The Phonetics of English Pronunciation
Session 05

Ingmar Steiner[1]
Institute of Phonetics
Saarland University

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[1]using material by William Barry

There were two tasks for homework!

- Identification and description of pronunciation problems
- Articulogram of *absent-minded*
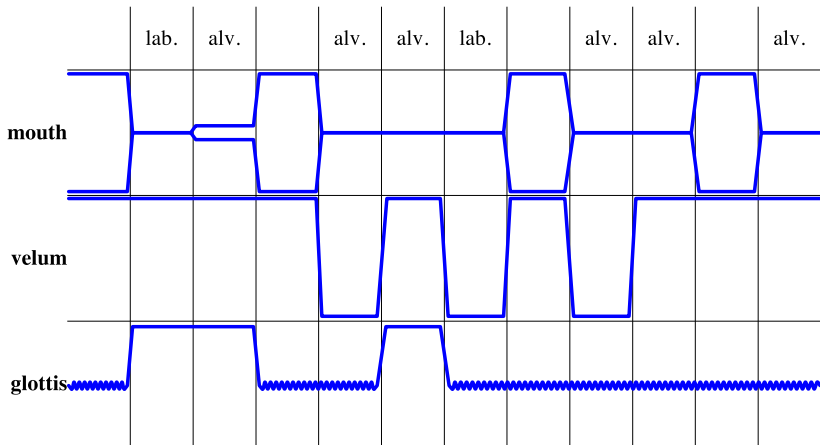
What problems did you identify?

One of the secretaries had whispered rather loudly to her friend that there were plans being hatched to close the local primary school and bus the children to the neighbouring village. The doors and windows would then be bricked up to discourage vandals, pending a decision on the future use of the building.

- ⟨th⟩ related
- FVC related
- /l/ related
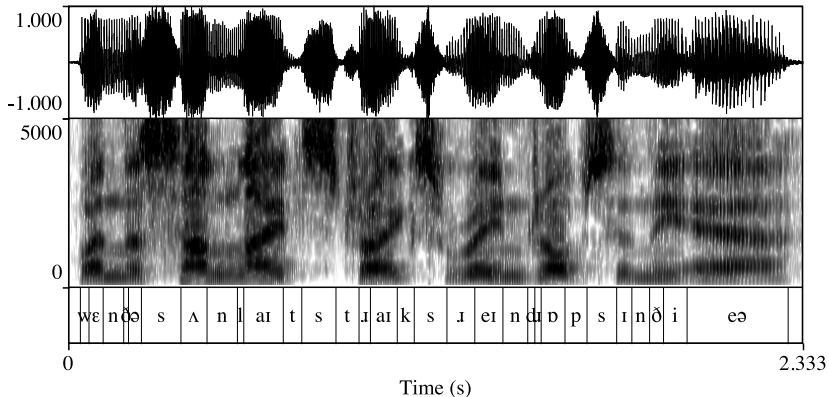- "R" related
- ⟨w⟩ related

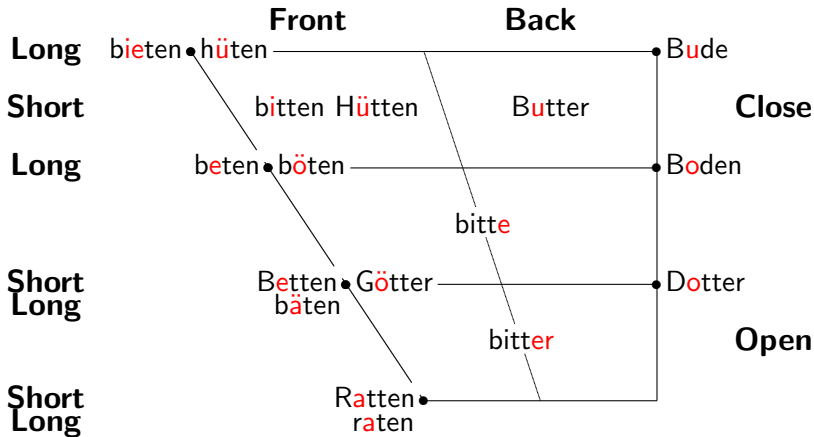# Your second task

Articulogram of *absent-minded*

G_rm_ns' pr_bl_ms w_th _ngl_sh v_w_ls

- In written language, the consonant letters carry more information than the vowel letters.

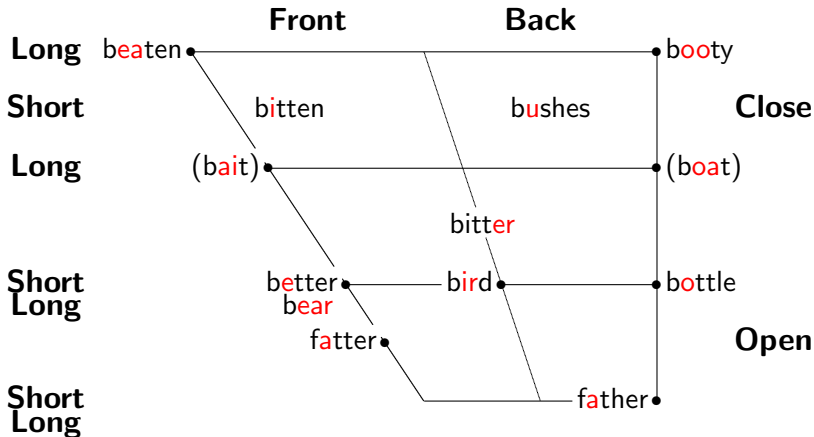- In spoken language, vowels carry much more information than the consonants.

Time (s)

Which vowels are problematical?

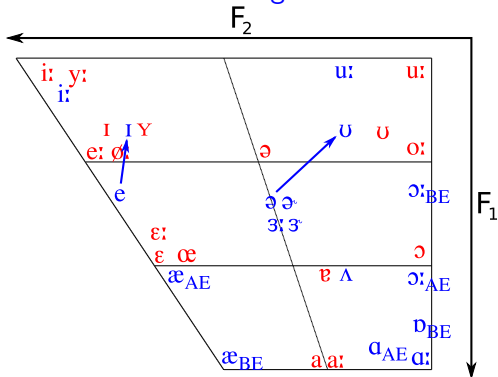We identified the German pure vowels (monophthongs) in our second lecture:

Which vowels are problematical? (cont'd)

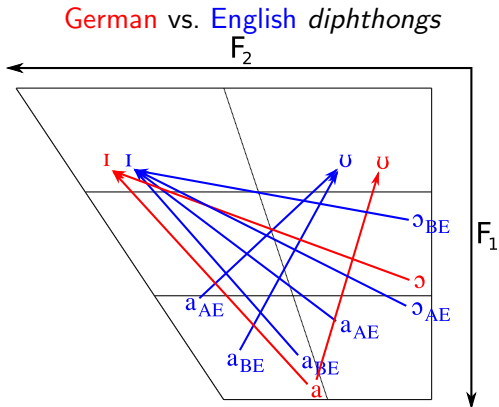We can fit *some* of the English "pure" vowels into the same framework:

Vowel quality and symbols

Universal Vowel Framework (Cardinal Vowels)
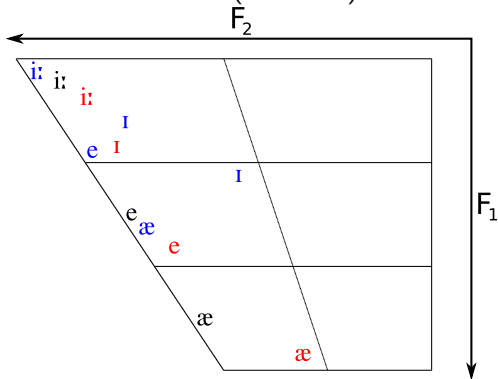
Vowel quality and symbols (cont'd)

Vowel quality and symbols (cont'd)

German vs. English *diphthongs*

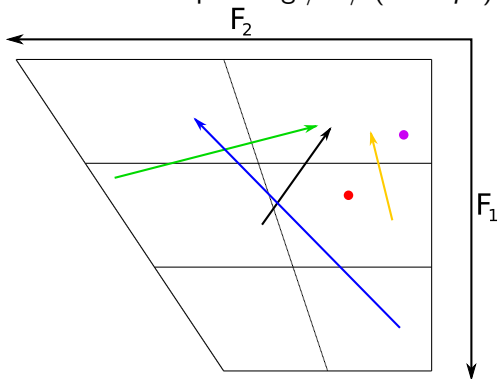# Vowel quality variants

Southern BE vs. New Zealand & South Africa vs. Northern BE
vowels (selection)

Vowel quality variants (cont'd)

Southern BE & Southern AE vs. Mid-West AE vs.
Conservative RP vs. New Zealand & Australia vs. Scottish vs.
Northern BE diphthong /əʊ/ (*no hope*)

Summary & Conclusions

- Vowels are very prominent signals of the sort of accent you speak
- The symbols used to represent vowels are only a rough indication of the vowel quality to produce.
- Nearly all English vowels (whether American or British) are phonetically different from German vowels.
- You need to understand what the differences are, hear them, and automate their production!

Homework

Read Chap. V and hand in the exercise sheet.

There will be no lecture next Monday (08/12)!