

# THE SUBJECT-MATTER OF PHONETICS

# Components of the Phonetic System of English

- Speech sounds
- The syllabic structure of words
- Word stress
- Intonation (prosody)

# Components of Phonetics

## Segmental phonetics

Deals with individual  
speech sounds  
("segments" of speech)

## Suprasegmental phonetics

Is concerned with larger units  
of connected speech:  
syllables  
words  
phrases  
texts

# Phonemes - Allophones

## **Phonemes**

Serve to distinguish words and morphemes

Don't depend on the phonetic environment

## **Allophones**

Variants of one and the same phoneme.

Depend on the position of the sounds within the word

# *Phonemes*

- bit /b/ - pit /p/
- set /e/ - sat /æ/
- lid /ɪ/ - lead /i:/

# *Allophones*

## **light - fell**

[l] in *light* is more palatalized  
than [l] in *fell*

## **bit – bid**

[ɪ] in *bit* is shorter than [ɪ] in *bid*

# Transcription symbols

// - slant brackets

[] – square brackets

[,] – syllabic consonants

[ɪg,zæmɪ'neɪʃən] –

secondary and primary stress

# Phonological mistakes

(wrong position of the nuclear tone)

Isn't she un<sub>↓</sub>well?

(general question)

Isn't she un<sup>ˈ</sup>well!

(exclamation)



# Phonological mistakes

(wrong position of the nuclear tone)

It's `Tom's fault.

It's → Tom's `fault.

# *Stages of speech production*

*psychological*



*physiological*



*physical (acoustic)*



*reception*

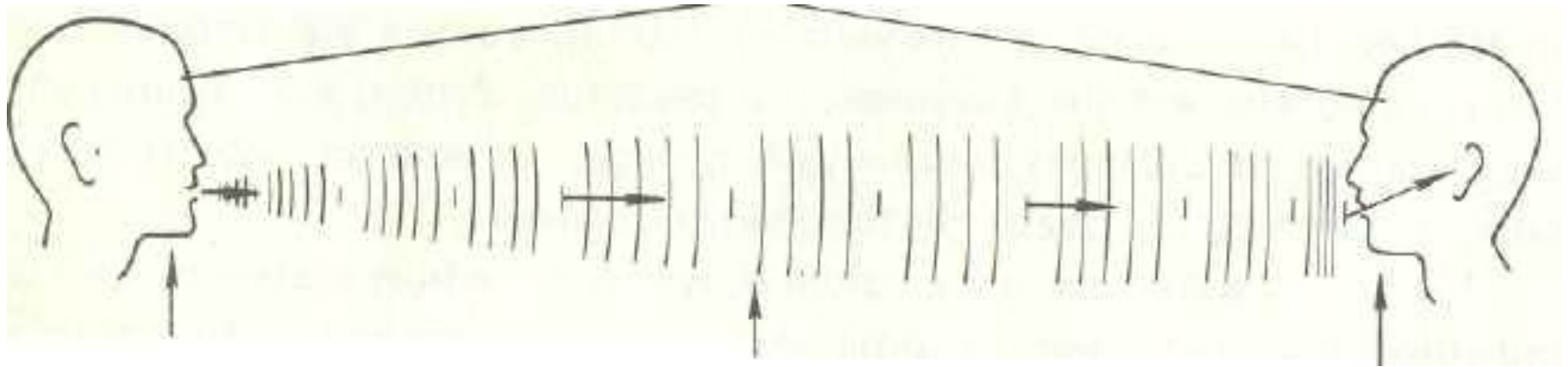


*transmission*



*linguistic interpretation*

# Stages in the passing of a spoken message



Articulation

sound waves

Perception

# *Mechanisms of Speech Production*

1. The power mechanism
2. The vibrator mechanism
3. The resonator mechanism
4. The obstructor mechanism

# The Power Mechanism

the diaphragm

the lungs

the bronchi

the windpipe (trachea)

the glottis

the larynx

the mouth cavity

the nasal cavity

# The Vibrator Mechanism (the Voice Producing Mechanism)

The vocal cords

# The Resonator Mechanism

the pharynx

the larynx

the mouth cavity

the nasal cavity

# The Obstructor Mechanism

The tongue

(blade with the tip, front, back or dorsum, rims – the edges of the tongue)

The lips

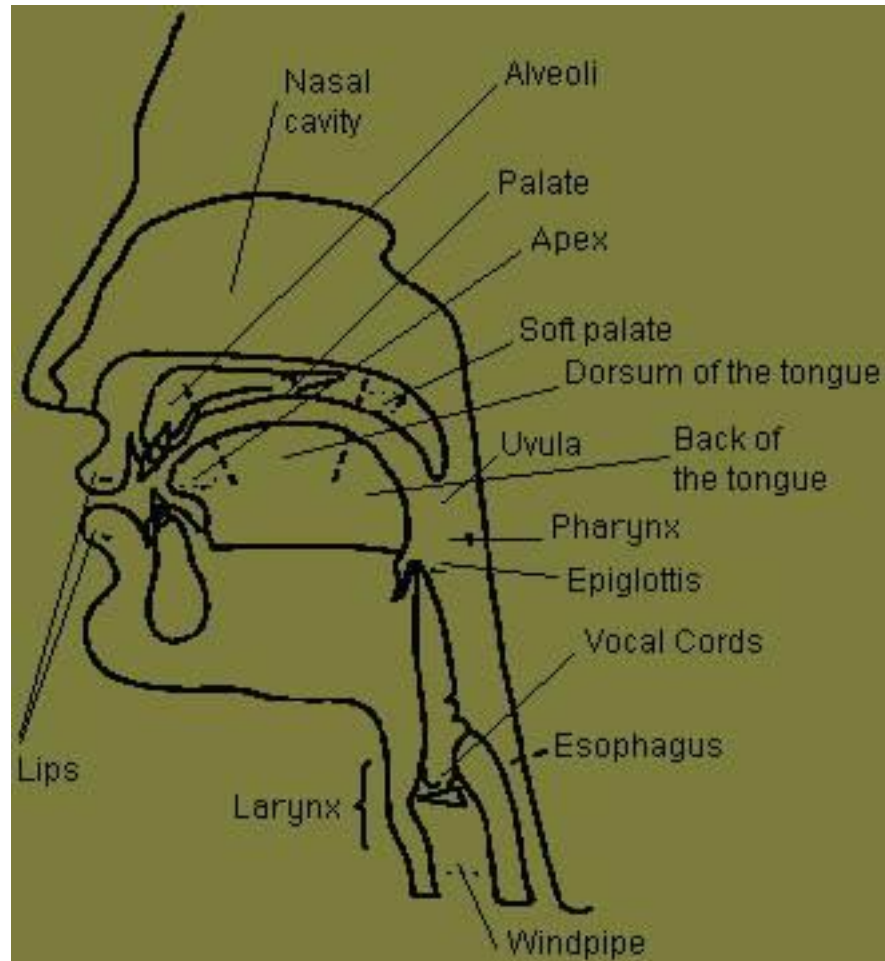
The teeth

The soft palate with the uvula

The hard palate

The alveolar ridge





# Branches of Phonetics

Articulatory (physiological) phonetics

Auditory (perceptive) phonetics

Acoustic phonetics

Phonology or functional (linguistic)  
phonetics

# Articulatory Phonetics (Physiological)

studies the way in which the air  
is set in motion, the movements  
of speech organs and the  
coordination of these  
movements in the production of  
single sounds and trains of  
sounds

# Auditory (Perceptive) Phonetics

investigates the hearing process

# Acoustic phonetics

studies the way in which the air vibrates  
between the speaker's mouth and the  
listener's ear

# Phonology

## (Functional or Linguistic Phonetics)

studies the linguistic function of consonant and vowel sounds, syllabic structure, word accent and prosodic features, such as pitch, stress and tempo

# Phonetics ↔ Grammar

## Sound Interchange

Interchange of [f-v], [s-z], [θ-ð]  
(plural and singular form)

calf – calves, house – houses

Tense forms of irregular verbs

write – wrote - written

# Phonetics ↔ Grammar

## Vowel Interchange

Nouns and verbs    bath – bathe

Adjectives and nouns    hot – heat

Verbs and adjectives    moderate –  
moderate

Nouns and nouns    shade – shadow

Nouns and adjectives    type – typical



# Phonetics ↔ Grammar

## Intonation Component

*He came out.*

He *came* home.

He came *home*.

# Phonetics ↔ Lexicology

'abstract – to ab'stract

'object – to ob'ject

'transfer – to trans'fer

## Homographs

Homonymous words and word groups

# Phonetics↔Stylistics

There are twelve months in all the year,  
As I hear many men say.  
But the merriest month in all the year  
Is the merry month of May.