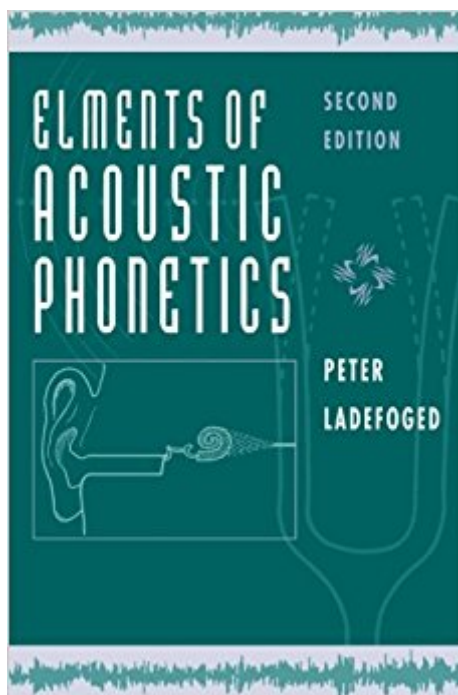


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Elements Of Acoustic Phonetics



Synopsis

This revised and expanded edition of a classic textbook provides a concise introduction to basic concepts of acoustics and digital speech processing that are important to linguists, phoneticians, and speech scientists. The second edition includes four new chapters that cover new experimental techniques in acoustic phonetics made possible by the use of computers. Assuming no background in physics or mathematics, Ladefoged explains concepts that must be understood in using modern laboratory techniques for acoustic analysis, including resonances of the vocal tract and the relation of formants to different cavities; digital speech processing and computer storage of sound waves; and Fourier analysis and Linear Predictive Coding, the equations used most frequently in the analysis of speech sounds. Incorporating recent developments in our knowledge of the nature of speech, Ladefoged also updates the original edition's discussion of the basic properties of sound waves; variations in loudness, pitch, and quality of speech sounds; wave analysis; and the hearing and production of speech. Like its predecessor, this edition of *Elements of Acoustic Phonetics* will serve as an invaluable textbook and reference for students and practitioners of linguistics and speech science, and for anyone who wants to understand the physics of speech.

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Customer Reviews

This book is a major achievement from the pedagogical point of view. For instance, Discrete Fourier Transform basic principles are clearly explained in chapter 10 using intuitive arguments (correlation and orthogonality). The same happens with other tough subjects for those studying acoustic

phonetics, like LPC (chapter 11). And some explanations come with simple algorithms, intended to illustrate what is being discussed. But, on the other side, the book has some (minor) flaws: in chapter 2, p. 18, the author gives the simple pendulum as an example of a system where frequency of oscillation is independent of the initial conditions (in this case, the initial displacement angle). This is wrong. It is approximately correct just for small angles. For angles close to 90 degrees, the error comes close to 18%; chapter 6 does one of the most common (and, therefore, one that should not be present in a book for beginners) mistakes in acoustics: taking sound power instead of sound pressure when talking about loudness; there is an excessive number of typos in chapter 11. But apart from that (which makes me give it 4 instead of 5 stars) it is an excellent start for students or professionals (my case), either from linguistics, engineering (my case) or medical sciences, in need for an introduction to this fascinating subject.

Ladefoged's book is, simply stated, great. Complex ideas and principles are broken down into digestible chunks, yet not too simple for those already familiar with phonetics or speech science. The many examples are drawn primarily from English, but the underlying concepts are applicable to all languages. An excellent resource for anyone interested in acoustic phonetics.

Well written, easy to understand. It's a great complement to Introduction to Phonetics, if I have the name right. He was a great author. It's sad that he died, though.

Ladefoged is one of the great phoneticians of the 20th century. This is a great introduction to acoustic phonetics. It covers a broad spectrum of acoustic phonetic principles and sub-disciplines and gives enough information that the beginner can understand them. Some chapters take a bit more time, i.e. Fourier analysis and linear predictive coefficients, but on the whole it is quite readable. The coding samples in the end are a bit outdated, but the principles are clear.

Major improvements are using the source-filter in place of spring resonance model and fine tutorials on digital speech processing. An excellent first text for the student phonetician. For more advanced students use my 1999 text. J.M. Pickett.

This book is great although very basic. It is very understandable to someone who knows little about speech acoustics but a little about musical acoustics. It is easy to read and understand

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