |
| 3 /æ/ (hat) _____   | 7 /θ/ (thing) _____ |
| 4 /z/ (zoo) _____   | 8 /l/ (life) _____  |



## Study questions

- 1. What are the main branches of linguistics and what do they study?
- 2. What is phonetics?
- 3. What is phonology?
- 4. What is the difference between phonetics and phonology?
- 5. What are the branches of phonetics and what do they study?
- 6. Why do we study phonetics and phonology?
- 7. How many vowels and consonants are there in standard English?
- 8. Is English a phonographic language? What does that mean?
- 9. Why is English spelling inconsistent with its pronunciation?
- 10. What is a phone?
- 11. What is a phoneme?
- 12. What will we learn about this semester?
- 13. What does IPA stand for?
- 14. Who uses the IPA charts?
- 15. What is the meaning of *accent* in sociolinguistics?
- 16. What does *accent* mean in phonetics and phonology?
- 17. What accent is most commonly taught and why?