University of Tikrit

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Department of English

Subject: Phonetics

1st Year
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What is Phonology?

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Phonology is the systematic study of the sounds used in language, their internal structure, and their composition into syllables, words and phrases.

Spelling, or orthography, does not consistently represent the sounds of language. Some problems with ordinary spelling are:

1. The same sound may be represented by many letters or combination of letters

she people key believe sea machine see
2. The same letter may represent a variety of sounds: father village badly made many

3. A combination of letters may represent a single sound

Shoot character Thomas physics rough coat deal

4. A single letter may represent a combination of sounds
Xerox

5. Some letters in a word may not be pronounced at all: autumn sword
resign lamb psychology write knot

The Phonetic Alphabet

• In 1888 the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA) was invented in
order to have a system in which there was a oneto-one correspondence
between each sound in language and each phonetic symbol • Someone
ﻦwho knows the IPA knows how to pronounce

Vowels

Vowels are classified by how high or low the tongue is, if the tongue is in the front or back of the mouth, and whether or not the lips are rounded
• High vowels: [i] [ɪ] [u] [ʊ]
• Mid vowels: [e] [ɛ] [o] [ə] [ʌ] [ɔ]
• Low vowels: [æ] [a]
• Front vowels: [i] [ɪ] [e] [ɛ] [æ]
• Central vowels: [ə] [ʌ]
• Back vowels: [u] [ɔ] [o] [æ] [a]
Round vowels: [u] [ʊ] [o] [ɔ] – Produced by rounding the lips –

English has only back round vowels, but other languages such as French and Swedish have front round vowels
• Diphthongs: [aɪ] [aʊ] [ɔɪ] – A sequence of two vowel sounds (as opposed to the monophthongs we have looked at so far)
• Nasalizaton: – Vowels can also be pronounced with a lowered velum, allowing air to pass through the nose – In
English, speakers nasalize vowels before a nasal sound, such as in the words beam, bean, and bingo – The nasalization is represented by a diacritic, an extra mark placed with the symbol: bean. word in any language