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to be in complementary distribution. Consider the words 'Peak' and 'speak'. The sounds represented by the letters /p/ in both the words are different. In peak it is aspirated and realized as /pʰ/, and in speak, it is unaspirated and realized as /p/. The phonetic environment of these sounds is different and the replacement of one by the other does not change the meaning of the words. That is to say, if /pʰ/ of peak is changed into /p/, its meaning will not change. Likewise, if /p/ unaspirated sound of 'speak' is changed into aspirated /pʰ/, the meaning of the word speak will remain the same. It means that these two sounds are in complementary distribution, and so they are not the separate phonemes. They are all allophones of English language. Thus, the Principle of complementary distribution establishes that two sounds will be allophones only when—

(a) they occur in different phonetic environment, and

(b) their replacement by each other does not change the meaning of the words.

—x——x—

Date: V. S. J. C. Kajmegar

The Principle of Contrastive Distribution

When two sounds of a language are found in the same phonetic environment and replacement of one by the other changes the meaning of the words, then these two sounds are two separate phonemes of that language. Consider the two words pat and mat, which are the minimal pairs. The phonetic environment for the sounds /p/ and /m/ are the same here as they are not preceded by any sound and followed by the same ~~sound~~ vowel /æ/. The replacement of the one by the other changes the meaning of the words. It means that these two sounds are in contrastive distribution and hence they are two distinct phonemes of English language, as these words are of English language. To make it clear further, this principle of contrastive distribution establishes that two sounds will be separate phonemes only when –

(a) they occur in the same phonetic environment and

(b) their replacement by each other alters the meaning of the words.

The Principle of Complementary Distribution

When two sounds used in a language don't occur in the same phonetic environment and the replacement of one by the other does not change the meaning of a word, these two sounds are considered