
Week 6: Vowels & Suprasegmentals

Practice Problems

Note that this week also includes transcription practice, which involves consonants (from last week)!

(1) Write the phonetic symbol representing each of the following sounds (remember to use square brackets). The last one is given as an example:

- (a) high front tense unrounded vowel
- (b) mid back lax rounded vowel
- (c) mid front lax unrounded vowel
- (d) low back lax unrounded vowel
- (e) high back lax rounded vowel - [ʊ]

(2) Write the four-part articulatory descriptions for the vowel sounds represented by the following symbols. The last one is given as an example.

- (a) [ɪ]
- (b) [ʌ]
- (c) [ɛ]
- (d) [u]
- (e) [æ]
- (f) [ʊ]
- (g) [ə] - **mid central unrounded lax**

(3) Give the IPA symbol for the vowel that occurs in each word.

- (a) sues
- (b) sis
- (c) sees
- (d) suss
- (e) sews

(4) What is the difference between a consonant and a vowel?

(5) Circle all of the symbols below that represent voiced sounds:

[s] [d] [g] [ð] [tʃ] [b] [t] [ʔ] [ɹ] [θ] [p]

(6) Give the conventional spelling for the following phonetically transcribed words (not that some may have more than one possible spelling). The first one is given as an example.

- (a) [sloʊp]
 - (b) [sʌni]
 - (c) [seɪl]
 - (d) [wɒɹm]
 - (e) [ɹut]
 - (f) [liʒɹ]
 - (g) [sɹtʃt]
 - (h) [kɹud]
 - (i) [ɹɪdʒ]
 - (j) [ɹɪtʃ]
 - (k) [peɪn]
 - (l) [wɛnzdeɪ]
 - (m) [kʌnfəs]
 - (n) [θʌʊznd]
 - (o) [fʌdʒ]
-

(7) Transcribe the following words. The last one is given as an example.

- (a) touch
- (b) woman
- (c) women
- (d) flood
- (e) wrapped
- (f) prays
- (g) brood
- (h) ghoul
- (i) torch
- (j) stood
- (k) move
- (l) breathe
- (m) breath
- (n) lose
- (o) loose

(8) Correct the mistakes in the following phonetic transcriptions of English words, if there is a mistake.

- (a) [ʃut] shut
- (b) [swit] swift
- (c) [fɒlʊ] follow
- (d) [tɹəd] trod
- (e) [lɛft] left
- (f) [tʰɪld] child

(9) Read the phonetically transcribed sentences below and write them out in ordinary spelling. These transcriptions represent the pronunciation of a particular speaker on a particular occasion and thus may differ from your own pronunciation in certain minor details, but this should not cause you any difficulty. These passages are from Woody Allen's book *Without Feathers*.

- (a) [ɪf ju ə sɪkstin ə ʌnd tɹəd nɒt tə goʊ bɒld]
- (b) [mʌni ɪz nɒt ɛvɹiθɪŋ bʌt ɪt ɪz bɛɹɹ ðæn hæviŋ wʌnz hɛlθ]
- (c) [ðə səfəɹɹ wʌz ə ɪdʒənəli oʊnd bɒt ə sʌltɪn hu dɑɪd ʌnd mɪstɹɹɪes sɪkəmstənsəz wɛn ə hænd ɪtʰ tʊt əv ə boʊl əv sup hi wʌz ɪtɪŋ n stɹæŋɡld hɪm]

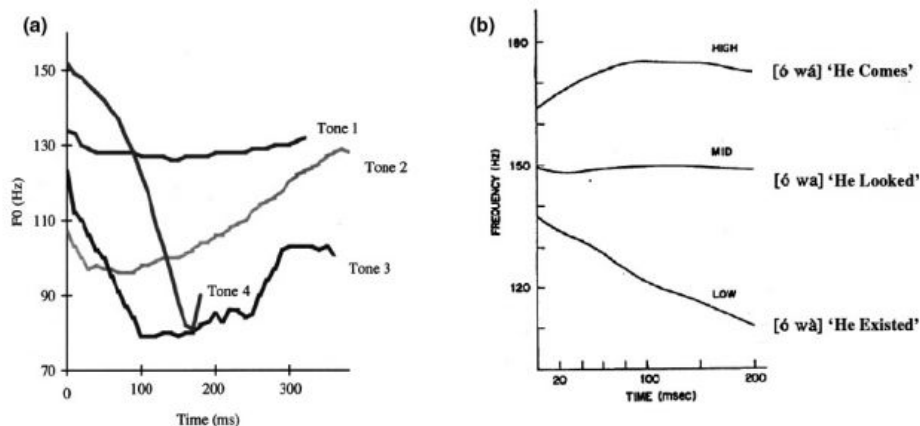
(10) Read the following pairs of sentences aloud. Words in capital letters indicate the presence of a pitch accent and should be said with special prominence. Both sentences in each pair contain exactly the same words, but they differ in intonation and have different meanings. Paraphrase what the two sentences in each pair mean.

- (a) John called Paul a Republican and then he **INSULTED** him.
John called Paul a Republican and then **HE** insulted **HIM**.
- (b) John even gave his daughter a new **BICYCLE**.
John even gave his **DAUGHTER** a new bicycle.

(11) Turn each of the strings of words below into two sentences with different meanings by adding punctuation or other visual markers of phrase tones that can serve to differentiate the two meanings. Then paraphrase the different meanings.

- (a) when danger threatens your children call the police
- (b) I met Mary and Elena's mother at the mall yesterday

(12) Figure (a) shown Mandarin and figure (b) shows Yoruba. Which of these tone languages would be described as level and which as contour? How do you know?



(13) In Cantonese, tone number 21 is described as “low falling”. How would tone number 22 be described? What about tone number 25?

You will be provided with the following charts on the exam.

THE INTERNATIONAL PHONETIC ALPHABET (revised to 2018)

CONSONANTS (PULMONIC)

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	Bilabial	Labiodental	Dental	Alveolar	Postalveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar	Uvular	Pharyngeal	Glottal
Plosive	p b			t d		ʈ ɖ	c ɟ	k ɡ	q ɢ		ʔ
Nasal	m	ɱ		n		ɳ	ɲ	ŋ	ɴ		
Trill	ʙ			r					ʀ		
Tap or Flap		ⱱ		ɾ		ɽ					
Fricative	ɸ β	f v	θ ð	s z	ʃ ʒ	ʂ ʐ	ç ʝ	x ɣ	χ ʁ	ħ ʕ	h ɦ
Lateral fricative				ɬ ɮ							
Approximant		ʋ		ɹ		ɻ	j	ɰ			
Lateral approximant				l		ɭ	ʎ	ʟ			

Symbols to the right in a cell are voiced, to the left are voiceless. Shaded areas denote articulations judged impossible.

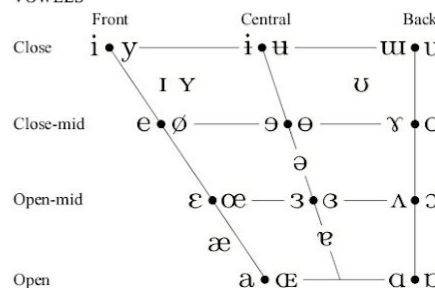
CONSONANTS (NON-PULMONIC)

Clicks	Voiced implosives	Ejectives
◌ Bilabial	ɓ Bilabial	ʼ Examples:
Dental	ɗ Dental/alveolar	pʼ Bilabial
! (Post)alveolar	ɟ Palatal	tʼ Dental/alveolar
‡ Palatoalveolar	ɡ Velar	kʼ Velar
Alveolar lateral	ɠ Uvular	sʼ Alveolar fricative

OTHER SYMBOLS

ɱ Voiceless labial-velar fricative	ɕ ʑ Alveolo-palatal fricatives
ɰ Voiced labial-velar approximant	ɻ Voiced alveolar lateral flap
ɰ Voiced labial-palatal approximant	ɺ Simultaneous ʃ and x
ħ Voiceless epiglottal fricative	
ʕ Voiced epiglottal fricative	Affricates and double articulations can be represented by two symbols joined by a tie bar if necessary.
ʕ Epiglottal plosive	

VOWELS



Where symbols appear in pairs, the one to the right represents a rounded vowel.

SUPRASEGMENTALS

ˈ Primary stress	ˌ Secondary stress
ː Long	ˑ Half-Long
˚ Extra-short	˘ Minor (foot) group
˙ Major (intonation) group	˙ Syllable break
˗ Linking (absence of a break)	

TONES AND WORD ACCENTS

LEVEL	CONTOUR
˥ Extra high	˥ or ˨ Rising
˨ High	˨ or ˥ Falling
˨ Mid	˨ or ˥ High rising
˨ Low	˨ or ˥ Low rising
˨ Extra low	˨ or ˥ Rising-falling
˩ Downstep	˩ or ˨ Global rise
˩ Upstep	˩ or ˨ Global fall

DIACRITICS Some diacritics may be placed above a symbol with a descender, e.g. ɲ̥̄

◌ Voiceless	◌ Breathy voiced	◌ Dental
◌ Voiced	◌ Creaky voiced	◌ Apical
◌ Aspirated	◌ Linguolabial	◌ Laminar
◌ More rounded	◌ Labialized	◌ Nasalized
◌ Less rounded	◌ Palatalized	◌ Nasal release
◌ Advanced	◌ Velarized	◌ Lateral release
◌ Retracted	◌ Pharyngealized	◌ No audible release
◌ Centralized	◌ Velarized or pharyngealized	
◌ Mid-centralized	◌ Raised	
◌ Syllabic	◌ Lowered	
◌ Non-syllabic	◌ Advanced Tongue Root	
◌ Rhoticity	◌ Retracted Tongue Root	