

PRONUNCIATION

Articulation: the combination and co-ordination of movements, by the relevant parts of the vocal apparatus, for the production of a given linguistic sound.

Aspiration: the delayed onset of vibration of the vocal cords following the release of a (usually) voiceless plosive, so that an emission of breath unaccompanied by voice precedes the voicing of the following vowel.

Assimilation: the process by which the movements to articulate a sound are affected by those required for a neighboring articulation. The resultant articulation is in some respect more similar to that neighbor than it would otherwise have been, or that it previously was. The phenomenon can be explained as due to the tendency to economise effort, to simplify and sometimes to anticipate.

Back vowel: a vowel sound articulated with the body of the tongue held towards the back of the mouth, with or without some degree of bunching up of the tongue.

Central vowel: a vowel sound articulated with some degree of bunching up of the part of the body of the tongue intermediate between front and back.

Centralization: the process of moving the tongue, or the tendency to move the tongue, to a more central position in the mouth, as compared to one more back or more front, which it should occupy, or formerly occupied.

Cis-Atlantic: on this side of the Atlantic Ocean, when considered from the European side.

Close vowel: a vowel sound articulated with the body of the tongue raised to near the roof of the mouth(hard or soft palate), but not so near to it as to cause perceptible friction to be produced when air is passed through the opening.

Closed syllable: a syllable closed(checked) by a consonant following the syllabic nucleus(usually a vowel). A consonant at the end of a word always closes its syllable; a single consonant in the middle of a word usually opens(releases) the following syllable. Groups of two or more consonants in the middle of a word usually divide up, one or more closing the first syllable and one or more beginning the next.

Co-articulation: the pronunciation of words in sequence, and the phenomena connected with transitions between articulations.

Consonant letter: a letter of the roman(or other) alphabet conventionally and traditionally used to 'stand for' a consonant sound of the language-though it may possibly not represent a pronounced sound in a given word.

Consonant sound: a sound produced by an articulation involving some degree of constriction of the mouth passage. This includes constriction sufficient to produce audible friction at the point of

narrowing, and also includes complete blocking of the passage. A technical term for 'consonant sound' is 'contoid'.

Diacritic: a small mark above, below or beside a letter but separate from it. In phonetic notation, diacritics are used to modify or qualify the value that a letter would otherwise indicate.

Digraph: a letter shape constructed from a combination of two other letters. Also, a sequence of two letters which is used to stand for a single sound.

Diphthong: a type of vowel sound having an audible change of quality, due to a movement of the articulating organs, during one and the same syllable.

Diphthongisation: a process involving the replacement of a steady vowel quality by one that changes; a tendency to alter the quality of a vowel sound during its articulation (by making some movement of the articulating organs).

Elision: the process by which a simplification in the movements to articulate a sequence of sounds results in the 'dropping', i.e. non-pronunciation of one of them, which is then said to be elided.

Frequency: the rate at which anything vibrates or oscillates, commonly expressed in cycles per second, i.e. the number of times the vibration or oscillation would take place if continued regularly for one second. The ear responds to frequency within a certain range, and is insensitive to frequencies outside this range. Within the range, a hearer perceives frequency in terms of a sensation of pitch, expressed as being on a higher or lower note according to the faster or slower rate of the original vibration. The human vocal cords can produce only frequencies within a narrower range than the overall audio-frequency range, with variation in the capability of individual voices. The normal speaking range is even narrower.

Fricative: a consonant produced with audible friction when the air is expelled through a narrowed air passage.

Front vowel: a vowel sound articulated with the body of the tongue held towards the front of the mouth, with or without some degree of bunching up of the tongue.

Glottis: the space between the vocal folds (vocal cords). During normal breathing the glottis is open; when the vocal folds are drawn completely together the glottis is closed.

Intonation: the rise and fall of the voice in connected speech. To speak without intonation is to speak on a monotone. An analysis of the intonation of a speaker, or of a language, seeks to describe and codify the use of changes of voice pitch: some of these tie in with the structure of sentences and the flow of speech; some are 'attitudinal' and convey, whether consciously or involuntarily, the emotions and attitudes of the speaker.

Kinaesthetic: describes the sensation, or the awareness, of part of the body motion relative to other parts. Kinaesthetic awareness of movement of the tongue in the mouth can be cultivated.

Larynx: the complicated mechanism in the throat incorporating the vocal folds that produce 'voice', and are also involved in coughing, together with the bony outer shell that protects the delicate parts

inside. one corner of this outer structure, generally known as 'Adam's apple', can be seen protruding at the front of the neck. The whole of the larynx is raised during swallowing.

Logatom: a modern coinage on Greek roots, to mean word piece or wordlike sequence, i.e. the equivalent of meaningless or nonsense word.

Minimal pair: a pair of words, of different meaning, that exist in a language, and that are minimally different in pronunciation.

Monophthong: a type of vowel sound of unchanging quality (to all intents and purposes) over its whole length. In the case of many languages, all the vowels are monophthongs.

Nucleus: The nucleus of a syllable (or syllabic nucleus) is in most cases a vowel, but occasionally a consonant. It is the part of a syllable on which the main chest pulse falls, resulting commonly in the greatest prominence of sound.

The nucleus of an intonation group is the part of the tune where the most important pitch feature of the group occurs. As to which is the most important, this is bound up with the language concerned, and with the intonational features it contains.

Open syllable: a syllable in uttering which the flow of air during the syllabic sound that constitutes its nucleus (most usually a vowel) is not checked by a following consonant. An open syllable at the end of a word is checked instead by muscular action to reduce the flow, until the sound dies away. An open syllable in the body of a word is so called if a following consonant (not usually when it is a single one) belongs to a succeeding syllable by virtue of the pulse of that syllable occurring on or before the consonant and so incorporating it into its structure.

Open vowel: a vowel sound articulated with the body of the tongue low in the mouth. Normally the jaw angle and the mouth opening at the lips are also wide.

Orthography: the conventional, traditional spelling of a language. Orthographic: with reference to the ordinary spelling of a language, as opposed to any phonetic notation used to represent it.

Palatalisation: the process of moving, or the tendency to move, the front of the body of the tongue to a more front position for articulating a sound; in Russian, and some other languages, the simultaneous raising of the front of the body of the tongue during the articulation of a sound.

Parameter: the scale along which a single variable may vary. Thus, the parameter of pitch is the scale of differences in the rate of vibration of the vocal cords; the parameter of duration in language is the scale of differences of length that sounds may have. In a living spoken language a number of parameters are generally involved simultaneously.

Phoneme: those units (as heard or pronounced) of a spoken language that can be utilized to make differences between different words of the language.

Phonemic: A phonemic notation or form of transcription of a language is one that is restricted to setting out its phonemes, i.e. other, non-phonemic features are excluded.

Phonemics: the study of the phonemes or phonemic system of languages.

Phonetic: relating to the sound or sounds of a language. A phonetic symbol is a letter or letter shape used to stand for a sound or sound feature of a language. A phonetic spelling is a sequence of letters having a close correspondence to a sequence of sounds.

Phonetics: the subject dealing with the phenomena of spoken language. Phonetics is a branch of linguistics and, as a subject, can be considered to include sub-branches such as phonemics and phonology. In studying General phonetics(i.e. phonetics in general) it is possible to disregard phonemics and phonology, but it is hardly possible to consider the phonetics of a language without studying its phonology.

Phonology: the organization and arrangement of the sounds of a spoken language considered as a system or set of system; the study of this.

Phonological: with reference to the above. A phonological notation or form of transcription is one that sets forth aspects or features of the phonology of a language. This is not necessarily restricted to its phonemes, and indeed is not necessarily concerned with them.

Pitch: The human ear responds to frequencies within a certain range by conveying them to the brain and producing a sensation of tone which can be described as having a given pitch-high or low, steady or moving, according to the rate of vibration of the source of sound(fast or slow) and to its nature(constant or changing). Below a certain frequency all sensation of pitch is lost, and separate pulsations may be perceived in place of a musical note or sound. Above a certain frequency the ear is incapable of responding by conveying any sensation to the brain, and a sound is then inaudible. The human voice is incapable of producing such low(slow rate) or such high(fast rate) frequencies as are not heard as a sound or musical note. Variations in pitch during speech create the rise and fall of the voice known as intonation.

Plosive: a consonant produced when a complete closing of the air passage is followed by an audible release of the air compressed behind the closure.

Prominence: the fact of standing out auditorily. A number of factors can contribute to prominence, more than one being present at a time, as a rule. Prominence by loudness produced by breath force, prominence by some pitch feature (e.g. high pitch, moving pitch), prominence by greater duration-these are the principal factors. A sound or word or idea can also be made to stand out by being preceded by a short gap of silence.

Semantic: concerned with the meaning of words and phrases.

Semantics: the field of meaning in language; the study of this.

Shwa: the name of a letter of the Hebrew alphabet which has the characteristic of occurring only in syllables that do not and cannot bear strong stress. For this reason the term has been found suitable to refer to a vowel in other languages that has the same feature. Other characteristics of shwa are that the vowel quality is indeterminate, neutral or central, and that the sound is often extremely short and lacking in prominence.

Stress: the amount of effort expended on a syllable. Stressed=with strong stress.

Stress timing: the tendency for the strongly stressed syllables of an utterance to follow each other at regular, or more regular, intervals of time.

Syllable: A physiological syllable is that part of an utterance that is produced on one impulse of the breath, that is, with a single chest pulse. An auditory syllable is an utterance that is judged to have a single peak of auditory prominence, i.e. two peaks of prominence constitute two auditory syllables. An acoustic syllable is an utterance that shows a single electrical or other peak on an instrument for measuring such peaks. A phonological syllable is that part of a word that can be separated from other parts in accordance with the structural 'rules' of the given language.

Syllabic: The syllabic nucleus is that part of a syllable which has the greatest prominence and/or which the greatest breath force is expended. A syllabic consonant is one that has so much prominence, due to its carrying power and/or its duration, that it constitutes the nucleus of its syllable (otherwise the nucleus of a syllable is most usually a vowel).

Syllable-timing: the tendency for the syllables in a sequence of syllables to follow one another at equal, or more equal, intervals of time.

Syntax: the field of word order and arrangement.

Syntactic: concerned with the ordering and arrangement of words in forming sentences.

Target language: the language that is the object of study or acquisition.

Trans-Atlantic: on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean, when considered from the European side.

Velarisation: the tendency to move the body of the tongue to a more back position, in the direction of the soft palate, during the articulation of a sound.

Vowel letter: a letter of the roman (or other) alphabet conventionally and traditionally used to stand for a vowel sound of the language.

Vowel sound: a sound produced by an articulation having little or no constriction of the mouth passage, at least not enough to produce 'audible friction' during normal speaking. A technical term for 'vowel-like sound' is 'vocoid'.