

Preface to the Revised Edition

Since its first publication in 1997, *A Practical Course in English Phonetics and Phonology* has been widely used in different universities in Iran. The feedback received from students and instructors has been mostly positive and encouraging. However, some shortcomings have been brought to the author's attention. Therefore, an attempt has been made to overcome these shortcomings in the revised edition. In this edition, certain new sections have been added and in particular Chapter 9 has been thoroughly revised and enlarged. In this chapter new drills and exercises have been provided for the teaching of English pronunciation. It is hoped that the new edition will meet the purpose and needs of Iranian students and teachers.

I owe a great debt of appreciation to Mrs. Nooshin Ghabdian for her careful reading of the revised edition.

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Preface

The tragedy of World War I prompted efforts in many countries towards greater international understanding after the war and the promotion of language teaching in the post-war world. Thus, the language programmes which were developed during the decade of World War II and the post-war decades put a great deal of emphasis on oral aspects of language for the ease of communication. In this regard, phonetics gained unprecedented momentum since it was considered helpful to the teaching of oral production, in general, and pronunciation, in particular.

On the other hand, in the early stages of modern linguistics, the most noticeable features of language, the speech sounds, were the first to be studied in the new science which set out to find out how to study language empirically. Today, phonetics and phonology are well-established components of linguistics and are sometimes considered disciplines in their own right.

Since in today's world oral communication plays a significant role, phonetics and pronunciation constitute a major part of EFL syllabi. Accordingly, the present book is especially designed to serve as a text for the undergraduate course in Phonetics and Phonology as one of the core courses of the B.A. programme in English in Iran. It may also be used at the M.A. level in conjunction with other texts in phonetics and phonology. The book may also be found useful by English teachers in secondary schools to increase their linguistic awareness and to help their students improve their pronunciation.

On a subject like phonetics and pronunciation, of course, there is no dearth of books. However, the present book differs from others in a number of ways. First, it takes into consideration the learner of English in Iran and provides for him exercises and practice

materials especially suited to his needs. Second, it makes a judicious selection of the subject matter, leaving out much of what is of no great consequence to Iranian undergraduate students (e.g., theoretical arguments, generative phonology, etc.). Third, it caters for the pronunciation differences between British and American English which is a matter of concern to many English teachers and students and is not normally included in other phonetic books as such. Finally, it provides various exercises for the pronunciation of problematic English sounds to Iranian students.

This book does not assume any previous linguistic or phonetic knowledge. The definition and explanation of technical terms are provided throughout the book.

The present book has developed from courses in phonetics and phonology taught by the author for several years at different universities in Tehran and the materials have been tested and revised throughout these years.

The book is presented in nine chapters. Chapter One serves as an introduction aiming at explaining the fundamental concepts of phonetics and phonology.

Chapter Two is intended to provide insight into the articulation of human speech sounds with detailed description of various parts of vocal tract.

Chapters Three and Four are concerned with the description and classification of English segmental phonemes. In Chapter Three, English consonants are presented, and in Chapter Four English vowels and diphthongs are dealt with. Figures and diagrams are included whenever they help to illustrate a point.

After the introduction of English phonemes in Chapters Three and Four, larger units of speech are studied in Chapters 5-7. Chapter Five discusses the notion of syllable and syllable structure as well as phonotactics. In Chapter Six, different stress patterns are introduced and necessary exercises are provided. Chapter Seven is devoted to the presentation and practice of most common intonation patterns.

In Chapter Eight, pronunciation differences between British and American English are discussed. The justification for the inclusion of this chapter in the book is the pedagogical significance of the issue.

And finally, Chapter Nine gives practice on English sounds which have proved difficult for Iranian learners of English.

I owe a great debt of gratitude to the editorial staff of SAMT particularly Dr. A. A. Rezaei, Ms. A. Jabbari, and Ms. F. Lashkari Nejad for their constant encouragement and support throughout the course of writing this book. I would also like to extend my sincere appreciation to Dr. Hossein Vossoughi for his careful reading of the manuscript. His insightful comments and invaluable suggestions led to the improvement of many sections of the book. My thanks are also due to my students in different universities in Tehran who gave me the impetus for writing this book.

It is hoped that this book, with all its shortcomings, will be found useful by English students and teachers in Iran.

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