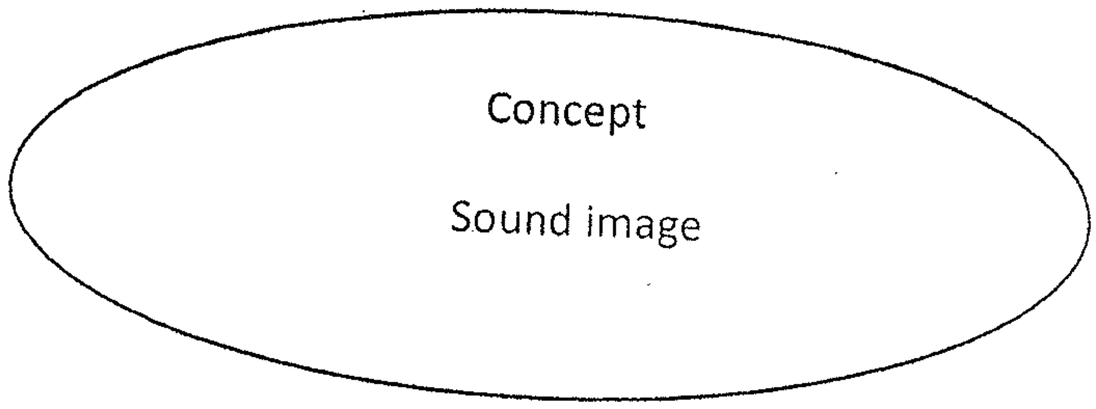
Parole= "is the actual, concrete act of a person, a dynamic, social activity in a particular time and place"(Crystal, 1997, 410).



3.Language as a system of signs: the linguistic sign as arbitrary union of a signifier and a signified

To introduce his distinction between signifier/ signified, de Saussure defines language as being a symbolic system based on pure or arbitrary convention infinitely extendible and modifiable according to the needs and the conditions of the speakers

De Saussure said that there are two sides of the study of meaning, but he stressed the idea that the relation between them is arbitrary. He called the two sides as sigifiant(the thing that signifies or sound image") and signifié('the thing signified', or 'concept') this relationship which de saussure called the linguistic sign (Crystal, 1997). Therefore langue is seen as ' a system of signs' (Crystal , 1997).

4.Syntagmatic vs Paradigmatic

If a sign is in a linear sequence, the relationship is called *syntagmatic* (Crystal,1997). It means that this relation is of combination

If a sign is contrasting with other signs in the sentence the relationship is called *paradigmatic* or associative (Crystal,1997, 411)

Syntagmatic

Paradigmatic

She	+	can +		go
He	+	will	+	run
I	+	may	+	sit
You	+	might	+	see
Etc		etc		etc.

2nd year English Lecturer: Mouleme .M

Lecture one: Phonology

Introduction

The sounds of the spoken language generally do not match up with letters of written English .If we cannot use the letters of the alphabet in a consistent way to represent the sounds we make, how do we go about describing the sounds of a language like English? One solution is to produce separate alphabets with symbols that represent sounds. Such a set of symbols does exist and it is called Phonetic alphabet. In this lecture, we will try to look at how these symbols are used to represent sounds of English words and how they are organized.

1/Phonetics (the sounds of speech)

1.1.Definition

Phonetics is a branch of linguistics. It is the general study of the characteristics o f speech sounds. It is how the linguistic sounds are made, transmitted and received.

There are three branches of phonetics

***Articulatory phonetics**: is the study of how speech sounds are made or articulated.

***Acoustic phonetics**: deals with the physical properties of speech as sound waves in the air. It examines the length, frequency and pitch of sounds

***Auditory phonetics**: (perceptual phonetics) deals with perception, via the ear, of speech sounds.(what happens in the ear and brain when the sound is finally received)

Yet, articulatory phonetics is the widely used description because the vocal tracts provide a well-understood reference point ,its description generally makes reference to six main factors:

1- Air stream: the source and direction of air flow identifies the basic class of sound.
2- Vocal folds: the variable action of the vocal folds must be considered- in particular, the presence or the absence of vibration (voiced / voiceless sounds)
3- Soft palate: the position of the soft palate must be noted. When it is lowered, air passed through the nose, and the sound is described as nasal or nasalized when it is raised, air passes through the mouth, and the sound is oral.
4- Place of articulation: it refers to the point in the vocal tract at which the main closure or narrowing is made, such as at the lips, teeth, or hard palate. E.g., bilabial, dental, glottal....
5- Manner of articulation: it refers at any place of articulation, such as marked degree of narrowing, a closure with sudden release, or a closure with slow release. E.g., plosive, nasal, affricate...

6- Lips: the position of the lips is an important feature of the description of certain sounds (especially vowels) such as whether they are rounded or spread, closed or open.

The International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA)

The first version of the International Phonetic Alphabet was published in 1886. Its main principles were that there should be a separate letter for each distinctive sound, and that the same symbol should be used for that sound in any language in which it appears. The alphabet was to consist of as many Roman alphabet letters as possible, using new letters and diacritics only when absolutely necessary. These principles continued to be followed today. (They to be used in dictionaries and textbooks)

2.Phonology (the linguistic use of sounds)

2.1.Definition

Phonology is the study of sound systems. It is essentially the description of the systems and patterns of speech sounds in a language. Therefore, the primary aim of phonology is to discover the principles that govern the way sounds are organized in languages and to explain the variations that occur.

Phonology is also concerned with :

1- The study of word-to-word relationsin sentences; that is how sound patterns are affected by the combination of words. For example, give /giv/ and him /him/ may combine to /givim/ give him.
2- The investigation of intonation patterns.

To discover:

-Tacit rules for how sounds vary in context.

-Tacit rules determining legal sequences of speech sounds.

-Tacit rules for rhythmic structure.

To know

-where the stress is in ,e.g., international

- The difference between *'subject* and *sub'ject* *'permit* and *per'mit*

-How to change stress pattern when affixes are added

diplomat	*diplomacy*	*diplomatic*
photograph	*photography*	*photographic*

2.2.Phonetics vs. phonology

The first focus of Phonetics is what a sound *is* (its composition), while in phonology, it is precisely what a sound *does*, and how it functions.

Phonology concerns itself with systems of phonemes, abstract cognitive units of speech sound which distinguish the words of a language. Phonetics, on the other hand, concerns itself with the production, transmission, and perception of the physical phenomena which are abstracted in the mind to constitute these speech sounds.

3.phoneme

The word phoneme comes from the Creek root meaning ***sound.***

The phoneme is the smallest unit of sound in a language which can distinguish two words.

For example:

1/ in English, the words **pan** and **ban** differ only in their initial sounds: **pan** begins with /p/ and ban with /b/

2/ **ban** and **bin** differ only in their vowels: /æ/ and /ɪ/

Therefore, /p/ , /b/,/æ/ and /ɪ/ are phonemes of English. The number of phonemes varies from one language to another. English is often considered to have 44 phonemes:24 consonants and 20vowels.

Yet, the phonemes are not sounds. They are a mental construct. No one has heard the phoneme /p/. In the case of /p/, the listener hears either [p] or [p^h] or various other allophones of the /p/ and all other phonemes are organizational and functional units with no physical properties of their own.

3.1.Minimal pair

Minimal pair is made up of two forms (words, phrases, or sentences) that contain the same sound segments, display only one phonetic difference that occurs at the same place in the form, and differ in meaning. If more than two forms are being compared, then we speak of sets instead of pairs.

Cat /kæt/ pat /pæt/ ⟶ pairs

Cat /kæt/ pat /pæt/ rat /ræt/ fat /fæt/ ⟶ sets

Two words in a language which differ from each other by only one distinctive sound (phoneme) and which also differ in meaning. For example, the English words bear and pear are minimal pair as they differ in meaning and in their initial phoneme /p/ and /b/.

For two words to be minimal pair they must be of equal length in terms of how many basic sounds constitute them, not in terms of how many alphabetic characters are needed to write them. This is because we want to establish the units of speech, not of writing.

Some Minimal Pairs in English

(a) hat [hæt] : cat [kʰæt]
(b) cat [kʰæt] : cap [kʰæp]
(c) cap [kʰæp] : cup [kʰʌp]
(d) flight [flaɪt] : fright [fraɪt]
(e) flight [flaɪt] : plight [plaɪt]

4.Allophone and complementary distribution:

4.1. Allophone

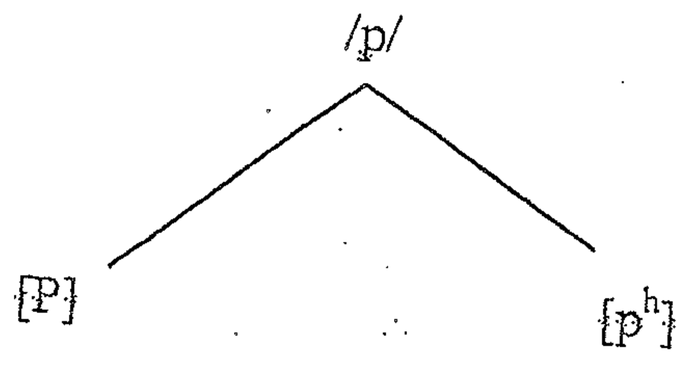
Allo= other , of the phoneme

Allophones are placed between brackets and phonemes between slashes

The allophone is any of the different variants of phoneme. The different allophones of a phoneme are predictably different but similar to each other, do not change the meaning of a word, and occur in different phonetic environments that can be stated in terms of phonological rules.

For example, the English phoneme / P/ is aspirated when it occurs at the beginning of a syllable (as in pot) but unaspirated when it is preceded by /s/ (as in spot) and may be released when it occurs at the end of an utterance (as in he is not her type). These aspirated, unaspirated and released sounds are all heard and identified as the phoneme /p/ and not as /b/; they are all allophones of /p/.

[P] and [pʰ] are acoustically (physically) somewhat different sounds, yet native English speakers (who do not take a linguistics class) perceive them as being the same sound. Therefore, native speaker would call them both the *p* sound.



Let's take another example. Consider the English phoneme /l/. It has one form at the beginning of the word such as 'lip' the first consonant is a clear l pronounced by placing the

tip of the tongue just behind the teeth and keeping the back of the tongue fairly low. In 'pill' the tip of tongue is in the same place but the back of the tongue is raised, resulting in a dark l. So, the clear variant [l] and the dark variant[ɬ].

4.2. Free Variation

Not all sounds of a language are necessarily distinctive sounds. Compare English and American pronunciations of dance [dæns] versus [dɑ:ns]. Although there are different sounds in the pair, the meaning does not change. Thus, [ɑ:] and [æ] are not phonemes in this case we call this phenomenon free variation.

Free variation can be found in various dialects of the same language. In this case, the different pronunciations of words throughout a country do not change the meaning of those words.

4.3. Complementary distribution

Another example of sounds which are not phonemes are those which occur in complementary distribution. This means that where one sound of the pair occurs, the other does not.

For example, aspirated and unaspirated allophones of /p/. The initial consonant as in pill is aspirated. The consonant after/s/ as in spring is unaspirated [p^hil] and [spriŋ] where [^{h}] indicates aspiration. Aspirated [p^h] as you can see, occurs only at the beginning of words. [p^h] and [p]are only allophones of the same phoneme /p/.

5. Shared Properties and distinctive features

It would be a mistake to consider the 44 phonemes of English as being totally separate from one another, just as it would be a mistake to regard the members of human family as being totally different. Even though each individual in a family is a distinct person in his own right, he is nevertheless lightly to have certain genes in common with his brothers and sisters. Similarly, many phonemes share common features.

Take the English phoneme: /p/ /t/ /b/ /d/ /m/ /n/

-First, these all share the property of being consonant.

-Second, /b/ /d/ /m/ /n/ are all voiced, that is, they are pronounced with vibration of the vocal cords.

-Third, /p/ /b/ and /m/ are pronounced with the lips and so share the property of being labials

- Fourth, when /m/ and/n/ are produced air is expelled through the nose. They are therefore nasals.

We can draw a chart which shows the properties possessed by each phoneme. A plus(+) sign indicates the presence of certain property and minus (-) sign signify its absence.

	/p/	/t/	/b/	/d/	/m/	/n/
Consonantal	+	+	+	+	+	+
Voiced	-	-	+	+	+	+
Labials	+	-	+	-	+	-
Nasals	-	-	-	-	+	+

The more usual linguistic term for property or component of the phoneme is the word **feature.** So we might describe the phoneme /m/ by saying that:
It has the features: consonantal, voiced and ~~nasal~~ labial
Compared with /m/, the phoneme /n/ lacks the feature labial. Otherwise they are the same. It is therefore the presence or the absence of the feature labial which separates /m/ from/n/. Any feature which distinguishes one phoneme from the other is called a **distinctive feature.**