



IPA Transcription Exercise

This exercise is based on the *Dialectal Differences* text that you read aloud for me.

Using the table on the following pages, go through the entire text and write down the correct IPA transcription of each word, placing it in the correct column.

There are separate columns for:

1. monosyllabic content words (like *world* and *marked*)
2. polysyllabic content words (like *structurally* and *English*)
3. polysyllabic function words (like *over* and *between*)
4. monosyllabic function words (like *is* and *all*), some of which may have two different forms:
 - (a) strong form (like [bʌt] for *but*)
 - (b) weak form (like [bət] for *but*)

Content words comprise nouns, main verbs, adjectives, and most adverbs.

Function words comprise ‘little’ adverbs like *there*, *then*, *now*, etc., along with determiners, auxiliary verbs, prepositions, and conjunctions.

The first few words have been done for you.

Don’t rush with this exercise — we won’t need the results of it until about Unit 07, when we begin looking systematically at weak forms and English rhythm. This will then form the basis for the final part of the course, where we look at English intonation.

A key will be provided later (this is why pages 12 to 21 are missing).

The key uses the conventions of the Longman Pronunciation Dictionary (ed. Wells), showing optionally omitted sounds and optionally inserted sounds; often, therefore, there is more than one possible answer in each case. We will look at the conventions of the Longman Pronunciation Dictionary over the first few weeks of the course; put simply, a raised (^{superscript}) letter represents a sound that can be optionally inserted, and a letter printed in italic (*slanted*) type represents a sound that can be optionally omitted. A tie represents the possibility of putting two sounds into the same syllable. Here are some possible expansions of Wells’s transcription of the first two words:

ˌdaɪ	ə	ˈlekt	əl	dɪf	ˌnʌnts	ɪz
ˌdaɪ	ə	ˈlekt	əl	ˈdɪf	ˌnʌnts	ɪz
ˌdaɪə		ˈlekt	l	ˈdɪf	ˌnʌns	ɪz
ˌdaə		ˈlekt	l	ˈdɪf	ˌnʌs	ɪz
ˌda	ə	ˈlekt	əl	ˈdɪf	ˌnʌts	ɪz

If you are using an Oxford dictionary to do the exercise, make sure it is one that does not use the symbol /ʌɪ/ – it should be /aɪ/.

WRONG! (words like:) **RIGHT!**

ɛ	BET	e	(ɛ is only mildly problematic)
a	BAT	æ	
ə:	NURSE	ɜ:	
ɛ:	SQUARE	eə	
ʌɪ	PRICE	aɪ	(ʌɪ is an abomination!)

See section 7 of:

<https://www.phon.ucl.ac.uk/home/wells/ipa-english.htm>





ORTHOGRAPHY	CONTENT WORDS		FUNCTION WORDS		ORTHOGRAPHY
	monosyllabic	polysyllabic	polysyllabic	monosyllabic strong form weak form	
	PHONOLOGICAL TRANSCRIPTION				
dialectal		,daɪ ə 'lekt əl			dialectal
differences		'dɪf ɪənts ɪz			differences
structurally		'stɹʌk tʃə əl i			structurally
the				ði: ði	the
English		'ɪŋ glɪʃ			English
language		'læŋ gwɪdʒ			language
is				ɪz	is
fairly		'feə li			fairly
homogeneous		,hɒm əv 'dʒi:n i əs			homogeneous
all				ɔ:l	all
over			'əʊv ə		over
the				ði: ðə	the
world	wɜ:l d				world
but				bʌt bət	but
there				ðeə ðə	there
are				ɑ: ə	are
marked	mɑ:kt				marked



differences
in
pronunciation
between
its
many
dialects

it
is
interesting
to
note
that
some
of
the
most
striking
of
these
differences

in

its

bi 'twi:n

'meni

'dɪf ɹəntʰs ɪz

pɹə 'nʌntʰs i 'eɪf ən

'daɪ ə lekts

differences
in
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dialects

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occur
in
the
small
island
of
Britain
a
fact
for
which
there
is
of
course
a
perfectly
logical
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explanation
visitors

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from
the
United
States
of
America
where
only
three
main
dialects
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when
they
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differing
British
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Second
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War
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British
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an
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from
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was
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a
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Received
Pronunciation
while
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a
marked
Cockney
accent

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for
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the
Kansan
suddenly
burst
in
with

say
I
can't
figure
out
how
you
Britishers
understand
one
another

[US English] “General American” (GA):

the
Kansan
suddenly
burst
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with

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I
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figure
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how
you
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understand
one
another





say
I
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another

[UK] "Received Pronunciation" (RP):

say
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out
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ORTHOGRAPHY	CONTENT WORDS		FUNCTION WORDS		ORTHOGRAPHY
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over			'əʊv ə		over
the				ði: ðə	the
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there				ðeə ðə	there
are				ɑ: ə	are
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 its
 it
 ɪz
 tu: tə
 ðæt ðæt
 sʌm
 ɒv əv
 ði: ðə
 məʊst
 ɒv əv
 ði:z

bi 'twi:n
 'men i

'dɪf ɹənʔs ɪz
 pɹə 'nʌnʔs i 'eɪf ən
 'daɪ ə lekts
 'ɪntɹ əst ɪŋ
 'stɹaɪk ɪŋ
 'dɪf ɹənʔs ɪz

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		occur
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		island
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		Britain
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		for
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		there
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		course
		a
		perfectly
		logical
		historical
		explanation
		visitors

in	
ði:	ðə
ɒv	əv
eɪ	ə
fɔ:	fə
wɪtʃ	
ðɛə	ðə
ɪz	
ɒv	əv
eɪ	ə

occur		ə 'kɜ:
in		
the		
small	smɔ:l	
island		'aɪl ənd
of		
Britain		'brɪt ən
a		
fact	fækt	
for		
which		
there		
is		
of		
course	kɔ:s	
a		
perfectly		'pɜ:fɪktli
logical		'lɒdʒɪkəl
historical		hɪ'stɔ:rɪkəl
explanation		'eksplə'neɪʃən
visitors		'vɪzɪtəz



fɪəm	fɪəm	from
ði:	ðə	the
		United
		States
ɒv	əv	of
		America
weə		where
		only
		three
		main
		dialects
ɑ:	ə	are
		recognized
ɑ:	ə	are
		often
		taken
		aback
wen		when
ðeɪ		they
		hear
ði:	ðə	the
		widely

'əʊn li

'ɒf ən

from		
the		
United	ju 'naɪt ɪd	
States	steɪts	
of		
America	ə 'meɪ ɪk ə	
where		
only		
three	θri:	
main	meɪn	
dialects	'daɪ ə lekts	
are		
recognized	'ɹek əg naɪzd	
are		
often		
taken	'teɪk ən	
aback	ə 'bæk	
when		
they		
hear	hɪə	
the		
widely	'waɪd li	





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	ði:	ðə
	eɪ	ə
	ɒv	əv
	ænd	ənd
	hu:	hu
	wɜ:	wə
	ɪn	
	eɪ	ə

'dʒʊəɪ ɪŋ

'dɪf ə ˌɪ ŋ
 'bɪt ɪʃ
 'æks ə nts

wɜ:l d
 wə:

'sek ə nd
 'nʌ m bə
 'bɪt ɪʃ
 ə 'meɪ ɪ k ə n
 mɪ 'kæ n ɪ ks

'steɪʃ ə nd
 'sɜ:t ə n





country			country
in		ɪn	in
the		ði: ðə	the
Near	nɪə		Near
East	i:st		East
were		wɜ: wə	were
living			living
together			together
in		ɪn	in
a		ə	a
local			local
boarding			boarding
house	haʊs		house
one	wʌn		one
day	deɪ		day
at		æt	at
tea-time			tea-time
an		æn ən	an
American			American
who		hu:	who
hailed	herəld		hailed

country		'kʌntɹɪ
in		
the		
Near	nɪə	
East	i:st	
were		
living		'lɪvɪŋ
together		
in		
a		
local		'ləʊkəl
boarding		'bɔ:dɪŋ
house	haʊs	
one	wʌn	
day	deɪ	
at		
tea-time		'ti:t aɪm
an		
American		ə'mɛrɪkən
who		
hailed	herəld	





fɪɒm	fɪəm	from
		Kansas
wɒz	wəz	was
		sitting
		opposite
eɪ	ə	a
		Yorkshireman
hu:	hu	who
həd		had
eɪ	ə	a
		strong
		local
		accent
ænd	ənd	and
		two
		Londoners
		one
ɒv	əv	of
hu:m		whom
		spoke
ɪn		in
ði:	ðə	the

		from
		Kansas
		was
		sitting
		opposite
		a
		Yorkshireman
		who
		had
		a
stɹɒŋ		strong
		local
		accent
		and
tu:		two
		Londoners
wʌn		one
		of
		whom
spəʊk		spoke
		in
		the

'kænz əs

'sɪt ɪŋ

'ɒp əz ɪt

'jɔ:kʃə mən

'ləʊk əl

'æks ənt

'lʌnd ən əz

stɹɒŋ

tu:

wʌn

spəʊk





Received			Received
Pronunciation			Pronunciation
while			while
the		waɪəl	the
other		ði:	other
had		ðɪ	had
a		'ʌð ə	a
marked	mɑ:kt	hæd	marked
Cockney		eɪ	Cockney
accent	'kɒk ni	ə	accent
	'æks ənt		
after		'ɑ:ft ə	after
listening	'lɪs ən ɹɪŋ		listening
for		fɔ:	for
some		fə	some
time	tɑɪm	sʌm	time
to			to
the		tu:	the
conversation	'kɒn və 'seɪʃ ən	ði:	conversation
of		ðə	of
these		ɒv	these
three	θri:	ði:z	three

Received	.ai 'si:vd
Pronunciation	pɪə ,nʌnts i 'eɪʃ ən
while	
the	
other	
had	
a	
marked	mɑ:kt
Cockney	'kɒk ni
accent	'æks ənt
after	
listening	'lɪs ən ɹɪŋ
for	
some	
time	tɑɪm
to	
the	
conversation	'kɒn və 'seɪʃ ən
of	
these	
three	θri:





the	ðə	the
Kansan		Kansan
suddenly		suddenly
burst		burst
in	ɪn	in
with	wɪð	with
say		say
I	aɪ	I
can't	kænt	can't
figure		figure
out	aʊt	out
how	haʊ	how
you	ju:	you
Britishers		Britishers
understand		understand
one		one
another	wʌn	another

[US English] “General American” (GA):

the		
Kansan	'kænz ən	
suddenly	'sʌd ən li	
burst	bɜ:st	
in		
with		
say	sei	
I		
can't		
figure	'fɪg jəʊ	
out		
how		
you		
Britishers	'brɪt ɪʃ əɪz	
understand	ʌnd əɪ 'stænd	
one		
another	ə 'nʌð ər	





[UK] “Received Pronunciation” (RP):

say	sei						say
I							I
can't						ai	can't
figure		'fi:g ə				ka:nt	figure
out						aʊt	out
how						haʊ	how
you						ju:	you
Britishers		'brɪt ɪʃ əz					Britishers
understand		ˌʌn də 'stænd					understand
one						wʌn	one
another					ə 'nʌð ə		another