This popular introduction to phonetics describes how languages use a variety of
different sounds, many of them quite unlike any that occur in well-known languages.
Peter Ladefoged rightly earned his reputation as one of the world’s leading linguists,
and students benefitted from his accessible writing and skill in communicating ideas.
The third edition of his engaging introduction to phonetics has now been fully updated
to reflect the latest trends in the field. It retains Peter Ladefoged’s expert writing and knowledge, and combines them with Sandra Ferrari Disner’s essential updates on
topics including speech technology.

Vowels and Consonants explores a wide range of topics, including the main forces
operating on the sounds of languages; the acoustic, articulatory, and perceptual
components of speech; and the inner workings of the most modern text-to-speech
systems and speech recognition systems in use today. The third edition is supported
by an accompanying website featuring new data, and even more reproductions of the
sounds of a wide variety of languages, to reinforce learning and bring the descriptions
to life, at www.wiley.com/go/ladefoged.

Peter Ladefoged (1925-2006) was Research Phonetician and Professor of Phonetics Emeritus at the University of California, Los Angeles, and was Director of the UCLA Phonetics Laboratory from 1962 to 1991 and was president of the Linguistic Society of America. He is the author of numerous books, including The Sounds of the World’s Languages (with I. Maddieson, Wiley-Blackwell, 1996), Phonetic Data Analysis (Wiley-Blackwell, 2004), and A Course in Phonetics, Sixth Edition (with Keith Johnson, 2010).

Sandra Ferrari Disner teaches general and forensic linguistics at the University of Southern California. She has over 25 years of experience in speech technology, having developed commercial text-to-speech and speech-recognition systems in five
languages, as well as the world’s first talking video games.

Praise for the previous edition:
“This is a fascinating, accessible, and reader-friendly book by a master phonetician, about
how speech sounds are made, and how they can be analyzed. I warmly recommend the
book to everyone with an interest, professional or otherwise, in spoken language.”
John Laver, Queen Margaret University College

Praise for the third edition:
“This book conveys an amazing range of current science, including phonetics, psycholinguistics, and speech technology, while being engaging and accessible for novices. This edition maintains Ladefoged’s friendly, enthusiastic style while adding important updates.”
Natasha Warner, University of Arizona
Vowels and Consonants
This book is for Jenny Ladefoged, although a major portion of it already belongs to her. Many of the sentences are hers, and she compiled almost all the sound files.

It also honors the memory of Eliot Disner.
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The following recordings, color figures, and videos are on the Vowels and Consonants website, www.wiley.com/go/ladefoged. Headphone prompts in the margin indicate where sound files are available to support the text. A list of the materials and their descriptions is provided below. You will find SciconWeb, a new browser, available on the website. This will not only play each recording when you open it, leaving the text visible during the audio portion, but also bring up a menu that allows you to make spectrograms and a pitch track of the sound that has been played, as well as other helpful options.

Users are reminded that all this material is copyright. Instructions whereby institutions can obtain similar material are available at:

www.linguistics.ucla.edu/faciliti/sales/software.htm.

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Recording 8.5a A single synthesized phrase
Recording 8.6 High-quality speech synthesis: Cereproc “William”
Recording 8.7 High-quality speech synthesis: Cereproc “Heather”

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| Recording 10.8 | A recording of *They thought it was Jane who could be brave and in the team* with s superimposed on it |
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Video of nasalized vowels

Recording 16.1  She sells seashells on the seashore and the seashells that she sells are seashells I’m sure
Recording 16.2  Oro Win labial trills
This book is about the sounds of languages. There are thousands of distinct languages in the world, many of them with sounds that are wildly different from any that you will hear in an English sentence. People trill their lips and click their tongues when talking, sometimes in ways that are surprising to those of us who speak English. Of course, some of the things that we do, such as hearing a difference between *fin* and *thin*, or producing the vowel that most Americans have in *bird*, are fairly amazing to speakers of other languages, as we will see.

There are about 200 different vowels in the world’s languages and more than 600 different consonants. There is no way that I can discuss all these sounds in an introductory book. I’ve just tried to give you some idea of what happens when people talk, explaining most of the well-known sounds, and giving you a glimpse of some of the more obscure sounds. If you want a fuller, more systematic, account of phonetics, there are many textbooks available, including one of my own.

Many of the sounds discussed are reproduced on the *Vowels and Consonants* website, www.wiley.com/go/ladefoged. If possible, you should listen to the sounds while you read. I hope you will be entertained by what you hear and read here, and will look at the suggestions for further reading at the end of the book. I’ve been thrilled by a lifetime chasing ideas in phonetics. Who knows, perhaps you, too, will go on to become a phonetician. Enjoy.

P.L.