**Chapter Seven**

**Phonemes and Symbols**

**Phonemes:** the smallest abstract segments (units)of our speech. We can change the meaning of an utterance by substituting one phoneme for another. E.g. substituting /l/ in 'led' for /r/ would result in the new word 'red' which has a different meaning.

**Allophones:** Different realisations of phonemes .e.g. dark and light are two allophones of /l/. aspirated and unaspirated are two allophones of /t/.

**Phonemic Transcription:**  the transcription where every speech sound is represented by one of the phonemes and written with the appropriate symbol.

e.g. map / mᴂp/ , keep / ki:p/ , true / tru:/

**Phonemic system of a language:** the complete set of phonemes in a language. It uses slashes / /

**Phonetic Transcription:**  a phonetic transcription contains a lot more information than phonemic, information like aspiration, devoicing, shortened vowels..etc. It uses square brackets [ ].

**NOTE**: The phonemic system for the BBC accent contains 44 phonemes. The best-known set of symbols is the **I**nternational **P**honetic **A**ssociation Alphabet(IPA). To use the cardinal vowels and the consonants chart is related to **IPA.** Look below.

**KEY TO ENGLISH PHONEMIC SYMBOLS**

( **CONSONANTS )**

/p/ as in pen

/b/ as in bag

/t/ as in ten

/d/ as in desk

/k/ as in cap

/g/ as in get

/m/ as in map

/n/ as in nose

/ŋ/ as in sing

/l/ as in leg

/f/ as in face

/v/ as in very

/θ/ as in thin

/ð/ as in these

/s/ as in six

/z/ as in zero

/∫/ as in shoe

/ʒ/ as in pleasure

/r / as in right

/h/ as in hat

/ʧ/ as in church

/ʤ/ as in jump

/w/ as in we

/j/ as in yes

**KEY TO ENGLISH PHONEMIC SYMBOLS**

( **Vowels )**

**Pure vowels are divided into:**

**1-Long Vowels**

 /uː/ as in moon

/ɔː/ as in ball

/ɜː/ as in word

/iː/ as in green

/ɑː/ as in glass

2-**Short Vowels**

/ **I** / as in sit

/e/ as in desk

/æ/ as in man

/ɒ/ as in hot

/ʊ/ as in book

/**^**/ as in son

/ə/ as in after

**DIPHTHONGS**

/e**I**/ as in day

/əʊ/ as in nose

/a**I/** as in five

**/**aʊ/ as in how

/ɔ**I**/ as in boy

/**I**ə/ as in here

/eə/ as in chair

/ʊə/ as in sure