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Clear and concise, this textbook is an introduction to phonology for students which assumes no prior knowledge of this area of linguistics and provides an overall view of the field which can be covered within one year. The book does not confine itself to any specific theoretical approach and can therefore be used for study within any framework and also to prepare students for work in more specialised frameworks such as Optimality Theory, Government, Dependency and Declarative Phonology. Each chapter focuses on a particular set of theoretical issues including segments, syllables, feet and phonological processing. Gussmann explores these areas using data drawn from a variety of languages including English, Icelandic, Russian, Irish, Finnish, Turkish and others. Suggestions for further reading and summaries at the end of each chapter enable students to find their way to more advanced phonological work.

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Phonology

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University of Gdańsk

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Preface

This book is intended as an introduction to phonology for students who have not previously been exposed to this area of linguistics. It contains material which can be covered within one academic year and provides guides for extensive further study. While it does not presuppose any knowledge of phonology, it does assume prior familiarity with the basic terminology of articulatory phonetics and some background in general linguistics. For this reason notions such as *morpheme* or *spirant* are not explained here – readers needing assistance with such terms should consult other sources, such as, for example, Trask (1996).

Because the objective of the book is to provide a manageable introduction to the field it has been necessary to exercise maximal restraint as far as the issues covered are concerned. As is well-known, phonology, just like any other branch of linguistics, is not a uniform discipline. Quite conversely, the field is theoretically vibrant, with several substantially different models currently vying for the dominant position, a situation which confuses not only the beginner student. It has been decided that introducing all or even a few of these models would amount to a fairly superficial survey of different techniques of description, or would require a book much broader in scope (and in length). It is quite unlikely that a textbook of that sort could be used by the introductory student with much profit, and a course based on it would last much longer than one year. Assuming that students do not live by phonology alone, there is only so much that can be covered within a single course. For these reasons a different perspective has been adopted.

Leaving aside the significant theoretical variation among different phonological models, it is possible to identify a body of data that most or perhaps all models would regard as calling for a phonological description. These are the issues that would need to be described in any model, even if there is a measure of disagreement concerning some specific sets of data. In this book we have adopted the view that the student should try and see what qualifies as a phonological issue and how it may be interpreted. Thus we do not set off by assuming that we know what the problem is, and define our task as basically capturing the problem in terms of some theory. Obviously, phonology means making theoretical assumptions and

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proposing hypotheses – we have not tried to avoid these. Phonology also means looking for and finding the relevant data, a task which is anything but easy. In this book we make an effort to avoid creating the impression that phonology amounts to merely providing a neat formula for a handful of examples taken from a workbook. For this reason, although we obviously start with quite simple cases, our data become progressively more complex, and the regularities involved are seen to be intricately interwoven with others. In general, the emphasis is not on formalising or providing definitive answers but on identifying issues and pointing out the consequences of adopting specific theoretical positions. This approach has been motivated by the desire to convince the reader from the start that neither the author nor the classroom instructor know all the answers to the questions raised in this book. They do not. But they definitely know more questions than the student, and are aware of various attempts which have been made to grapple with these questions.

It is this attempt to identify phonological problems and provide a possible theoretical framework for them that is the focus of interest in the following nine chapters. No specific theoretical doctrine/approach/theory is explicitly adopted or adhered to, and hence practitioners of any particular model may be disappointed or may want to take issue with the particulars of what follows. This does not mean that the author has no theoretical preferences or that these preferences are not reflected in the book: the notion of a theory-free theoretical approach is an absurdity. No instructor or practising phonologist will have any difficulties in identifying the theoretical proclivities of the present author. As far as possible, however, we have tried to avoid model-specific machinery and theory-internal issues. For the same reason we have refrained from adopting any specific phonological alphabet (distinctive features, particles, elements) and used instead the traditional labels of phonetic description such as velarity, voicedness, rounding etc. It is hoped that the gist of our proposals will be acceptable to different frameworks and that most of the interpretations we offer can be translated into the distinctive theoretical language of individual models. Students should constantly be invited to venture their own reanalyses of the textbook cases and, where possible, search for new or additional sources of data. Partly for this reason some of the analyses we provide are deliberately provocative and can – or should – be challenged.

The constraints adopted here mean also that this textbook should not be viewed as a survey of the various types of phonological regularities in existence. Both the scope of the book and its author's competence (or lack of it) preclude any such attempt. Economies had to be effected and the results will hardly please everybody. The author remains solely responsible for the individual selections and for all other failures and misdemeanours.

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A short comment is in order with respect to the vexed problem of transcription. Although the number of languages used for discussion and illustration is very small, the phonetic tradition behind the various sources varies considerably. To make the task easier for the student we have ruthlessly unified the different systems by bringing them maximally close to the current IPA notation as presented in the *Handbook of the International Phonetic Association* (1999). The IPA chart is included in the Appendix and should be regularly consulted in case of doubt.

Every chapter is supplied with a list of suggested further reading. These lists comprise sources used in the body of the chapter and indications as to where the problems or the theoretical issues following from them have been discussed previously. Some references to different theoretical frameworks will be found there. The listings are deliberately restrictive since they relate directly to some issues discussed in the body of a given chapter; we believe that an introductory text is not the place for extensively documenting the development of the discipline in general or of the history of specific problems and their solutions. By consulting the works mentioned the student will be able to find his/her way to more advanced phonological work. This strategy is in line with a leitmotif of this book: models come and go, problems remain. It is hoped that the reader will discover some of the reasons why both of these statements are true, and in doing so come to realise why phonology is such a fascinating study.

The writing of this book has taken an inordinately long period of time. Two people were involved in its inception: Heinz Giegerich first suggested to me the idea of writing an introduction to non-derivational phonology, and Judith Ayling of Cambridge University Press helped me thrash out a general framework within which the discussion could be cast. During the writing of the book I have received support from two institutions and a number of individuals. My work on Irish was aided by the Cultural Relations Committee of the Irish Ministry for Foreign Affairs through grants supporting research into Irish in Poland. I also received a grant from the Stofnun Sigurðar Nordals in Reykjavík which allowed me to pursue my work in Icelandic. I am deeply obliged to both institutions for their support.

A number of people have read and commented on parts of the book at the different stages of its gestation, and also responded to questions about language data. I would like to single out in particular Aidan W. Doyle who read individual parts of the manuscript and also its prefinal version, raising doubts and helpful questions which forced me to clarify numerous points. Colin Ewen read the typescript for Cambridge University Press and provided a massive amount of feedback which has affected the shape of the book. Special thanks go to the copyeditor,

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Abbreviations

acc.	accusative
adj.	adjective
augmen.	augmentative
dat.	dative
def.	definite
def. art.	definite article
dim.	diminutive
express.	expressive
fem.	feminine
gen.	genitive
imper.	imperative
indef.	indefinite
instr.	instrumental
loc.	locative
masc.	masculine
n.	noun
neut.	neuter
nom.	nominative
part.	participle
pl.	plural
sg.	singular
vb.	verb
vb. n.	verbal noun
voc.	vocative

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