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I ENGLISH FACULTY**

PAPER

THE THEME: Lexical phonetics

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(Имзо)

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I. Introduction

This course paper is dedicated to the study of phonetic devices used in different English texts, and their importance which is one of the most interesting and actual problems of modern linguistics. The study of the role of phonetics in discourse analysis has become the matter of discussion among contemporary linguists as one of the most interesting, disputable and important problems of general linguistics at present.

The main aim of the present course paper is thorough linguistic analysis of the role of phonetics in the discourse and text interpretation in modern linguistics.

This aim puts forward the following tasks to fulfill:

- to define the term phonetics and its historical development;
- to study the phonetic and phonological terms and concepts;
- to analyze the types, aspects and methods of investigation of modern English phonetics;
- to study the connection of phonetics with other linguistic disciplines;
- to investigate the importance of phonetic devices in text analysis.

The main material of the given course paper is taken from different books on theoretical and practical phonetics as such English Phonetics. A Theoretical Course (by Abduazizov A.A) T., 2006, A Theoretical Course of English Phonetics (Leontyeva S.F). M., 2002. Theoretical Phonetics of English (Sokolova M.A. and others) M., 1994, English Phonetics. A Theoretical Course, Vassilyev V.A.) M., 1970, Pronunciation Theory of English (Alimardanov R.A.) and many others.

The theoretical value of the present course paper is that the theoretical part of the work can be used in delivering lectures on the Theoretical Phonetics of Modern English.

The practical significance of the present course paper is that the practical results gained by investigating the given problem may be used as examples or mini-tests in seminars and practical lessons on English phonetics.

Structurally, the present research work consists of four parts – Introduction, Body, Conclusion and Bibliography.

Introduction of the given investigation leads us to get general information about the structure and the main plot of the course paper.

II. Body

1. General notes on Phonetics as a Linguistic Science

Language as “the most important means of human intercourse” exists in the material form of speech sounds. It cannot exist without being spoken. Oral speech is the primary process of communication by means of language. Written speech is secondary; it represents what exists in oral speech.¹

In oral speech grammar and vocabulary as language aspects are expressed in sounds. The modification of words and their combination into sentences are first of all phonetic phenomena. We cannot change the grammatical form of a verb or a noun without changing the corresponding sounds. The communicative type of sentences can often be determined only by intonation. Hence the importance of the sound (phonetic) aspect of a language is obvious. To speak any language a person must know nearly all the 100% of its phonetics while only 50-90% of the grammar and 1% of the vocabulary may be sufficient.²

The terms “phonetics” and “phonetic” come from the Greek word (fo:ne:) sound. The term “phonetics” may denote either the phonetic system of a concrete language or the phonetic science. Both the phonetic system of a language and the phonetic science are inseparably connected with each other but at the same time the one cannot be taken for the other. The phonetic system of a language is an objective reality while the phonetic science is a reflected reality.

Phonetics as a science is a branch of linguistics. It is concerned with the study of the sound system of a language. Phonetics has a long history. It was known to the ancient Greeks and Hindus. But up to the 19th century it was

¹ Alimardanov R.A. Pronunciation Theory of English. T, 2009 , p 3

² Bloomfield L Language N.Y 1950 p.13

considered to be a part of grammar. As an independent linguistic science it began to develop in Russia and Western Europe in the 2nd half of the 19th century.¹

Being an independent science, phonetics is at the same time closely connected with other linguistic sciences – grammar, lexicology, stylistics and the history of a language since the phonetic system of a language, its vocabulary and grammar constitutes one indivisible whole. It is also closely interconnected with such sciences as physiology, biology, physics, pedagogy, psychology, mathematics, cybernetics. The object of phonetics is the sound matter of a language which comprises speech sounds and prosodic characteristics of speech (stress, pitch, rhythm, tempo, etc.)

Sounds and prosodic phenomena of speech are of a complex nature. They involve a number of simultaneous activities on the part of the speaker and the hearer: the movement of speech organs that is regulated by the central nervous system; the perception of sound waves resulting from the work of speech organs; the formation of the concept in the brain (at a linguistic level)².

Consequently, sound phenomena have different aspects, which are closely interconnected: articulatory (physiological), acoustic(physic), auditory(perceptual) and linguistic(phonological, social, functional).³

Speech sounds are products of human organism. They result from the activities of the diaphragm, the lungs, the bronchi, the trachea, the larynx with the vocal cords in it, the pharynx, the mouth cavity with the speech organs situated in it and the nasal cavity.

Sound production is impossible without respiration, which consists of two alternating phases-inspiration and expiration. Speech sounds are based chiefly on expiration, though in some African languages there are sounds produced by inspiration.

¹ Alimardanov R.A. op.cit p.4

² Abduazizov A.A. Theoretical Phonetics of Modern English , T-1986 p.9

³ Abduazizov A. A. Theoretical Phonetics of Modern English, T-1986, p.12

Expiration, during which speech sounds are produced, is called phonic expiration. Phonic expiration differs from ordinary biological non-phonic expiration. In phonic expiration the air comes from the lungs not freely but in spurts, because the speech organs often block the air-passage.

The lungs are the source of energy. They supply the air-pressure (the spectral component of sounds) and at the same time they regulate the force of the air-pressure, thus producing variations in the intensity of speech sounds.

Sound production actually takes place in the larynx, the pharynx and the oral and the nasal cavities. The air-stream coming from the lungs undergoes important modifications in them.

One part of sound production is phonation, or voice-production.

When the vocal cords, situated in the larynx, are tensed and brought loosely together, the air-pressure below the vocal cords becomes very high and the air comes from the lungs in regular puffs making the vocal cords vibrate. Their vibrations are complex and, mainly, regular or periodic. The regular vibrations of the vocal cords are transmitted to the air-stream and the acoustic effect perceived by the human ear is that of a vocal tone.

Thus sound production is a complicated phenomenon. The main sources of vibration in the production of speech sounds are the vocal cords and various kinds of obstruction.

Complex periodic vibrations of the vocal cords are the physiological basis of speech melody and voice-timbre as components of prosody. The amplitude of vibration is the physiological basis of intensity-the dynamic component of prosody.

Like any other sound of nature speech sounds exist in the form of sound waves and have the same physical properties-frequency, intensity, duration and spectrum¹.

¹Alimardanov R.A. op.cit p.7

Frequency is the number of vibrations per second generated by the vocal cords. Frequency produced by the vibration of the vocal cords over their whole length is the fundamental frequency. It determines the musical pitch of the tone and forms an acoustic basis of speech melody.

Frequency is measured in hertz or cycles per second (cps).

Intensity of speech sounds depends on the amplitude of vibrations. Changes in intensity are associated with stress in those languages which have force stress, or dynamic stress.

Intensity is measured in decibels (db).

Like any other form of matter, sound exists and moves in time. Any sound has a certain duration. The duration of a sound is the quantity of time during which the same pattern of vibration is maintained. For this reason the duration of a sound is often referred to as its quantity. The duration of speech sounds is usually measured in milliseconds (msec.).

The complex tone is modified in the resonance chambers (the pharyngeal, oral and nasal cavities). These chambers can assume an infinite number of shapes, each of which has a characteristic vibrating resonance of its own. Those overtones of the complex tone which coincide with the chamber's own vibrating resonance are considerably intensified. Thus, certain bands of strongly intensified overtones are characteristic of a particular shape, size and volume of the resonator which produces a certain vowel sound. These bands of frequencies are intensified whatever the fundamental frequency. The vowel /a:/, for instance, has one such characteristic band of energy in the region of 800 cps and another at about 1,100 cps; the vowel /i:/ has bands of energy at about 280 cps and 2,500 cps, irrespective of the pitch of the voice.¹

¹ Alimardanov R.A. op.cit p.8

The spectra of consonants have no sharply defined formant structure. There are concentrations of energy at high frequencies or no energy, at a low, fundamental frequency.

Every act of oral communication presupposes the presence of at least two persons: the speaker and the hearer. The former produces speech sounds, the latter perceives them. Thus speech sounds may also be analyzed from the point of view of perception.

The perception of speech sounds involves the activity of our hearing mechanism, which can be viewed in two ways.

On the one hand, it is a physiological mechanism which reacts to acoustic stimuli. The human ear transforms mechanical vibrations of the air into nervous stimuli and transmits them to the brain.

On the other hand, it is also a psychological mechanism which selects from the great amount of acoustic information only that which is linguistically significant. The human brain interprets acoustic phenomena in terms of a given language system. In this way, different acoustic stimuli may be interpreted as being the same sound unit. Thus for an Englishman the soft /l/ as in “let” and the hard /l/ as in “tell” are one and same unit, as the difference between them is not significant in distinguishing words or grammatical forms in English.

Speech sounds and prosodic features are linguistic phenomena. They are realizations of language units-phonemes and prosodies. Representing language units in actual speech, speech and prosodic features (pitch, stress, temporal characteristics etc.) perform certain linguistic functions. They constitute meaningful units-morphemes, words, word forms, utterances. All the words of a language consist of speech sounds and have stress. All the utterances consist of words, and, consequently, of sounds; they are characterized by certain pitch-and-stress patterns, temporal features, rhythm.¹

¹ Abduazizov A. A. English Phonetics A theoretical Course, T, 2007 p.18

Speech sounds and prosodic features serve to differentiate the units they form. Communication by means of language is possible only because speech sounds (and prosodic features) can be opposed to one another for purposes of differentiating words, word forms, and communicative units-utterances.

Simultaneously all the sound phenomena provide a basis for the hearer to identify them as concrete words, word forms or utterances.

Thus, speech sounds and prosodic features of speech perform constitutive, distinctive and identificatory functions.

The basis of phonology is the phoneme theory, created in Russia by I.A.Baudouin de Courtenay (1845-1929) and developed by his pupils and followers L.V.Shcherba, N.V.Krushevsky and later by other Russian and foreign linguists. Phonology was founded in Prague by a group of linguists (Trubetskoy, Jakobson and others).

Among the definitions of phoneme the following one which was suggested by great Russian phonetician V.A. Vassilyev plays a great role in modern phoneme theories: “the segmental phoneme is the smallest (i.e. further indivisible into smaller consecutive segments) language unit (sound type) that exists in the speech of all members of a given language community as such speech sounds which are capable of distinguishing one word from another word of the same language or one grammatical form from another grammatical form of the same word”¹

N.S.Trubetzkoy claims that phonology should be separated from phonetics. According to the Prague School phonetics and phonology are independent sciences: phonetics is a biological science and is concerned with physical and physiological characteristics of speech sounds, phonology is a linguistic science and is concerned with the social function of phonetic phenomena. This point of view is supported by the Danish linguist L.Hjelmslev who advocates total separation of phonetics and phonology. But the vast majority of Russian phoneticians do not consider it logical to separate function from form and thereby

¹ Vassilyev V. A. , English Phonetics. A theoretical Course. M, 1970 p.136

completely exclude phonetics from the linguistic sciences. A great number of phoneticians abroad adhere to the same point of view. For instance, B. Malmberg, a Swedish phonetician, writes as follows: ¹

“It was a grave error on the part of the Prague School to want to establish a strict separation between phonetics and phonology”. “The two types of studies are interdependent and condition each other. Consequently it seems preferable to group them together under the traditional general heading of phonetics”.

Besides the three branches given above there are other branches of phonetics: special, general, historical, descriptive, comparative, applied.

Special phonetics is concerned with the study of the phonetics system of a concrete language. When the phonetic system is studied in its static form, at a particular period (synchronically, we speak about descriptive phonetics. When the system is studied in its historical development (diachronically) we speak about historical, or evolutionary phonetics. Historical phonetics uses the philological method of investigation. It studies written documents and compares the spelling and pronunciation of one and the same word in different periods of the history of the language.

General phonetics is concerned with the study of man’s sound-producing possibilities and the functioning of his speech mechanism. It finds out what types of speech sounds exist in various languages. How they are produced and what role they play when forming and expressing thoughts. General phonetics is based on the extensive material which is provided by the special phonetics of a great number of languages and on the material of other sciences. As a result of this, general phonetics has been able to make a number of general conclusions concerning the complex nature of speech sounds and to formulate a number of theories: the phoneme theory, the theory of syllable formation, theories of stress, intonation, etc.

Comparative phonetic is concerned with the comparative study of the phonetic systems of two or more languages, especially kindred ones.

¹ Malmberg B Phonetics N. Y. 1963 p.25

By practical, or applied phonetics we mean all the practical applications of phonetics. Phonetics is of considerable importance for other fields of language study, which have made use of the structural approach and those linguistic methods worked out by phonetics.

Phonetics is applied in the teaching of diction; in correcting speech defects (pathological phenomena and aphasia); in teaching children to read and write their mother tongue and in teaching foreign languages ; in the teaching of deaf-mutes; for creating orthographies for unwritten languages.

The methods of investigation used in phonetics vary, but there are three principal methods: (1) the direct observation method; (2) the linguistic method; (3) the experimental method.

Theoretical significance of phonetics is connected with the further development of the problem of the synchronic study and description of the phonetic system of a national language, the comparative analysis and description of different languages, the study of the correspondences between them, the diachronic description of successive changes in the phonetic system of a language or different languages.

Practical significance of phonetics is connected with teaching foreign languages. Practical phonetics is applied in methods of speech correction, teaching deaf-mutes, film dubbing, transliteration, radio and television.

2. Connection of Phonetics with Lexicology

Phonetics is connected with linguistic and non-linguistic sciences: acoustics, physiology, psychology, logic, grammar, lexicology, stylistics, pedagogics, mathematics etc.

The connection of phonetics with linguistic disciplines such as grammar, lexicology and stylistics is exercised first of all via orthography, which in its turn is very closely connected with phonetics. Here we want to focus on the connection of phonetics with lexicology and grammar which deal with the morphological characteristics of speech sounds.

Phonetics formulates the rules of pronunciation for separate sounds and sound combinations. The rules of reading are based on the relation of sounds to orthography and present certain difficulties in learning the English language, especially on the initial stage of studying. Thus, vowel sounds, for instance, are pronounced not only as we name the letters corresponding to them: the letter **a** as /eI/, the letter **e** as /i:/, the letter **I** as /aI/, the letter **y** as /waI/, the letter **u** as /ju:/ the letter **o** as /ou/, *but a* can be pronounced as: /æ/ - *can*, /ɑ:/ - *car*, /εə/ - *care*; **e** can be pronounced as: /e/ - *them*, /3:/ - *fern*, /Iə/ - *here*, etc¹.

Though the system of rules of reading phonetics is connected with grammar and helps to pronounce correctly singular and plural forms of nouns, the past tense forms and past participles of English regular verbs, e.g. /d/ is pronounced after voiced consonants (*beg-begged*), /t/-after voiceless consonants (*wish-wished*). It is only if we know that /s/ is pronounced after voiceless consonants, /z/ after voiced and /Iz/ after sibilants, that we can pronounce the words *books*, *bags*, *boxes* correctly. The ending **-ed** is pronounced /Id/ following /t/ or /d/, e.g. *waited* /'weItId/, *folded*, /'fəuld Id/. Some adjectives have a form with /Id/, e.g. *crooked* /'krukId/, *naked* /'neIkId/, *ragged* /'rægId/.

¹ Alimardanov R.A. op.cit p.4

One of the important phonetic phenomena - sound interchange - is another manifestation of the connection of phonetics with grammar. For instance, this connection can be observed in the category of number. Thus, the interchange of /f-v/, /s-z/, /θ-ð/ helps to differentiate singular and plural forms of such nouns as: *calf-calves* /f-v/, *leaf-leaves* /f-v/, *house-houses* /s-z/.

Vowel interchange helps to distinguish the singular and the plural of such words as: *basis – bases* /ˈbeɪsɪs - ˈbeɪsɪz/, *crisis – crises* /ˈkraɪsɪs - ˈkraɪsɪz/, *analysis-analyses* /əˈnæləsɪs- əˈnæləsɪz/, and also: *man-men* /mæn-men/, *foot-feet* /fʊt-fi:t/, *goose-geese* /gu:s-gi:z/, *mouse –mice* /maʊs-maɪs/.

Vowel interchange is connected with the tense forms of irregular verbs, for instance: *sing-sang-sung*; *write-wrote-written*, etc.¹

Vowel interchange can help to distinguish between

- a) nouns and verbs, e.g. *bath-bathe* /a:-eɪ/,
- b) adjectives and nouns, e.g. *hot-heat* /ɔ -i:/,
- c) verbs and adjectives, e.g. *moderate-moderate* /eɪ-I/,
- d) nouns and nouns, e.g. *shade-shadow* /eɪ-æ/,
- e) nouns and adjectives, e.g. *type-typical* /aɪ-I/.

Vowel interchange can be observed in onomatopoeic compounds:

jiggle - joggle *толчок, покачивание*

flip - flop *лёгкий удар, шлепок*

chip - chop *рубить топором, штыковать*

flap - flop *шлепать, шлёпнуть*

hip - hop *подпрыгивание при ходьбе*

Consonants can interchange in different parts of speech for example in nouns and verbs:

extent – extend /t-d/

¹ Ibid p.5

mouth - mouth /θ-ð/

relief - relieve /f-v/

Phonetics is also connected with these linguistic disciplines through its intonation component. Sometimes intonation alone can serve to single out predication in the sentence. Compare:

˘He came home. Not Mary or John.

He ˘came home. So you can see him now.

He came ˘home. He is at home, and you said he was going to the club.

In affirmative sentence the rising nuclear tone may serve to show that it is a question. Cf.:

He ˘came home.

He ˈcame ,home?

Pausation may also perform a differentiating function. If we compare two similar sentences pronounced with different places of the pause, we shall see that their meaning will be different.

ˈWhat ˈwriting ˈpoet is doing is ,interesting.

If we make a pause after the word *what*, we are interested in what the poet is doing in general. If the pause is made after the word *writing* we want to know, what book or article the poet is writing.

The presence of stress, or accent, in the right place, that we can distinguish certain nouns from verbs (formed by conversion), e.g.

ˈabstract *реферат* - to abˈstract *извлекать*

ˈobject *предмет* - to obˈject *не одобрять*

ˈtransfer *перенос* - to transˈfer *переносить*

Homographs can be differentiated only due to pronunciation, because they are identical in spelling, e.g.

bow /bəʊ/ *лук* - bow /baʊ/ *поклон*

lead /li:d/ *руководство* - lead /led/ *свинец*

row /rəʊ/ ряд	- row /raʊ/ шум
sewer /səʊə/ швея	- sewer /sju:ə/ сточная труба
tear /tɛə/ разрыв	- tear /tɪə/ слеза
wind /wɪnd/ ветер	- wind /waɪnd/ виток

Due to the position of word accent we can distinguish between homonymous words and word groups, e.g.

ˈblackbird дрозд	- 'black ˈbird чёрная птица
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3. The Importance of Lexical Phonetics in Text Interpretation

As we know lexical phonetics is a result of connection of phonetics with lexicology. The first matter of lexical phonetics which can be found in text interpretation is homonymy, of course.

Words identical in sound -form but different in meaning are traditionally termed homonyms.

Modern English is exceptionally rich in homonymous words and word – forms. It is held that languages where short words abound have more homonyms than those where longer words are prevalent. Therefore it is sometimes suggested that abundance of homonyms in Modern English is to be accounted for by the monosyllabic structure of commonly used English words.¹

When analyzing different cases of homonymy we find that some words are homonymous in all their forms, i.e. we observe full homonymy of the paradigms of two or more different words, e.g.; in SEAL (1) – “a sea animal” and SEAL (2) - “a design printed on paper by means of a stamp”. The paradigm “seal, seal’s, seals, seals’ ” is identical for both of them and gives no indication of whether it is SEAL (1), SEAL (2) that we are analysing. In other cases, e.g. SEAL (1) – “a sea animal” and (to) SEAL (3) – “to close tightly”, we see that although some individual word- pare, for instance, the paradigms:

SEAL (1)	(to) SEAL (3)
Seal	seal
Seal’s	seals
Seals	sealed
Seals’	sealing.

It is easily observed that only some of the word –forms (e.g. seal, seals, etc.) are homonymous, whereas others (e.g. sealed, sealing) are not. In such cases we cannot speak of homonymous words but only of homonymy of individual word – forms or of partial homonymy. This is true of a number of other cases, e.g. compare **find** [faind], **found** [faund], **found** [faund], and **found** [faund], **founded** [ˈfaundid], **founded** [ˈfaundid]; **know** [nou], **knows** [nouz], **knew** [nju:], and **no** [nou]; **nose** [nouz], **noses** [ˈnouzɪs]; **new** [nju:] in which partial homonymy is observed. Consequently all cases of homonymy may be classified into full and

¹ Ginzburg R. S. A Course in Modern English Lexicology, M, 1979, p.39

partial homonymy –i.e. homonymy of words and homonymy of individual word –forms.

The bulk of full homonyms are to be found within the same parts of speech (e.g. **seal**(1) n –**seal** (2) n), partial homonymy as a rule is observed in word –forms belonging to different parts of speech (e.g. **seal**(1) n –**seal** (3) v). This is not to say that partial homonymy is impossible within one part of speech. For instance in the case of the two verbs –**lie** [lai] –‘to be in a horizontal or resting position’ and **lie** [lai] –‘to make an untrue statement’ –we also find partial homonymy as only two word –forms [lai],[laiz] are homonymous, all other forms of the two verbs are different. Cases of full homonymy may be found in different parts of speech too; e.g. **for** [fo:] –preposition, **for** [fo:] –conjunction and **four** [fo:] –numeral, as these parts of speech have no other word –forms.

Homonyms may be also classified by the type of meaning into lexical, lexico –grammatical and grammatical homonyms. In **seal** (1) n and **seal** (2) n, e.g., the part –of –speech meaning of the word and the grammatical meanings of all its forms are identical (e.g. **seal** [si:l] Common Case Singular,) **seal`'s** [si:lz] Possessive Case Singular for both **seal** (1) and **seal** (2)). The difference is confined to the lexical meaning only: **seal** (1) denotes ‘a sea animal’, ‘the fur of this animal’, etc., **seal** (2) –‘a design printed on paper, the stamp by which the design is made’, etc. So we can say that **seal** (2) and **seal** (1) are lexical homonyms because they differ in lexical meaning.

If we compare **seal** (1) –‘a sea animal’, and (to) **seal** (3) –‘to close tightly, we shall observe not only a difference in the lexical meaning of their homonymous word –forms but a difference in their grammatical meanings as well. Identical sound –forms, i.e. **seals** [si:lz] (Common Case Plural of the noun) and (he) **seals** [si:lz] (third person Singular of the verb) possess each of them different grammatical meanings. As both grammatical and lexical meanings differ we describe these homonymous word –forms as lexico –grammatical.

Lexico –grammatical homonymy generally implies that the homonyms in question belong to different parts of speech as the part –of –speech meaning is a

blend of the lexical and grammatical semantic components. There may be cases however when lexico –grammatical homonymy is observed within the same part of speech, e.g., in the verbs (to) **find** [faɪnd] and (to) **found** [faʊnd], where the homonymic word –forms: **found** [faʊnd] –Past Tense of (to) **find** and **found** [faʊnd] –Present Tense of (to) **found** differ both grammatically.

Modern English abounds in homonymic word –forms differing in grammatical meaning only. In the paradigms of the majority of verbs the form of the Past Tense is homonymous with the form of Participle II, e.g. **asked** [a:skt] – **asked** [a:skt]; in the paradigm of nouns we usually find homonymous forms of the Possessive Case Singular and the Common Case Plural, e.g. **brother`s** [ˈbrʌðəz] . It may be easily observed that grammatical homonymy is the homonymy of different word –forms of one and the same word.

The two classifications: full and partial homonymy and lexical, lexico –grammatical and grammatical homonymy are not mutually exclusive. All homonyms may be described on the basis of the two criteria – homonymy of all forms of the word or only some of the word-forms and also by the type of meaning in which homonymous words or word-forms differ. So we speak of the full lexical homonymy of SEAL(1) *n* and SEAL(2) *n*, of the partial lexical homonymy of LIE(1) *v* and LIE(2) *v*, and of the partial lexico-grammatical homonymy of SEAL(1) *n* and SEAL(3) *v*.

It should be noted that in the classification discussed above one of the groups, namely lexico-grammatical homonymy, is not homogeneous. This can be seen by analyzing the relationship between two pairs of lexico –grammatical homonyms, e.g.

1. **seal** (1) *n*.- ‘a sea animal’; **seal** (3) –‘to close tightly as with a seal ’;
2. **seal** (2) *n*- ‘a piece of wax, lead’; **seal** (3) *v* – ‘to close tightly as with a seal’.

We can see that **seal** (1) *n* and **seal** (3) *v* actually differ in both grammatical and lexical meanings. We cannot establish any semantic connection between the meaning “a sea animal” and “to close tightly”. The lexical meanings of **seal** (2) *n* and **seal** (3) *v* are apprehended by speakers as closely related. The noun and the

verb both denote something connected with “a piece of wax, lead, etc., a stamp by means of which a design is printed on paper and paper envelopes are tightly closed”. Consequently the pair SEAL (2) n –SEAL (3) v does not answer the description of homonyms as words or word –forms that sound alike but differ in lexical meaning. This is true of a number of other cases of lexico –grammatical homonymy, e.g. **work** n – (to) **work** v; **paper** n – (to) **paper** v; **love** n – (to) **love** v and so on. As a matter of fact all homonyms arising from conversion have related meanings. As a rule however the whole of the semantic structure of such words is not identical. The noun **paper**, e.g., has at least five meanings (1. material in the form of sheets, 2. a newspaper, 3. a document, 4. an essay, 5. a set of printed examination questions) whereas the verb (to) **paper** possesses but one meaning ‘to cover with wallpaper’.

Considering this peculiarity of lexico –grammatical homonyms we may subdivide them into two groups: A. identical in sound –form but different in their grammatical and lexical meanings SEAL (1) n –SEAL (3) v, and B. identical in sound –form but different in their grammatical meanings and partly different in their lexical meaning, i.e. partly different in their semantic structure SEAL (2) n –SEAL (3) v; PAPER n –(to) PAPER v. thus the definition of homonyms as words possessing identical sound –form but different semantic structure seems to be more exact as it allows of a better understanding of complex cases of homonymy, e.g. **seal** (1) n –**seal** (2) n; **seal** (3) v –**seal** (4) v which can be analysed into homonymic pairs, e.g. **seal** (1) n –**seal** (2) n lexical homonyms; SEAL (1) n –SEAL (3) v –lexico –grammatical homonyms, subgroup A; SEAL (2) n –SEAL (3) v –lexico –grammatical homonyms, subgroup B.

In the discussion of the problem of homonymy we proceeded from the assumption that words are two –facet units possessing both sound –form and meaning, and we deliberately disregarded their graphic form. Some linguists, however, argue that the graphic form of words in Modern English is just as important as their sound –form and should be taken into consideration in the analysis and classification of homonyms. Consequently they proceed from

definition of homonyms as words identical in sound –form or spelling but different in meaning. It follows that in their classification of homonyms all the three aspects: sound –form and meaning are taken into account. Accordingly they classify homonyms into homographs, homophones and perfect homonyms.

Homographs are words identical in spelling, but in their sound –form and meaning, e.g. **bow** n [bou] –‘a piece of wood curved by a string and used for shooting arrows’ and **bow** n [bau] –‘the bending of the head or body’; **tear** n [tɪə] –‘a drop of water that comes from the eye’ and **tear** v [tɛə] –‘to pull apart by force’.

Homophones are words identical in sound –form but different both in spelling and in meaning, e.g. **sea** n and **see** v; **son** n and **sun** n.

Perfect homonyms are words identical both in spelling and in sound –form but different in meaning, e.g. **case** (1) n –‘something that has happened’ and **case** (2) n –‘a box, a container’. The description of various types of homonyms in Modern English would be incomplete if we did not give a brief outline of the diachronic processes that account for their appearance.

The two main sources of homophones are: 1) diverging meaning development of a polysemantic word, and 2) converging sound development of two or more different words. The process of diverging meaning development can be observed when different meanings of the same word move so far away from each other that they come to be regarded as two separate units. This happened, for example, in the case of Modern English **flower** and **flour** which originally were one word (ME. **flour**, eg. OFr. **flour**, **flor**, L. **flos** –**florem**) meaning ‘the flower’ and ‘the finest’ part of wheat’. The difference in spelling underlines the fact that from the synchronic point of view they are two distinct words even though historically they have a common origin.

Convergent sound development is the most potent factor in the creation of homonyms. The great majority of homonyms arise as a result of converging sound development which leads to the coincidence of two or more words which were phonetically distinct at an earlier date. For example, OE. **ic** and OE. **ease** have

become identical in pronunciation (MnE. **I** [ai] and **eye** [ai]). A number of lexico – grammatical homonyms appeared as a result of convergent sound development of the verb and the noun (e.g. MnE. **love** –(to) **love** and OE. **lufu** -**lufian**). Words borrowed from other languages may through phonetic convergence become homonymous. ON. **ras** and Fr. **race** are homonymous in Modern English (e.g. **rase**(1) [reis] –‘running’ and **race** (2) [reis] –‘a distinct ethnical stock’).

One of the most debatable problems in semasiology is the demarcation line between homonymy and polysemy, i.e. between different meanings of one word and the meanings of two homonymous words.

If homonymy is viewed diachronically then all cases of sound convergence of two or more words may be safely regarded as cases of homonymy, as, e.g. **rase** (1) and **rase** (2) can be traced back to two etymologically different words. The cases of semantic divergence, however, are more doubtful. The transition from polysemy to homonymy is a gradual process, so it is hardly possible to point out the precise stage at which divergent semantic development tears asunder all ties between the meanings and results in the appearance of two separate words. In the case of **flower**, **flour**, e.g., it is mainly the resultant divergence of graphic forms that gives us grounds to assert that the two meanings which originally made up the semantic structure of one word are now apprehended as belonging to two different words.

Besides that words belonging to different classes can have the following features, homophones may be appeared by means of elision of consonants as such **OUR** – **HOUR**, **EAR**- **HEIR** and many others. Several words can be homophones such as **BUY** – **BYE**- **BY** where different parts of speech participate.

Lexical variants, for instance, are examples of free variation in language, in so far as they are not conditioned by contextual environment but are optional with the individual speaker. E. g. northward / norward; whoever / whosoever. The variation can concern morphological or phonological features or it may be limited to spelling. Compare weazen/weazened ‘shrivelled and dried in appearance’, an adjective used about a person’s face and looks; directly which may be pronounced

[di'rektli] or [dai'rektli] and whisky with its spelling variant whiskey. Lexical variants are different from synonyms, because they are characterised by similarity in phonetical or spelling form and identity of both meaning and distribution. The cases of identity of stems, a similarity of form, and meaning combined with a difference in distribution should be classed as synonyms and not as lexical variants. They are discussed in many books dedicated to correct English usage. These are words belonging to the same part of speech, containing identical stems and synonymical affixes, and yet not permitting free variation, not optional. They seem to provoke mistakes even with native speakers. A few examples will suffice to illustrate the point. The adjectives luxurious and luxuriant are synonymous when meaning 'characterised by luxury'. Otherwise, luxuriant is restricted to the expression of abundance (used about hair, leaves, flowers). Luxurious is the adjective expressing human luxury and indulgence (used about tastes, habits, food, mansions). Economic and economical are interchangeable under certain conditions, more often, however, economic is a technical term associated with economics (an economic agreement). The second word, i.e. economical, is an everyday word associated with economy; e. g. economical stove, economical method, be economical of one's money. Synonyms of this type should not be confused with paronyms, i.e. words that are kindred in origin, sound form and meaning and therefore liable to be mixed but in fact different in meaning and usage and therefore only mistakenly interchanged.

Another example for lexical phonetics which can be used in the text interpretation is a paronym. The term paronym comes from the Greek para 'beside' and onoma 'name', it enters the lexicological terminology very conveniently alongside such terms as synonyms, antonyms, homonyms and allonyms. Different authors suggest various definitions. Some define paronyms as words of the same root, others as words having the same sound form, thus equalising them with word-families or homonyms. Any definition, however, is valuable only insofar as it serves to reflect the particular conception or theory of the subject one studies and proves useful for the practical aims of its study. Ingenuous means 'frank', 'artless',

as an ingenuous smile. The likeness may be accidental as in the verbs *affect* and *effect*. The first means ‘influence’, the second — ‘to produce’. These come from different Latin verbs. The similarity may be also due to a common source. It is etymologically justified in alternate ‘succeeding each other’ and alternative ‘providing a choice’, or consequent ‘resulting’ and consequential ‘important’, or continuance ‘an uninterrupted succession’ and continuation which has two distinct meanings ‘beginning again’ and ‘sequel’ as the continuation of a novel.

Paronyms can be categorized in several ways. We could speak about two different types of paronyms: those that look like they’re related and those that don’t. Coming from the same root doesn’t mean that words came into English at the same time or in the same way. So, while paronyms *beauty* and *beauteous* share the first 5 letters, paronyms *dubious* and *doubtful* look far less alike, though they both have the letters *d*, *u*, and *b* in the first syllable.

Another way to categorize paronyms is by whether or not they sound alike. Paronyms may be differentiated by having different prefixes or suffixes and added word syllables can change stress and other elements of pronunciation. Paronyms *beaut* and *beautiful* sound identical for the first syllable. Paronyms *legal* and *legislate* sound quite different, with the pronunciation of both *e* and *g* changing when the suffix is applied, even though the spelling of the first three letters is identical.

A third way to categorize paronyms is the ones that are words in the same language and the ones include words in more than one language. English, with words from so many languages, also has paronyms with many, many different languages, although Spanish, French, and German are three that often are referred to.

Paronyms across languages can also be of two types: those that are identical in orthography, and those that are different (even those that are homographs, may sound different).

In the category of identical paronyms, English and Spanish, for example, both have the adjectives *brutal* and *natural* and the nouns *actor*, *animal*, and

hospital. English and French, for example, both have the adjectives *possible* and *impossible* and the nouns *restaurant* and *cousin*. English and German, for example, both have the adjectives *elegant*, *modern*, and *wild*.

When identifying paronyms, is important to be aware of words that look like they would have identical meanings in two language, but actually do not (although they may, in fact, share a common root. The existence of these is a good reason to check a dictionary rather than jumping to conclusions based on similar orthography. An example of false cognates are the English word *library* and the French word *librairie*, which means not “library” but “bookstore.” Although these words are of the type referred to as “false cognates,” they are, nevertheless, paronyms.

Besides that many paronyms such as *accept-except*, *effect-affect* can be given as examples for this case which frequently found in text interpretation.

III. Conclusion

As we have already above mentioned, language as “the most important means of human intercourse” exists in the material form of speech sounds which cannot exist without being spoken such oral speech as the primary process of communication by means of language where written speech is secondary that represents what exists in oral speech. Phonetics as a science is a branch of linguistics. It is concerned with the study of the sound system of a language. Phonetics has a long history. It was known to the ancient Greeks and Hindus. But up to the 19th century it was considered to be a part of grammar. As an independent linguistic science it began to develop in Russia and Western Europe in the 2nd half of the 19th century.

As an independent linguistic science phonetics has close connections with other disciplines linguistic branches as such grammar, lexicology and stylistics. It

is connected with non- linguistic sciences such as biology, physiology, physics, and sociology and many others.

As has been mentioned above, lexical phonetics is a result of connection of phonetics with lexicology. This type of phonetics can have several linguistic phenomena such as sound interchange, stress interchange, homonymy and paronyms which can frequently be found and have enough importance in text interpretation. Words identical in sound -form but different in meaning are traditionally termed homonyms. Modern English is exceptionally rich in homonymous words and word –forms. It is held that languages where short words abound have more homonyms than those where longer words are prevalent. Therefore it is sometimes suggested that abundance of homonyms in Modern English is to be accounted for by the monosyllabic structure of commonly used English words.

Another example for lexical phonetics which can be used in the text interpretation is a paronym. The term paronym comes from the Greek para ‘beside’ and onoma ‘name’, it enters the lexicological terminology very conveniently alongside such terms as synonyms, antonyms, homonyms and allonyms. Paronyms such as *accept-except*, *effect-affect* can be frequently found in text interpretation.

Summarizing all above stated, now we can come to conclusion that phonetics being one of the main branches of general linguistics plays an immense role among linguistic sciences.

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