

The Phonetics of English Pronunciation

Discussion of Practice Test

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Topics

- Final Exam arrangements
- The Practice Exam

Exam Arrangements

- The exam will be in *Musiksaal*
From 9.00 till 10.00 on Monday 14th July.

Please note that we start at 9.00 sharp!
(so you need to be there by about 8.50)

- A meeting to discuss the practice exam and other questions is arranged for **Thursday 10th July, 18.00**
Location: Musiksaal

1. The phonetic description of consonants:

(a) Give the phonetic transcription symbol for the sound indicated by the underlined letter(s) in the following words and b) provide the phonetic description of the sound (N.B. take variants into consideration): e.g. <cat> = [kh]; a voiceless velar aspirated plosive

- | | | |
|-------|----------------------------|--|
| i. | <u>th</u> rough: /θ/ | voiceless (inter)dental fricative |
| ii. | <u>to</u> ugh: /f/ | voiceless labiodental fricative |
| iii. | <u>ri</u> dge: /dʒ/ | voiced post-alveolar (palato-alveolar) affricate |
| iv. | <u>st</u> oye: /v/ | voiced labiodental fricative |
| v. | <u>thr</u> ifty: /r/ ([r]) | (voiced) apical (apico-alveolar) tap or flap |
| vi. | <u>sh</u> elled: [ɫ] | (voiced) velarized (dark) alveolar lateral approximant |
| vii. | <u>lei</u> sure: /ʒ/ | voiced post-alveolar (palato-alveolar) fricative |
| viii. | <u>sp</u> oil: [p] | voiceless bilabial plosive (unaspirated after /s/) |
| ix. | <u>ch</u> ase: /tʃ/ | voiceless post-alveolar (palato-alveolar) affricate |
| x. | <u>ca</u> che: /ʃ/ | voiceless post-alveolar (palato-alveolar) fricative |

2. Consonant Problems:

Name and explain briefly the pronunciation problems for German learners of English in the consonantal sounds indicated in the underlined letters in the following sentence (number the points below and write the answers on the back of this page)

Why do politicians think they can put the world to rights?

1

2/3

4/5

6/7

8

- (1) The labio-velar glide /w/ is a sound that doesn't exist in German; There is also orthographic interference which reinforces the wrong [v] pronunciation.
- (2/3) The final voiced /z/ does not occur in German (no final voiced consonants). Before /θ/, which is a new sound, /z/ is additionally difficult. It has to be articulated with the tongue blade to allow the tongue tip to contact the teeth for /θ/.
- (4/5) /t/ is not a problem normally, but before the new sound - voiced dental fricative /ð/ - it needs to be pronounced dentally [t̪] .
- (6/7) The /l/ sound is velarized ("the dark L" [ɫ]) in the syllable coda. Before a final voiced consonant, here /d/, it also has to be lengthened.
- (8) The post-alveolar (palato-alveolar) approximant [ɹ] is a new sound for speakers of German.

3. The phonetic description of vowels:

(a) Give the phonetic transcription symbol for the sound indicated by the underlined letter(s) in the following words and b) provide the phonetic description of the sound:

- i. shoot: /u:/ long, close, fronted back (slightly diphthongized) rounded vowel
- ii. flood: /ʌ/ short, mid-open fronted back (US: central) unrounded vowel
- iii. good: /ʊ/ short, near-close, centralized back, weakly rounded vowel
- iv. women: /ɪ/ short, near-close, retracted-front unrounded vowel
- v. post: /əʊ/-/oʊ/ diphthong from mid-central unrounded (US: mid-central-back rounded) to mid-close, centralized back rounded.
- vi. trout: /aʊ/ diphthong from retracted front unrounded open to mid-close centralized-back rounded
- vii. cough: /ɒ/ - /ɑ/ short, open back rounded vowel (US: open central unrounded)
- viii. fought: /ɔ:/ (/ɑ:/) long, mid (US: mid-open) back rounded vowel.
(US-alternative: open central unrounded)
- ix. creak: /i:/ long, close, front (slightly diphthongized) unrounded vowel
- x. stack: /æ/ short, near-open front unrounded vowel

4. Vowel Problems:

Specify the pronunciation problems for German learners of English in the vowel sounds indicated in the underlined letters in the following sentence (number the points below and write the answers on the back of this page)

Food processing is ruining people's health. It destroys all the vital trace elements,

1

2

3

4

5

6

And additives produce a chemical imbalance. Countless allergies are the result.

7

8

- (1) German /u:/ is too retracted, too rounded and monophthongal (pure)
- (2) German /i:/ is too extreme (close fronted) and monophthongal (pure)
- (3) German /ɔɪ/ starts from too open a position for Brit. Engl. /ɔɪ/ (no problem for US /ɔɪ/)
- (4) The closest German vowel /ɔ/ is too open for Brit. Engl. /ɔ:/ (no problem for US /ɔ:/)
- (5) German /aɪ/ starts from too fronted a position for Brit. or US Engl. /aɪ/
- (6) There is no diphthongal equivalent to Brit/US English /eɪ/ (German /e:/ interferes.)

Question 4 (continued)

(7) additives: There is no equivalent to the near-open English /æ/.

German /a/ (Städt) is too open and retracted; the mid German /ɛ/ (Stätte) is too close.

(8) countless: German /aʊ/ starts from too retracted a position for Brit. or US Engl. /aʊ/

5. Weak Forms and Linking:

Transcribe the sentences, indicating any reduced forms (weak forms) and linking phenomena. (Mark the stressed words as an indication of the prosodic pattern you assume)

(a) What is the reason for this.

[ˈwɒts_zə ˈriːzən fə ˈðɪs] US [ˈwɒts_zə ˈriːzən fər ˈðɪs]

(b) How can we expect to find the answer?

[ˈhaʊ kən wi ɪ ɪkˈspek_tə ˈfaɪnd_ðɪ ɪ ˈɑːnsə] US [ðɪ ɪ ˈænsər]

(c) There would be no challenge if it were obvious.

[ðəd (ðə wəd) bi ˈnəʊ ˈtʃæləndʒ_ɪf_ɪt wə ɪ ˈɒbvɪəs] US [wər_ɪ ˈɒbvɪəs]

(d) Put the others' feelings on a par with your own.

[ˈpʊt_ðɪ ɪ ˈʌðəz ˈfiːlɪŋz_ɒn_ə ˈpɑː wɪð jə ɪ ˈəʊn] US [ˈʌðəz ... ɒn_ə pɑːr... jər_ɪ ˈəʊn]

(e) It would need to be accepted by all.

[ɪt wəd ˈniːd tə bi ɪ əkˈseptɪd baɪ ɪ ˈɔːl] US alternative [baɪ ɪ ˈɔːl]

5. Stress patterns:

Mark the syllables with primary (') and secondary (,) stresses in the underlined sections of the following sentences.

- a) Mary 'walked ,down the Mall to ,Buckingham 'Palace, ,walked 'up to the guards and posed for a 'snap ,shot.
- b) Her 'father-in- ,law was a real 'skin ,flint. He never payed for his share of the costs at any of the ,family cele'brations.
- c) In the 'High ,Street, a number of de'partment ,stores had ,closed 'down. They had ,given 'up because of the competition from out-of-town 'hyper ,markets.
- d) Rain 'drove ,in her face and smeared her 'make- ,up. It 'ran ,down her face in black streaks.
- e) On ,Lake 'Constance the 'guest ,houses have been enjoying an 'up ,turn in the number of tourists. They hope that the trend is ,long 'term.