

International Phonetic Alphabet

Ling101 2/19/21



Orthography is misleading

Some examples in English:

- Rough, row, route
- Bough, bot, boot
- Bought, caught, lot

Which sound the same?



Orthography is misleading

Some examples in English:

- Rough, row, route, wrought, ow
- about, bot, boot, buff
- Bought, caught, lot, tough, toe

Not only does spelling lead us astray, but it also doesn't tell us how to pronounce things!!



Orthography is misleading

Ok, so, we should spell the same way we speak? Right?

How would you spell:

- Route vs. boot



Orthography is misleading

Ok, so, we should spell the same way we speak? Right?

How would you spell:

- Route vs. boot

What about:

- Route vs. about



Orthography is misleading

Ok, so, we should spell the same way we speak? Right?

How would you spell:

- Route vs. boot

But! We know that “route” and “route” are the same word, no matter how someone pronounces it!

What about:

- Route vs. about



What have we learned?

- Orthography is not enough to **describe** the sounds of the English language!
- To describe the sounds of the English language, we need a different system that will bridge the gap
- But...what about other languages?



International Phonetic Alphabet

- A system of symbols for which:
 - Each symbol is assigned to a single sound
 - That symbol represents that sound in any language
 - Not all symbols (sounds) are in all languages, so languages can have a subset of these sounds and symbols



Back to our problem:

Ok, so, we should spell the same way we speak? Right?

How would you spell:

- Route vs. boot

What about:

- Route vs. about

“Route” in IPA is:
[rut] OR [raʊt]
“Boot”: [bu:t]
“About”: [ʌbaʊt]



IPA Cont.

- The goal is to describe the **sounds** of an utterance
- So, is it a problem that 'route' and 'root' both (could) be transcribed as [rut]?



IPA Cont.

- The goal is to describe the **sounds** of an utterance
- So, is it a problem that 'route' and 'root' both (could) be transcribed as [rut]?
- **No!** Because we are not describing: meaning, syntax, part of speech, etc... just the sound!



Consonants

- Obstructed airflow: (not blocked)
 - Example: /n/
 - Obstructors: tongue tip, hard palate
 - <https://www.ipachart.com/>



Voicing

- /s/ vs. /z/
- “Cats” => [kæts]
- “Dogs” => [dɔgz]
- What is the difference?!?



Voicing

- /s/ vs. /z/
- “Cats” => [kæts] -- Voiceless “ssss” No Vibration of vocal folds
- “Dogs” => [dɔgz] -- Voiced “zzzz” Vocal fold vibration

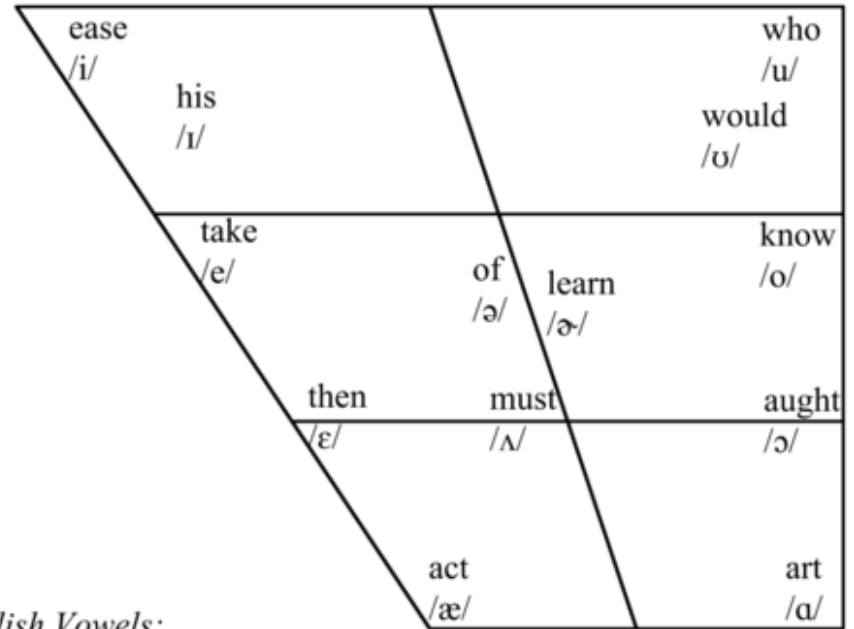
Make sure to determine the correct consonant when transcribing!

Vowels

- Free-flow airflow
- Vowels are always voiced
- Vowel contrast occurs based on mouth position at time of utterance:

[i] “eeee” => close, high

[æ] “aaa” => open, low



English Vowels:

“Who would know aught of art, must learn, act, then take his ease.”



Homework Practice 1

Write the phonetic symbol for each consonant sound in each word.

- awkward
- rampage
- asterisk
- yellow



Homework Practice 1

Write the phonetic symbol for each consonant sound in each word.

- awkward → k, w, d, ʌ
- rampage → ʌ, m, p, dʒ
- asterisk → s, t, ʌ, s, k
- yellow → j, l, w



Homework Practice 2

Your task: Write the phonetic transcription for each word

- physical
- tough
- riggling



Homework Practice 2

Your task: Write the phonetic transcription for each word

- physical → /fɪzɪkəl/
- Tough → /tʌf/
- rigging → /rɪgɪŋ/



Homework Practice 3

The following sets of minimal pairs show that English /p/ and /b/ contrast in initial, medial, and final positions.

Initial: pit/bit

Medial: rapid/rabid

Final: cap/cab

Find minimal pairs for each set that show that the consonant sounds contrast in initial, medial, and final positions. ***This might take awhile! Make sure you get started on it soon!**



Homework Practice 3

The following sets of minimal pairs show that English /p/ and /b/ contrast in initial, medial, and final positions.

Initial: pit/bit → /pɪt/ /bɪt/

Medial: rapid/rabid → /ˌræpɪd/ /ˌræbɪd/

Final: cap/cab → /kæp/ /kæb/

Now, we can see the environments of our target consonants and double check! * **Make sure to do this after you've determined minimal pairs**



Homework Practice 3

/s/ /ʃ/

Initial:

Medial:

Final:



Homework Practice 3

/s/ /ʃ/

Initial: 'save' 'shave', 'said' 'shed'

Medial: 'eraser' 'erasure'

Final: 'as' 'ash'





IMPORTANT

Don't get confused by the following symbols on the homework:

ǰ => dʒ

č => tʃ

š => ʃ

<https://www.ipachart.com/>