

Phonetics vs. Phonology:

Phonology begins with the construction of a representation more abstract than phonetic transcription; for phonology, we leave out the predictable properties.

Phonemic Analysis. There are two aspects to what we'll be doing:

- 1) actually doing phonemic analyses on real data.
- 2) looking at different theories of Phonemics.

Ferdinand de Saussure *Course in General Linguistics (lectures 1906-1911)*

For Saussure, language was a sign system, in which each sign consisted of a *signifiant* ("sound-image") and a *signifié* ("concept"). The **signifiant** functions to distinguish signs from other signs in the system, so **the difference** between sounds is their important characteristic, not their individual manifestation.

Characterizes sign in negative terms, as not equal to other units in a system, leaving open:

- 1) the nature of the relationship between the role of the sign in the system of *langue* and phonetic reality of how the sound is realized in *parole*.
- 2) the question of how to represent this unit
- 3) what kind of entity a phoneme is

There have been various approaches to answering these questions:

Prague School	American Structuralists
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Trubetskoï Jakobson	Pike Sapir Bloomfield Taxonomic phonemicists
(Optional Reading: Anderson's chapter 11 becomes relevant here)	

For now, a Phoneme is the marker of differences between morphemes/words: changing one phoneme to another phoneme gives you a different word, or no word at all.

We start with the analytical approach: a phoneme is a unit in a phonological analysis of a language. From an analytical point of view, not all the actual phonetic sounds have **the same value in the language or the same linguistic reality** to a speaker.

Phones	=	actual phonetic sounds used in a language	(concrete, phonetic)
Phonemes	=	distinct units of the sound system	(abstract, phonological)
Allophones	=	various realizations of the phonemes, not used to convey distinctions among words.	(concrete) (& abstract)

Phonemic analysis is the way of determining the phonemes of a language from phonetic data, and you probably learned how to do it following Pike 1947, an American Structuralist).

Steps to find phonemes:

- 1) To find distinctive units, look for **minimal pairs** like tie/die, kill/till in English. Sounds are classified as separate phonemes if they are responsible for a difference in meaning in a minimal pair. Also known as:

CONTRAST IN IDENTICAL ENVIRONMENTS

- 2) If you can't find exactly the same environment for showing a contrast between two words, you have to settle for a less rigorous test. If two sounds occur in phonetically similar contexts, and the context probably isn't causing the difference between those two sounds, then you've got phonemes that:

CONTRAST IN ANALOGOUS ENVIRONMENTS**Steps to find allophones (members of a single phoneme):**

- 1) For each **suspicious pair** (=pairs/groups of sounds that bear a significant phonetic resemblance to each other), examine the contexts in which each sound occurs. If the two sounds never appear in the same contexts, we have two sounds in:

COMPLEMENTARY DISTRIBUTION

- 2) if similar sounds appear in the same environment but do not make any difference in meaning, the sounds are in: **FREE VARIATION**

So, to summarize these analytical procedures:

- 1) look for contrast (in identical or analogous environments)
- 2) if there is no contrast, look for complementary distribution or free variation
- 3) group phones into sets of allophones belonging to phonemes

Alternations: the realization of an abstract sound (phoneme, lexical entry) is different in different contexts (phonetic/phonological/morpho-phonological).

Writing Rules for alternations

Phonological rules are usually written in the following form: $A \rightarrow B / C _ D$

where: A,B,C,D are sets of segments (later, distinctive features) except that:

A or B (but not both) may be the null set \emptyset

C or D (or both) may be absent or C or D (or both) may contain or consist of boundary symbols, such as # or +

A consists of a single set of features (i.e., A is a single segment)

Some terminology: A is the *affected segment*, B is the *change*, and C and D constitute the *context* or *environment*. CAD is the *structural description*, and CBD is the *structural change*.

Some symbols: # = word boundary + = morpheme boundary
 \emptyset = the null set, so $\emptyset \rightarrow B / C _ D$ means insert B between C and D
 $A \rightarrow \emptyset / C _ D$ means delete A between C and D