

Lgcs 10, Intro Ling. Lecture Notes. Thurs 30 Sept 2010.

0. Announcements

-Exam 2!!! Set for October 14th, two weeks from today. On the other hand:
-No homework this weekend! Assignment 4 will be distributed next Tuesday, and due the following Tuesday (October 12th).

1. Phonetics

Phonetics is the study of **speech sounds**.

Speech sounds are sounds used in human languages.

Speech sounds can be divided into two types: **consonants** and **vowels**.

Consonants involve a significant constriction somewhere in the vocal tract.

Vowels have no such constriction; air flows out of the mouth relatively freely.

All languages have C's and V's. But not the same C's and V's.

To study speech sounds, we need a consistent, unambiguous way to represent them.

Phonetic alphabets are sets of symbols used to represent speech sounds unambiguously; the main principle is a one-to-one mapping between sound and symbol.

Compare **orthographies** (writing systems), which often do not have a one-to-one mapping between sound and symbol. E.g., English orthographic *i* is used for at least two different sounds: *kite* vs *bit*, and *th* is used for both *thigh* and *thy*.

We will adopt the **IPA** (International Phonetic Alphabet), which is the most widely used phonetic alphabet. The IPA aims to provide a symbol for every sound in every language.

IPA symbols are by convention written between square brackets [].

1.1 Broad vs. narrow transcriptions

We will start by transcribing the **basic sounds**, or **phonemes**, of English; these are the **minimum** number of sounds needed to represent each word uniquely.

Phonemes are sounds that are **distinctive**: their presence alone can distinguish words.

For example, the sounds [r] and [l] are distinctive/phonemes in English, since their presence alone distinguishes the words *row* and *low*.

Phonemes are conventionally put between slant brackets: /r/, /l/.

Every language has a relatively small set of basic sounds, and a very large number of phonetic variants of those sounds, depending on their phonetic context.

For example, the phoneme /l/ itself varies in pronunciation based on context: the first sound of *like* is predictably pronounced differently than the last sound of *oval*. However, this phonetic difference is not distinctive; it cannot be used in English to distinguish words. For now, we will only transcribe distinctive sounds, so we won't be transcribing the difference between the two pronunciations of /l/.

A transcription using only the minimal set of basic sounds is a **broad** or **phonemic transcription**. Phonemic transcriptions are written between slant brackets / /. (However, anything transcribed may occur between square brackets, so a phonemic transcription may also occur between square brackets.)

In contrast, a **narrow** (or **phonetic**) **transcription** contains more phonetic detail, including phonetic differences that are not distinctive. Phonetic transcriptions are always written between square brackets.

Phonemes of English: p. 487.

1.2 Dialectal Variation

- (1) cot, caught
- (2) merry, marry, Mary
- (3) pen, pin
- (4) horrible
- (5) father, farther
- (6) poor, pour, pore

1.3 Narrower transcriptions

Although our transcriptions will be mostly broad, it will at times be useful to have a few additional symbols for transcribing English (see pp. 489-490).

Here are some conventions for narrower transcriptions in English:

/t/ is often pronounced as a **flap**: [ɾ], e.g. *city*.

/e/ and /o/ are often pronounced as diphthongs: [eɪ] and [oʊ].

[ə] is used for vowels in nonstressed syllables.

[ə̃] is a rhoticized schwa.

1.4 Stress

Stress is often left out in (especially broad) IPA transcriptions.

The most strongly stressed syllable in a word is called the **main** or **primary** stressed syllable. E.g., for the verb *invite*, the second syllable carries the main stress. Following IPA usage, we will transcribe main stress with a raised vertical tick before the main stressed syllable: [in'vaɪt] 'invite (verb)'.

2. Practice!

(7) /pɪtʃ/

(8) /mʌd/

(9) /mʌd/

(10) /saɪd/

(11) /ni/

(12) /taɪ/

(13) /pen/

(14) /bʌn/

(15) /wɪk/

(16) /wɪk/

(17) /wɒk/

(18) /wɒk/

(19) /lʊk/

(20) /lʌk/

(21) bombed

(22) shoelace

(23) phone

(24) should

(25) sing

(26) choose

(27) extra

(28) fume

(29) thing

(30) then

(31) what

(32) who

(33) whole

(34) use

(35) crook

(36) breathing

(37) wished

(38) gnome

(39) touch

(40) punched

(41) leather

(42) cringe

(43) wrapped

(44) price

(45) calves

(46) whale

(47) prays

(48) monkey

(49) wove

(50) mother

(51) huge

(52) mustache

(53) pure

(54) cough

(55) breath

(56) breathe

(57) hour

(58) icy

(59) though

(60) love