ABSTRACT

This thesis is concerned with training in the discipline known as practical phonetics and with the nature of phonetic judgements made by students during the course of the training process. By practical phonetics training in this context is meant ear-training in the context of a course of study of general phonetics (termed *pure* practical phonetics); the thesis is not concerned with pronunciation training (termed *applied* practical phonetics).

The thesis is divided into two parts. Part I relies entirely on extant literature and researches first the historical background to practical phonetics, exploring especially the development of this subject from the 1890s to the present day. The narrative goes on to catalogue and describe the techniques commonly employed in the classroom, establishing the Jonesian model of training as a yardstick and seeking influences, parallels and differences of approach evident in the development of the subject.

Part I concludes with a case-study in the form of a critical review which acknowledges the intrinsic relationship between the *pure* and *applied* form of the discipline in the pronunciation teaching forum. Selected publications are eventually measured against the Jonesian yardstick.

Part II undertakes the analysis of data collected in the practical phonetics classroom describing in detail student output both during and at the end of the training course and focusing especially on errors of judgement in relation to a number of specified hypotheses. Analysis of responses to a selection of vowel and consonant stimuli is presented together with some statistical evaluation of the significance of the findings.

Considerable support is found for a number of the initial hypotheses and some of the implications of these findings are considered in the concluding chapter.