

Elements of the Study of Phonetics and Phonology



Lecture 3

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Two elements of the study of phonology



Segmental elements: the primary elements of the study of phonology which deal with consonants and vocals

Suprasegmental elements : the secondary elements of the study of phonology which deal with stress, intonation, rhythm, and others.



Consonants

Consonants are part of the segmental elements which are generated by the organ of speech with blocking practices. In the production of consonants, the flow of air is blocked when they travel to the mouth.



Vowels

Vowels refer to segmental elements which are produced by the organ of speech without any blocking practices.

Vowels are generated with no oral obstructions whatsoever.



Cont

The vowels in some languages are categorised into two types, namely single vowels and double vowels. The former is labelled as monothong while the latter is called diphthongs.



The Number of Phonemes

In English, there are 44 phonemes. They include 24 consonants, 12 monothongs, and 8 diphthongs. Those are positioned in three positions, initial, middle, and final ones. However, not all consonants and vowels could place in the three positions.



Cont.

The alphabet which we use to write English has 26 letters but (British) English has 44 sounds.



English Spelling

English spelling is not a reliable guide to pronunciation because of the following issues.

- Some letters have more than one sound
- Sometimes letters are not pronounced at all
- The same sound may be represented by different letters
- Sometimes syllables indicated by the spelling are not pronounced at all



Cont.

Questions:

How do you pronounce *gh* in 'enough', 'through', laugh, and 'ghost'? (like *f* in fun, not pronounced, like *g* in got)

How many syllables are there in 'chocolate' and 'determine'?

Task 1 Transcribe the following texts

- In the second place, competition is becoming more intense. Many people feel anxious that they may be “laid-off” if they can’t work as hard as others. And they also feel at a disadvantage before new graduates. Therefore, it is understandable that people keep themselves involved in intensely hard work in order to preserve their positions.
- In my opinion, the worst aspect of this phenomenon is that the huge pressure of work will gradually affect people’s mental health. Excessively hard work means that people can never get rid of the fatigue of their work, even in their leisure time. This means that they cannot enjoy a normal life.
- In a word, in modern society overwork is stealing our leisure time. however, I believe this problem will be settled eventually with the development of science and technology.

Task 2 Transcribe the following texts



- The term “neon light” was originally applied to a particular type of vapor lamp using the inert gas neon. A long tube was filled with neon, which then became luminous at low pressure when an electric current was passed through it. The lamp then emitted the characteristic reddish-orange light of neon. Today, the term “neon light” is given to lamps of this general type that may be filled with a variety of gases, depending on the color that is desired. Argon, for example, is used to produce blue light.
- Color can also be altered by changing the color of the glass tube. The tubes must be quite long in all these lamps to light efficiently. As a result, high voltages are required. Neon tube lamps are not practical for indoor illumination, but they have found widespread outdoor use in glowing, colourful advertising signs.



References:

Fromkin, V. et al. 1988. *An Introduction to Language*. London: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Mcmahon, A. 2002. *Introduction to Phonology*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press



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A traditional Japanese garden scene. In the upper left, a thatched pavilion sits on a grassy slope. The middle ground features a stone waterfall cascading into a pond. The foreground shows a dark stone structure and a fence. The background is filled with lush greenery and some autumn-colored trees.

Thank you.