

# Key Concepts of Phonetics & Linguistics

(Preparation for M.A Exam of Linguistics & English Teaching)

Based on: The study of Language (George Yule) & Linguistics and Language (Julia S. Falk)

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### Key Concepts in Phonetics & Linguistics

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حق چاپ برای ناشر و مولف محفوظ می باشد

In The Name of God  
The most compassionate – The most merciful

Introduction:

The main objective of this book has been to provide the university students of English or MA candidates of TEFL and LINGUISTICS with an authentic, comprehensive and reliable source of information. The book is based on the two most fundamental linguistics books *The Study of Language* by George Yule and *Linguistics and Language* by Julia Falk, with the intention to help the candidates to enhance their knowledge of linguistics in general. Attempts have been made to render each chapter as concise and informative. Hence, the students can grasp the gist of each chapter as easily as possible. Having studied the summary of each chapter, the students are immediately provided with some helpful multiple-choice questions which are classified according to the subject matter or the topics of each chapter.

It is recommended that the readers first study the chapter, then attempt the tests given. They can simultaneously check their answers with the answer key given at the end of the book. It should be said that this book has been taught several times as the main course book in our classes before publication. Therefore, it has been re-edited and revised repetitively and it has been attempted to remove any likely errors and misspellings.

The book is comprised of two main chapters in addition to the topics available in the main sources: Phonetics and Phonology and the Schools of Linguistics.

In the chapter related to Phonetics and Phonology, the authors have devotedly tried to acquaint the students with the phonetic and phonological concepts and the phonological rules. In the next voluminous chapter, the Schools of Linguistics, the writers have managed to present a concise overview of each main period in the history of linguistics. In this chapter, the readers will become acquainted with the most well-known philosophers and linguists who have contributed strenuously to the field and science of linguistics.

All comments are most welcome.

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To : Our Dearest Teacher **Dr. Mohammad Dabir Moghaddam**

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## Chapter One

### The Origins of Language

We don't know for sure how language originated. We only know that some type of spoken language developed about 100000 years ago, well before written language about 5000 years ago. However, there are some speculations about the origins of language. They are as follows:

**The Divine Source:** "God created Adam and whatsoever Adam called every living creature that was the name thereof".

= God has created us and has provided us with the gift of speaking.

**The Natural Sound Source:** primitive words could have been imitation of natural sounds which early men heard around them, e.g. BOOM, CUCKOO, CAW-CAW.

These are also called [Onomatopoeia = Imitation of natural sounds in the nature]

This theory is also called BOW – VOW theory.

{The sounds from cries of pain, anger and joy and interjections like Ooh, Wow, ... also belong to this theory of natural sound source}.

**Yo – He- Ho Theory:** the sounds of a person involved in physical effort could be the source of our language OR A group of early humans might develop a set of grunts, groans and curses that were used when they were lifting and carrying large bits of trees or woods.

**Physiological Adaptation:** Human beings can talk because they have unique features of speech. Some of these features are human's shape of teeth, lips, larynx, lateralized brain, etc. {Throughout the history human beings gradually developed and gained the physical adaptation for uttering sounds.}

Human teeth are upright not slanting outwards like those of apes and are even in height.  
Human lips are flexible and are helpful in producing the sounds of /p/, /b/, /m/.

Human tongues are also flexible in producing many different sounds.

Human beings have larynx containing vocal cords and also have pharynx acting like a resonator for increased range and clarity of the sounds produced via the larynx.

**Brain Lateralization:** The human brain is lateralized meaning it has different functions in each of the two hemispheres.

Those functions that control motor movements involved in things like speaking and making tools are largely attributed to the LEFT hemisphere.

**The Genetic Source:** We are born with a biological (innate) gift or capacity to produce sounds and master a language.

It is also called *Innateness Hypothesis*.