

A Text Book of
**Phonetics Pronunciation
and Spoken English**

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**Phonetics Pronunciation
and Spoken English**

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ANMOL PUBLICATIONS PVT. LTD.

NEW DELHI-110 002 (INDIA)

ANMOL PUBLICATIONS PVT. LTD.

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IIIrd Phase, IIIrd Block, Bengaluru-560 085 (India)
Tel.: 080-41723429 • Fax: 080-26723604
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First Edition, 2013

ISBN 978-81-261-5476-0

PRINTED IN INDIA

Printed at Suman Printer, Delhi.

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Foreword

English is not only the most widely used international language but also the most potent medium of access to the valued treasures of human knowledge. No other language can claim equality with English in possessing the choicest and the best that has been produced by human intellect and imagination in different countries and different ages. For this the hard work and dedication of the users of this language deserve the highest admiration. This painstaking devotion of widening the horizons of English language and trying to bring the best in human culture and knowledge into its fold is yet another manifestation of the mysterious rise and development of civilizations in human history. That the fall of civilizations too is as mysterious does not, in any way, diminish the significance of this effort and the truth of the assertion that it was through this widening of horizons that the Western Civilization achieved its post-Renaissance glory. The learning of such a language which is the repository of all that is the best in human knowledge is indispensable for a serious student. Any one (individual or community) who chooses to neglect English language would do so at his own peril. There is no doubt that the potential of an individual of a community can be best realized through the medium of the mother-tongue but to serve as a successful medium, a mother-tongue must be sufficiently developed. The condition of our mother-tongue being what it is, English will continue to occupy a position of seminal importance for a long time to come. One can justifiably say that for this end it would be enough to learn the use of English as a library language, why bother about the niceties of pronunciation? Now

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apart from those who have to learn the use of Spoken English—broadcasters, international tourists and teachers imparting instruction through English etc.—ever for those who learn English as a library language it would be as well to learn it as precisely and thoroughly as it is possible for a second language learner. Learning pronunciation is an essential part of learning a language well and for this grounding in phonetics is essential.

The present book, *A text of English Phonetics, Pronunciation and Spoken English*, has been prepared with this broader aim in mind. The author has chosen the Received Pronunciation (RP) as his model and the choice is amply justified. No doubt English is spoken in different countries with differences in accent and pronunciation. In India a case has always been made for what is called 'Educated Indian Pronunciation' (General India English GIE) and there is considerable substance in the case but if all brands of pronunciation are accorded the same importance in the process of teaching and learning it will create a lot of confusion which will not be in conformity with the international status of English.

This Book is primarily pitched at the level of an ordinary student and is sufficiently comprehensive, and remarkably lucid and clear for the purpose. It will be useful both for a layman desirous of learning spoken English and a student pursuing a course in phonetics and pronunciation.

The primary aim of this book is to provide students with the necessary material which we need for our day to day use. For example its first part covers the general phonology and the phonetics of English language as a syllabus prescribed by most of the Indian Universities for the PG classes. The book is a comprehensive survey of speech mechanism and sound distinctions.

Its second part deals with the pronunciation of English which includes English sounds—their allophones, their symbol representation in English orthography (written form...spellings);

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their occurrence in accented and unaccented syllables in words, word accent (primary and secondary accent on polysyllabic words) and shift of accent.

Its last part deals with spoken English and intonation: i.e. how to speak English in different situations considering the attitudes and facial gestures. Lastly transcription is introduced for practice as a feedback to reinforce what the learners have gathered so far from the book.

For any student, teacher or an English language centre related to ELT, enough data is devised in a graded manner for English language learning purposes. Hope this book will be of a great help to the learners of English language and will prove to be a good contribution to both the teaching and learning of English language.

I wish the author and the book all success.

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Preface

At present people in general are least content with learning only the reading and writing skills of English language. In fact they need to speak it intelligibly and with fluency so that they are understood approximately by the natives and non-natives all over the world. English language has tremendously gained much of the field in all the branches of knowledge etc and on the international scenario of trade and commerce, education, tourism, science and technology and so on. For this reason a course in spoken English is the best alternative for general students. It deals with **what to speak** and **how to speak** i.e. spoken English with elocutionary communication and pronunciation. The former is situationally a governed course which enables a student how to express the feelings of greetings, welcome, farewells, thanks, apologies, regrets and so on and gives him the exposure to the spheres of various branches of life like art and acting etc. The latter is concerned with grammar, accent, and intonation that enable him to speak English words, clauses, and sentences. Both these courses are important for a learner to speak English precisely with fluency and accuracy.

The primary aim of this book is to provide the students the necessary material and the data, which they need in their daily use of the language. For example part II and III of this book abound in such a material (such as selected words, adjectives and verbs; and the passages for the conversational practice). Next the students who take phonetics subject as a burden just to throw it down by passing the examination would definitely get enticed by reading this book. This book is a comprehensive survey of sound-

system, rules of pronunciation and grammatical theories exemplified by clear modern English and illustrates them with numerous examples whose ultimate emphasis is on conversational form which provides a student the exposure he needs for learning a second or a foreign language.

Keeping in view the dearth of material on spoken English in the market the Indian students (from intermediate to university level) find it difficult to exercise and use English language in their daily use. No doubt in various countries particularly in India English has been introduced at the primary level but students after completing their degree hardly can speak correct and intelligible sentences. This book aims at both (i) to fulfill the examination requirement and (ii) to approximate their learning and speaking efficiency.

Its first part covers the general phonetics and the phonetics of English as a syllabus prescribed by most of the Indian Universities for M.A. and PG Diploma classes. Its second part deals with the pronunciation of English which includes the vowels and consonants—their allophones, their weak and strong forms, word accent (i.e. the primary and secondary accent) on polysyllabic words and the compounds; the shift in accent changing the meaning of the words (like nouns, verbs and adjectives); the sound distinctions and spellings; and their occurrence in accented or unaccented syllables in the words. The vowels and consonants are discussed at length, for example / t / sound—where it occurs and in what environment (i.e. syllable initially, medially or finally); where it is aspirated or unaspirated; and where it is audibly or inaudibly released etc. Its third part deals with the intonation—how to speak English in different situations, in conversational mode considering the attitudes and facial gestures. It also takes an account of rhythmic patterns in connected speech of English. The transcription (phonemic) is introduced in this part for practice purpose as a feedback just to reinforce what the learners have encountered in the book and what they have learnt so far from the book.

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This book exclusively deals with pronunciation and spoken English for which there is enough data given in it. Any Institute or department of English related to ELT or a teacher of phonetics or spoken English or even an individual learner can record this data in a language laboratory or even at home for listening and speaking practice. The data is devised in a graded manner so that a student can practice it gradually for pronunciation and accentuation purposes.

For writing this book I am highly to Prof.V. Prakasm, and Prof. T. Balasubramanian previously from (Department of phonetics CIEFL- Hyd.) and Hemalata Nagrajan EFLU. I am thankful to my friend Dr. Hany Babu Dept. of English Delhi University who all the time extended his help. I pay my gratitude to Prof. G. R. Malik former and Prof. Aslam Dept. of English, Kashmir University, Srinagar who scrutinized the manuscript and obliged me thus. Especially, my sincere thanks and veneration go to Prof. G.R. Malik who condescended to me in writing the foreword to this book. I am also thankful to those of my students of English Phonetics especially Masrook Dar and Sobial J.G Dar who enthusiastically helped me while I was preparing the manuscript. However, I will never forget the inconveniences from my side shared and borne by my better half humbly during the preparation of the original manuscript. I am thankful to her for she would always prepare all the necessary things for me as would do my sister Shada for me. I always shall remain thankful to my teacher Dr. Suzie Tharu. Dept. of Comp Literature CIEFL Hyderabad for the encouragement she gave me and inspired me through her innovative intelligence. Above all I am grateful to my all the colleagues and those students who helped me in finding the data from dictionaries, references and other related books.

Dr. M. Bashir Dar

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