

Minimalist pairs, phonemes, syllables,
Minimalist pairs:

A Minimalist pair is two words which differ only in one sound, different between the two words. For example, the words tip and tip are the minimal pair as they differ only in one sound /t/ and /l/ only. This concept of minimal pairs is useful in understanding many other phonological concepts.

Phonotactics:

It deals with that aspect of phonology which looks about the permissible combinations of a syllable in a language. For example, in English, a consonant-vowel-consonant combination is very common as we have words like - big, sit, cat, etc. which conform to this pattern. On the constitution of syllable and consequently a word, only a certain set of phonemes is used. To clarify it further, a combination of five or more consonants in continuation is not permissible in English. The consonantal clusters like 'mks' 'lkt' 'qmps', etc do not occur in English, whereas the consonantal clusters like 'str' (strange), 'lth' (twelfth), 'tr' (train) etc. are found. Such a phonological phenomenon is language specific as we can find unacceptable consonantal clusters of English, acceptable in any other language. Thus, Phonotactics takes into account the phonological constraints that limit the permissible combination of phonemes in syllables of a language.