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| Phonetics and phonology  A brief introduction  17-1-2015  Anne Manders |

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Preface

Let’s be honest, I never really liked writing prefaces. I still do not like writing prefaces, really, which is why this one is a really short one. There is so much you can say in a preface that still does not cover all you need to say or all you want to say to the people who read your preface. To me, a preface is useless, so I will just stick to this:

| fəˈnetɪks rɒks|

Anne Manders

H5N

VAVO College

Chapter 1: Phonetics and phonology

It is almost always a phonetics teacher you need to ask; otherwise you will never get a proper answer: what is the difference between phonetics and phonology? Two difficult words with a different meaning that still look so much alike and still mean almost the same thing: it is a case of nuance. The mere difference between phonetics and phonology is that phonetics studies the aspects of human speech. Phonetics is all about how man produces certain sounds. It is actually the studies of human speech, whereas phonology is all about what sounds a language contains. If you see silly symbols between brackets, it is phonetics. If they are between slashes, it is phonology. Simple. Phonetics and phonology seem totally useless when it comes down to learning English. Phonetics will not teach you anything about the present simple and phonology will not tell you about the past continuous either. Phonetics and phonology are simply of no use when it comes down to writing and reading. However, when we talk about speaking and listening, phonetics and phonology could really come in handy, because that is exactly what phonetics and phonology are all about: speaking! How do we produce those perfect sounds for that language? Moreover, how can we get a flawless accent?

In this profile assignment we are going to find out if phonetics and phonology can actually help improving someone’s speaking skills. Step by step, we’re going to take a quick peek at my three students, Diek, Kiki and Silvy, who studied phonetics for 12 whole weeks.

§1.1: Posing the main question

Curious as I am, I wondered if phonetics could help someone to improve their accent. The only places where people still learn the IPA is at universities and teacher training schools for languages. Apart from that, phonetics is getting slightly ruled out as it is said to be ‘too difficult’ or ‘of no use’. Because I wanted to give phonetics one more round of applause, I chose the following main question:

Can phonetics help to improve someone’s pronunciation?

§1.2: Posing the subsidiary questions

All a main question needs is a couple of subsidiary questions to back the answer to the main question up with.

Subsidiary question 1:

Is it difficult to learn and understand phonetics?

Subsidiary question 2:

Is it possible to teach a 12-15-year-old phonetics?

Subsidiary question 3:

Should phonetics be a part of each English course at each secondary school or would it make the course too difficult for children who already find themselves struggling with English?

Subsidiary question 4:

Why do regular English courses pay only little attention to speaking?

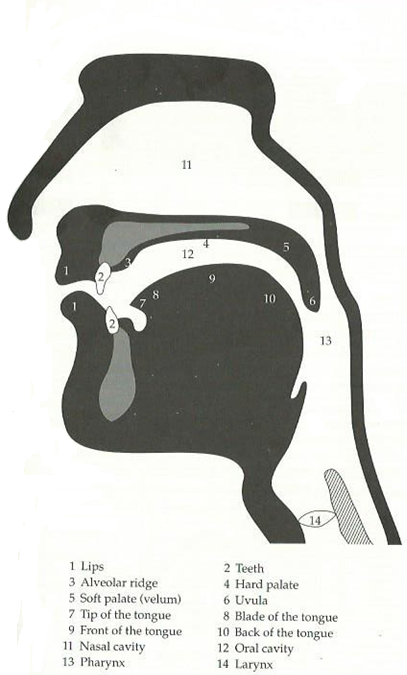
Subsidiary question 5:

What is the easiest way to teach a 12-15-year-old phonetics?

Chapter 2: Phonetics: a brief introduction

§2.1: Consonants: the parameters

Consonants can be classified under three different headings: *place of articulation, voicing and manner of articulation.* All these parameters will tell you exactly how a consonant should sound.

***Place of articulation***

Meet Hugh. Hugh has been my friend for ages now and Hugh always comes in right when I need him. Hugh tends to have numbers on his face that tell you exactly which *articulator* is placed where in the human head. Articulators are simply the places of articulation.

1 = lips (labial)

2 = teeth (dental)

3 = alveolar ridge (alveolar)

4 = soft palate or velum (velar)

5 = hard palate (palatal)

6 = uvula (uvular)

7 = tip of the tongue

8 = blade of the tongue

9 = front of the tongue

10 = back of the tongue

11 = nasal cavity

12 = oral cavity

13 = pharynx

14 = larynx

If Hugh produces a dental sound, it basically means he makes this sound primarily with his teeth. E.g. the ‘th’ sound is a dental sound: it is made with the tip of the tongue, pressed to the upper front teeth. Every consonant is classified under different articulators. Hugh tells us something about the *place of articulation*. Consonants are usually uttered with a passive articulator and an active articulator. The *active articulator* is typically the tongue, which actively causes obstruction with the *passive articulator*, usually some part of the roof of the mouth.

The human voice naturally produces sounds in the following manner:

1. Air pressure from the lungs flows through the larynx, pharynx and either the oral cavity or the nasal cavity.

2. The vocal cords, which are placed in the larynx, resonate. This causes fluctuations in air pressure.

3. The air then flows through either the nasal cavity or the oral cavity. In case it flows through the oral cavity, it gets modified by different articulators into differentiable sounds.

4. Mouth and nose openings bring the air into the world so the sounds produced can be heard by the environment.

***Voicing***

*Voicing* is probably the easiest parameter to explain to children. I found it rather interesting how enthusiastic my students were when I told them to put their fingers to their larynxes and utter the words ‘miss’ and ‘hazy’. Whenever they uttered the word ‘miss’, they did not feel anything when producing the ‘s’ consonant. However, when they uttered the word ‘hazy’, they could feel their vocal cords *vibrating.* Now this is exactly what voicing is all about; whether the vocal cords resonate when uttering a consonant. Consonants that are *voiced* resonate, consonants that are *unvoiced* or *voiceless* do not resonate. This is the second of the three descriptive parameters by means of which we distinguish consonants.

***Manner of articulation***

Here we distinguish five separate groups of consonants: *fricatives, approximants, affricates, nasals and plosives,* under which we file each and every consonant.

*Fricatives*

When two articulators are to the point where the airflow is not fully blocked, enough of a gap remains for air to escape, but the articulators are so close together that friction is created as the air escape. For that reason, we call these consonant fricatives. In the English phonetic alphabet we have nine fricatives, which we will discuss right here.

[f] = voiceless labio-dental fricative first sound in *fin*

[v] = voiced labio-dental fricative consonant in *Eva*

[Θ] = voiceless dental fricative first sound in *thin*

[ð] = voiced dental fricative first sound in *that*

[s] = voiceless alveolar fricative first sound in *sin*

[z] = voiced alveolar fricative second consonant in *hazy*

[ʃ] = voiceless palato-alveolar fricative first sound in *ship*

[ʒ] = voiced palato-alveolar fricative second consonant in *seizure*

[h] = voiceless glottal fricative first consonant in *hazy*

Normally, we first say whether a consonant is voiced/voiceless, then what place of articulation it has and finally what type of consonant it is.

*Approximants*

Approximants are produced when the articulators come fairly close together, but not close enough to cause friction. Approximants are normally voiced. Voiceless approximants are rather rare and we will not discuss them in this thesis.

**y**es → this consonant, transcribed as [j], is a voiced palatal approximant. It is produced by bringing the front of the tongue rather close to the hard palate, but remember: not close enough to create friction! As the sides of the tongue are in a constriction of complete closure with the upper gums, air escapes along a central groove in which the front of the tongue is not yet close enough to the hard palate to cause friction.

[j] = voiced palatal approximant first sound in *you*

[ɹ] = voiced palato-alveolar approximant first sound in *right*

*(Also used for the GA ‘r’, somewhat inaccurately)*

[w] = voiced labial-velar approximant first sound in *what*

[l] = voiced alveolar approximant first sound in *long*

*Affricates*

Affricates are sounds which are uttered with a constriction of complete closure followed by a release phase in which friction occurs. This means that you first get a plosive and after that a fricative (did the name af**fricates** ring a bell?). There are only two affricates in the English language. Affricates are ‘cleavable’: [tʃ] is cleavable into [t] (plosive) and [ʃ] (fricative) and [dʒ] is cleavable into [d] (plosive) and [ʒ] (fricative).

[tʃ] = voiceless palato-alveolar affricate first sound in *chip*

[dʒ] = voiced palato-alveolar affricate first sound in *jury*

*Nasals*

Nasals (or nasal stops) are produced with the velum lowered and with air escaping through the nasal cavity alone. There are only three nasals in the English language. Nasals don’t have a voiced/voiceless dimension, since they are all voiced. I will, though, for the sake of it, add the voiced/voiceless dimension here to keep things clear and uncluttered.

[m] = voiced bilabial nasal stop first sound in *map*

[n] = voiced alveolar nasal stop first sound in *now*

[ŋ] = voiced velar nasal stop second consonant in *sing*

*Plosives*

Plosives are sounds which are produced with complete closure of two articulators, such as the lips. Plosives are also called ‘stops’. There are six plosives. Though, there is one more plosive called the *glottal stop*, which only appears in a couple of accents and languages throughout the UK.

[p] = voiceless bilabial plosive the first sound in *pit*

[b] = voiced bilabial plosive the first sound in *boat*

[t] = voiceless alveolar plosive the first sound in *tin*

[d] = voiced alveolar plosive consonant in *ado*

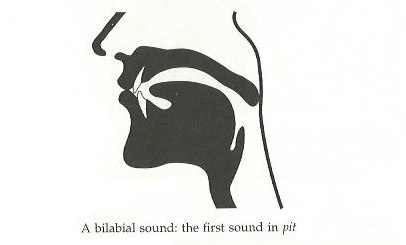
[k] = voiceless velar plosive first sound in *cool*

[g] = voiced velar plosive consonant in *ago*

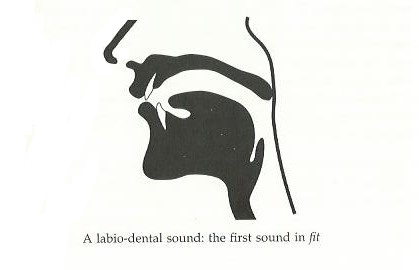
[Ɂ] = glottal stop double t in *butter* (Cockney and Scottish English)

§2.2: Consonants: tell me more

As I said earlier, consonants can be classified under three different headings. To give you some more information about the *places of articulation*, we go back to Hugh and his lovely head. Hugh can tell us exactly how different consonants are produced. After Hugh’s quick intervention, we will go straight onto vowels.

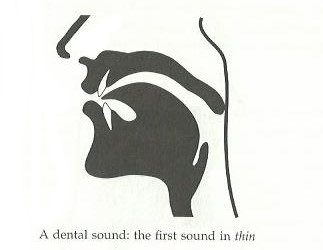


Sounds made by forming a constriction between the lips are referred to as **labial** sounds. If both lips participate in producing the consonant, the name **bilabial** is given to this consonant. ------------------------------------>

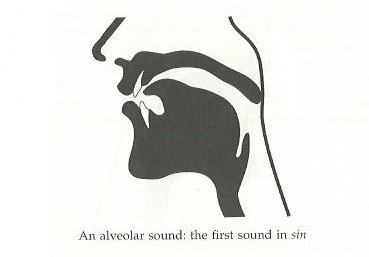


Sounds made by forming a constriction between the upper teeth and the lower lip are referred to as **labio-**

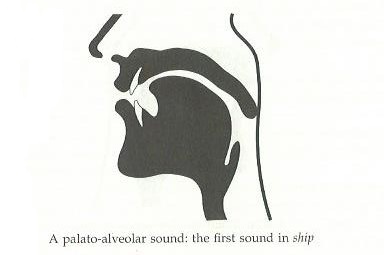
<---------------------------- **dental** sounds.



Sounds in which there is friction between the tip of the tongue and the upper teeth are **dental** sounds. E.g. the first consonant in *thin*. --------------------------->

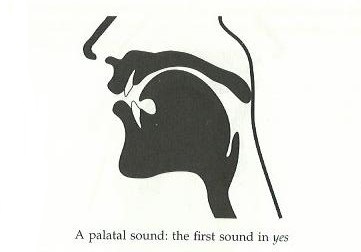


Sounds in which an obstruction is made between the tongue and the alveolar ridge are called **alveolar** sounds. The first sound in *sin* is a really good example. ---------------------------------------->

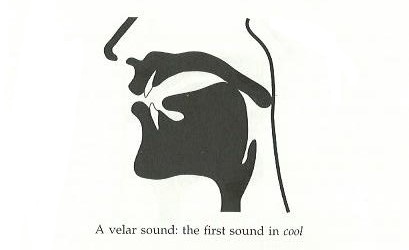


Sounds made with a constriction between the tongue and the post-alveolar region (basically the

<----------------------------------------- spot just between the alveolar ridge and the uvula) are called **palato-alveolar** sounds.



Sounds in which there is an obstruction between the tongue and the hard palate are called **palatal** sounds. E.g. the first sound in *yes*. -------------------->

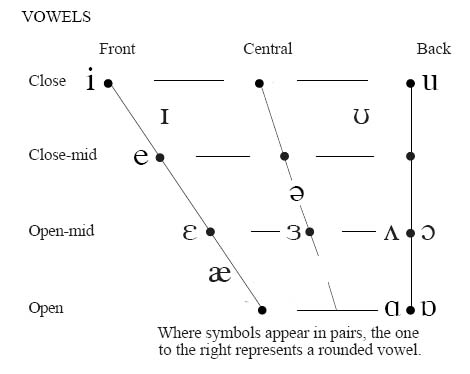


Sounds made by a constriction between the tongue and the

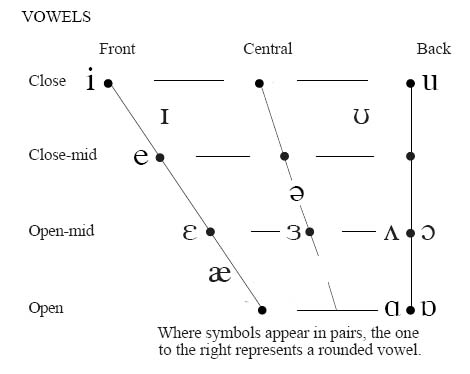
<----------------------------------- velum are called **velar** sounds.

§2.3: Vowels: the parameters

We also know three parameters under which we can classify the vowels in the English language: the three parameters are *close/open dimension, front/back dimension* and *rounding.* These parameters tell you exactly how a vowel should sound.

***[](http://www.google.nl/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&docid=NheruMzNedEpsM&tbnid=CO-lVOrV8Vm3NM:&ved=0CAUQjRw&url=http://www.picstopin.com/3508/vowel-symbols-for-practice-card-game/http:||www*ihmadridtraining*com|resources|vowel%20symbols*jpg/&ei=2gkbU7KJJ4rGtQb69YGABQ&bvm=bv.62578216,d.bGQ&psig=AFQjCNEUZPz19u7fuzFvV7daWasAUbRWnA&ust=1394367073110436)Close/open dimension***

The close/open dimension is often also called the high/low dimension. For now, we will call it the close/open dimension, just so we can stick to one word that pretty much describes how it works. The close/open dimension is the dimension depicting the height of the body of the tongue during the articulation of the vowel. This phenomenon is called the *vowel height*. In the diagram to the right of this part of text you can see how different vowel sounds are either closed sounds (the body of the tongue is in (almost) complete closure with the palate), close-mid sounds (the body of the tongue gets rather close to the palate), open mid sounds (the body of the tongue is getting close to being completely relaxed) and open sounds (the body of the tongue is completely relaxed).

[](http://www.google.nl/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&docid=NheruMzNedEpsM&tbnid=CO-lVOrV8Vm3NM:&ved=0CAUQjRw&url=http://www.picstopin.com/3508/vowel-symbols-for-practice-card-game/http:||www*ihmadridtraining*com|resources|vowel%20symbols*jpg/&ei=2gkbU7KJJ4rGtQb69YGABQ&bvm=bv.62578216,d.bGQ&psig=AFQjCNEUZPz19u7fuzFvV7daWasAUbRWnA&ust=1394367073110436)

***Front/back dimension***

The second parameter is the front/back dimension, depicting how far the body of the tongue lies towards to front of the *vowel space* (the oral cavity). This is represented by the horizontal axis in the diagram to the left of this part of text. The tongue can lie either in the front, the central part or the back of the vowel space.

***Rounding***

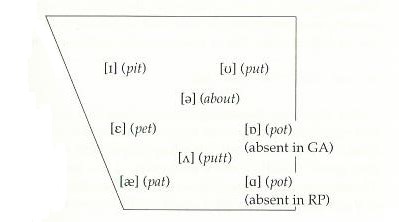
The third dimension says whether the lips are *rounded* when articulating a vowel or whether they’re *unrounded*. Vowels produced with the lips rounded are called rounded vowels, vowels articulated without this rounding in the lips are called unrounded vowels.

***Monophthongs: short and long vowels***

RP has short vowels and long vowels. A triangular colon behind a vowel tells you the vowel is long. If there is no triangular colon behind the vowel, it is a short vowel. RP has seven short vowels and five long vowels.

*Short vowels*

[ɪ] = high front unrounded vowel

(h**i**t)

[ʊ] = high back rounded vowel

(b**oo**t)

[ʌ] = low-mid central unrounded vowel

(c**u**p)

[æ] = low front unrounded vowel

(d**a**d)

[ɛ/e] = low-mid front unrounded vowel

(b**e**d)

[ɒ] = low-mid back rounded vowel (this vowel is absent in GA English)

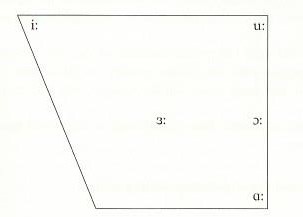
(n**o**t)

[ɑ] = low back unrounded vowel (this vowel is absent in RP English)

(p**o**t)

[ə] = high-mid central unrounded vowel

(**a**bout)

*Long vowels*

[u**:**] = high back rounded vowel

(bl**ue**)

[i:] = high front unrounded vowel

(s**ee**)

[ɔ:] = low-mid back rounded vowel

(f**ou**r)

[ɑ:] = low back unrounded vowel

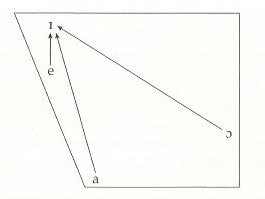
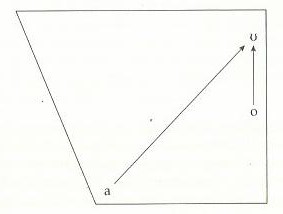
(**ar**m)

[ɜ:] = central central unrounded vowel

(t**ur**n

***Diphthongs***

When the articulators remain more or less in the same position throughout the articulation of a vowel, the vowel is called a *monophthong*. The *vowel quality* (the acoustic effect created during the articulation of the vowel) remains more or less consistent. If this is not the case, we talk about a *diphthong*. A diphthong is a vowel which vowel quality changes within a syllable. Some diphthongs end in an [ɪ]-quality, others end in a [ʊ]-quality and some end in an [ə]-quality.

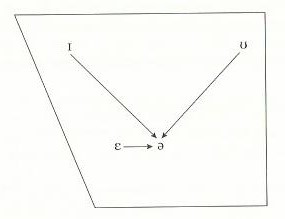


Vowels ending in an [ɪ]-quality Vowels ending in a [ʊ]-quality

[eɪ] [aʊ]

[aɪ] [əʊ]

[ɔɪ]



Vowels ending in an [ə]-quality

[eə]

[ɪə]

[ʊə]

§2.4: Wait, there’s more!

Phonetics is not just about funny little symbols that tell you how to pronounce a word. Phonetics is much like music: you do not just play the notes, you need to know stuff like forte and piano and what kind of different voices people can have. Phonetics is much the same. I am going to describe a couple of terms which I personally think really can come in handy. I am going to describe *pre-fortis clipping, the difference between eth and theta* and *allophones.*

***Pre-fortis clipping***

Pre-fortis clipping basically already tells you what it is without having to explain it to you. Pre-fortis clipping is the effect of vowel-shortening before a fortis consonant. The difference between *fortis* and *lenis* is basically whether a consonant sounds a lot stronger than its lenis counterpart. E.g. /f/ and /v/. The consonant /f/ sounds a lot stronger than /v/. So the difference between fortis and lenis is basically just what it says it is. Fortis means strong, lenis means weak. The fortis consonants are /p/, /t/, /k/, /tʃ/, /f/, /θ/, /s/, /ʃ/ and /h/ whereas the lenis consonants are /b/, /d/, /g/, /dʒ/, /v/, /ð/, /l/, /z/ and /ʒ/. To make it even easier: voiced consonants are lenis, unvoiced consonants are fortis, as you might have noticed. If there is a vowel in a word followed by a fortis consonant, the vowel is relatively short. If a vowel is followed by a lenis consonant, it is relatively long. Take a look at the words ‘beat’ and ‘bead’. You can (if you are doing it right) feel a difference between the two words. ‘Beat’ is shorter than ‘bead’. Their phonetic transcriptions hide every single clue about pre-fortis clipping, as ‘beat’ is transcribed as /bi:t/ and ‘bead’ is transcribed as /bi:d/. It is much like the ‘double consonant’ in Dutch, which is preceded by a short vowel.

***The difference between eth and theta***

The ‘th’ sound is usually pretty difficult to non-native speakers of English. The th-sound represents in most cases one of two phonemes: the voiced dental fricative /ð/ and the voiceless dental fricative /θ/. The mere difference is actually the fact that /ð/ is lenis and /θ/ is fortis. The fortis /θ/ is uttered with more muscular tension that the lenis /ð/. The actual difference you can feel, is that the eth (/ð/) is pronounced with the tip of the tongue pressed to the inside surface of the upper teeth and that the theta (/θ/, a Greek letter) is pronounced with the tip of the tongue softly pressing to the cutting edge of the upper front teeth. Also, the theta is slightly more stronger aspirated than the eth, which you can easily feel when holding one of your hands about an inch from your mouth when pronouncing either of these phonemes. You should feel a stronger puff of air when articulating the theta.

***Allophones***

The term allophones sounds a lot more difficult than it actually is. Allophones have much to do with something we call ‘aspiration’. Aspiration means that you hear an [h] when pronouncing a consonant. Let’s say, you have the words ‘pin’ and ‘spin’. If you are doing it right (and I presume you are) you can hear an [h] after the [p] in ‘pin’. You don’t hear this [h] after the [p] in ‘spin’. That [h] you hear after the [p] in ‘pin’ is called aspiration, which we transcribe with a superscripted ‘h’. So, ‘pin’ can be phonetically transcribed as /phɪn/ whilst ‘spin’ is transcribed as /spɪn/. Now, to come back to allophones: the aspirated version of a consonant and the ‘normal’ version of a consonant are called the allophones of this phoneme.

Now, what is a phoneme? I might have used this term many times before in this thesis, so I thought it a good idea to explain what it means. A phoneme is basically “the smallest contrastive linguistic unit which may bring about a change of meaning”.

Chapter 3: The real deal

The main reason why I wanted to write a profile assignment about phonetics is basically because I want to turn this little ‘hobby’ of mine into something I will be doing for the rest of my life. In just one year, phonetics grew out from being something I studied just to help out a friend of mine who did not understand phonetics as well as he should, during his first year of the teacher training school for English in Tilburg, to something that really caught my attention in a way that I am always excited about it. Whenever I hear someone saying the word ‘phonetics’, I would prick up my ears and listen carefully, so to memorise all the new information that would come through.

Obviously, this profile assignment would not have been as much fun as it was without a practical part and some help from my little friends. For this profile assignment, I created an entire course in phonetics of 12 lessons, books and tests included. I went to a secondary school nearby and asked one of the deans if I could ‘borrow’ a couple of students, so I could teach them phonetics and experience what teaching is like and whether it is something I want to be doing for the rest of my life or not. So, I found out that it is.

Teaching is now still a hobby of mine. I have had many students throughout a couple of years who I have tutored through their tests. None of my students have been as amazing as Diek, Silvy and Kiki, who worked very hard so I could write a proper profile assignment. I simply could not have imagined that they would make so much effort to help me out.

Diek, for example, would study at home, quietly trying to memorise the diphthongs and terminology (this came with the course, since I felt it important for them to know what a ‘monophthong’ is, or what ‘voiced’ is). Diek simply aced his tests with roaring success and made me feel like the proudest teacher-to-be in the world.

Silvy, only 13 years old, would try her best in class to pronounce things as I would pronounce them (given that I have an RP English accent, she really did a good job). Silvy would always be scared for tests but then score incredible marks (leaving out her first test: that was a bit of a difficult one). I am ever so keen on Silvy, because she would always ask these very smart questions that really made me think about why I was doing this experiment for my profile assignment.

And last, but never least, there is sceptic little Kiki (who is much taller than me, so I should not have called her little in any case). Kiki would always ask: ‘What is the use of us learning all this?’. I still have not found out what the use of them learning it is; all I know is that they have done a remarkable job.

Enough of this now, it is time to go meet the kids.

§3.1: Progress

Diek, Kiki and Silvy have worked hard to make as much progress as they could in just 12 weeks. They have paid attention, they have done their homework and they have asked questions when they did not get something. Phonetics has been a tough course for them, yet they have done very well. 12 lessons, filled with monophthongs, diphthongs, consonants, vowels, parameters, and a lot more. Each lesson, they had to learn something new. Here is the training programme:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Lesson | What are we going to do? |
| 1: 12th of September | Introduction and Λ, α:, e and æ |
| 2: 19th of September | ə ɜ: ɪ i: |
| 3: 26th of September | ɒ ɔ: ʊ u: |
| 4: 3rd of October | aɪ aʊ eɪ əʊ |
| 5: 31st of October | ɔɪ eə ɪə ʊə |
| 6: 7th of November | Transcribing easy words – Mr. de Leijer comes over to analyse the teacher |
| 7: 14th of November | Transcribing more difficult words and transcribing phrases |
| 8: 21st of November | Transcribing phrases |
| 9: 28th of November | Transcribing phrases |
| 10: 5th of December | Learning how to pronounce phonetic symbols |
| 11: 19th of December | Reading phonetic symbols |
| 12: 9th of January | Reading phonetic symbols – Ms Manders comes over to analyse the teacher |
| Test 1: 17th of October |  |
| Test 2: 12th of December |  |
| Test 3: 16th of January | Oral exam |
| Holidays: 20th of October – 26th of October |  |
| Holidays: 22nd of December – 4th of January |  |

* In class

Some things are less important than others. I presumed it would help me, as a teacher, to make schedules of what I was going to do and say in class. These schedules are not as extensive as supposed to, but they do make clear what I have been telling the kids. After these schedules, you can read about how every lesson was different and how about how I have learnt so many new things.

Lesson 1 – 12th of September

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **What?** | **Materials** | **Time** |
| Getting to know each other | None | 10 minutes |
| Introduction to phonetics | PPP Phonetics 1 | 5 minutes |
| Λ | PPP Phonetics 1 | 10 minutes |
| α: | PPP Phonetics 1 | 10 minutes |
| e | PPP Phonetics 1 | 7 minutes |
| æ | PPP Phonetics 1 | 10 minutes |
| End, what are we going to do next week? | PPP Phonetics 1 | 3 minutes |

Lesson 2 – 19th of September

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **What?** | **Materials** | **Time** |
| Repeat what we have done last week | None | 10 minutes |
| Checking homework | None | 5 minutes |
| ə | PPP Phonetics 1 | 10 minutes |
| ɜ: | PPP Phonetics 1 | 10 minutes |
| ɪ | PPP Phonetics 1 | 7 minutes |
| i: | PPP Phonetics 1 | 10 minutes |
| End, what are we going to do next week? | PPP Phonetics 1 | 3 minutes |

Lesson 3 – 26th of September

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **What?** | **Materials** | **Time** |
| Repeat what we have done last week | None | 10 minutes |
| Checking homework | None | 5 minutes |
| ɒ | PPP Phonetics 1 | 10 minutes |
| ɔ: | PPP Phonetics 1 | 10 minutes |
| ʊ | PPP Phonetics 1 | 7 minutes |
| u: | PPP Phonetics 1 | 10 minutes |
| End, what are we going to do next week? | PPP Phonetics 1 | 3 minutes |

Lesson 4 – 3rd of October

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **What?** | **Materials** | **Time** |
| Repeat what we have done last week | None | 10 minutes |
| Checking homework | None | 5 minutes |
| aɪ | PPP Phonetics 1 | 10 minutes |
| aʊ | PPP Phonetics 1 | 10 minutes |
| eɪ | PPP Phonetics 1 | 7 minutes |
| əʊ | PPP Phonetics 1 | 10 minutes |
| End, what are we going to do next week? | PPP Phonetics 1 | 3 minutes |

Lesson 5 – 31st of October

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **What?** | **Materials** | **Time** |
| Repeat what we have done last week | None | 10 minutes |
| Checking homework | None | 5 minutes |
| ɔɪ | PPP Phonetics 1 | 10 minutes |
| eə | PPP Phonetics 1 | 10 minutes |
| ɪə | PPP Phonetics 1 | 7 minutes |
| ʊə | PPP Phonetics 1 | 10 minutes |
| End, what are we going to do next week? | PPP Phonetics 1 | 3 minutes |

Lesson 6 – 7th of November

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **What?** | **Materials** | **Time** |
| Repeat what we have done last week | None | 10 minutes |
| Checking homework | None | 5 minutes |
| Transcribing easy words | PPP Phonetics 1 | 25 minutes |
| End, what are we going to do next week? | PPP Phonetics 1 | 5 minutes |

Lesson 7 – 14th of November

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **What?** | **Materials** | **Time** |
| Repeat what we have done last week | None | 10 minutes |
| Checking homework | None | 5 minutes |
| Transcribing more difficult words and transcribing phrases | PPP Phonetics 1 | 25 minutes |
| End, what are we going to do next week? | PPP Phonetics 1 | 5 minutes |

Lesson 8 – 21st of November

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **What?** | **Materials** | **Time** |
| Repeat what we have done last week | None | 10 minutes |
| Checking homework | None | 5 minutes |
| Transcribing phrases | PPP Phonetics 1 | 25 minutes |
| End, what are we going to do next week? | PPP Phonetics 1 | 5 minutes |

Lesson 9 – 28th of November

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **What?** | **Materials** | **Time** |
| Repeat what we have done last week | None | 10 minutes |
| Checking homework | None | 5 minutes |
| Transcribing phrases | PPP Phonetics 1 | 25 minutes |
| End, what are we going to do next week? | PPP Phonetics 1 | 5 minutes |

Lesson 10 – 5th of December

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **What?** | **Materials** | **Time** |
| Repeat what we have done last week | None | 10 minutes |
| Learning how to pronounce phonetic symbols | PPP Phonetics 1 | 30 minutes |
| End, what are we going to do next week? | PPP Phonetics 1 | 5 minutes |

Lesson 11 – 19th of December

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **What?** | **Materials** | **Time** |
| Repeat what we have done last week | None | 10 minutes |
| Reading phonetic symbols | PPP Phonetics 1 | 30 minutes |
| End, what are we going to do next week? | PPP Phonetics 1 | 5 minutes |

Lesson 12 – 9th of December

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **What?** | **Materials** | **Time** |
| Repeat what we have done last week | None | 10 minutes |
| Reading phonetic symbols | PPP Phonetics 1 | 30 minutes |
| End, what are we going to do next week? | PPP Phonetics 1 | 5 minutes |

* The textbook

The textbook consisted of the monophthongs, the diphthongs, the consonant parameters and exercises so to help them understand how these monophthongs, diphthongs and consonants work. The following pages contain the pages of the textbook my students had to work with.

Phonetics: a brief introduction

**Glossary**

**Consonant:** medeklinker

**Diacritic:** a sign, such as an accent or cedilla, which when written above or below a letter indicates a difference in pronuncioation from the same letter when unmarked or differently marked – een tekentje zoals een accent of cedilla die aangeeft hoe een letter wordt uitgesproken.

**Diphthong:** a sound formed by the combination of two vowels in a single syllable, in which the sound begins as one vowel and moves towards another – een combinative van twee klinkers waarvan het geluid begint met de ene klinker en eindigt op een andere klinker. Ook wel een tweeklank genoemd.

**Monophthong:** a vowel that has a single perceived auditory quality – een klink met maar één klank (eenklank).

**Parameter:**  a numerical or other measurable factor forming one of a set that defines a system or sets the condition of its operation – een meetbare factor die aangeeft hoe iets werkt.

**Voiced:** a speech sound with resonance of the vocal cords – een geluid is stemhebbend wanneer de stembanden bij het maken van het geluid resoneren.

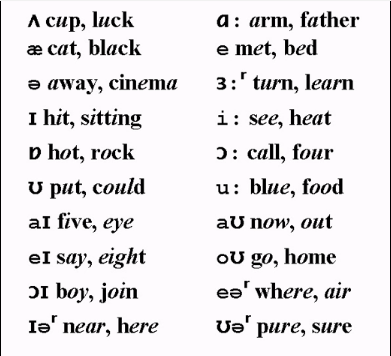
**Voiceless:** a speech sound without resonance of the vocal cords – een geluid is stemloos wanneer de stembanden bij het maken van het geluid niet resoneren.

**Vowel:** klinker

**Chapter 1: Vowels**

Chapter 1: 1.1. Monophthongs

EN: We will discuss 11 monophthongs in this course. We will not look into the parameters of the vowels, as this is irrelevant to students at this stage. Monophthongs are vowels that have only a single perceived auditory quality. A triangular colon behind a vowel denotes vowel length. RP English has the following monophthongs:



NL: In deze cursus gaan we het over 11 monophthongs hebben. We kijken niet naar de parameters van de klinkers omdat deze er niet toe doen voor leerlingen die deze cursus gaan doen. Monophthongs zijn klinkers die maar één klank kennen: het zijn dus eenklanken. Driehoekige puntjes achter bepaalde klinkers geven aan dat de klinker lang is. RP Engels kent de bovenstaande monophthongs.

Chapter 1: 1.2. Diphthongs

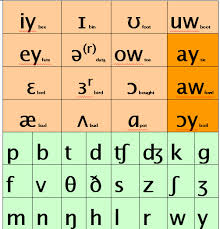
EN: Diphthongs are vowels that change throughout their pronunciation. They start as one vowel and end as another. In the IPA (International Phonetics Alphabet), diphthongs are transcribed with two different symbols, whereas monophthongs are transcribed with just one symbol. In this course we will discuss 8 diphthongs:



NL: Diphthongs zijn klinkers die tijdens de uitspraak veranderen. Ze beginnen als de ene klinker en veranderen doorgaans in een andere klinker. In het IPA (International Phonetics Alphabet) worden diphthongs als twee aan elkaar vast hangende symbolen geschreven, waar monophthongs als alleenstaande symbolen worden geschreven. In deze cursus gaan we het over de bovenstaande 8 diphthongs hebben.

**Chapter 2: Consonants**

EN: The only parameter for consonants that you need to know is the voiced/voiceless parameter. When a consonant is voiced, you can feel a vocal cord resonation when uttering this phoneme. You can try this for yourself: put your fingers to your larynx and say ‘*miss*’. While making the ‘s’ sound, you should not feel a very clear vocal cord vibration. Now put your fingers to your larynx again and say the word ‘*hazy*’. While uttering the ‘z’ sound you should feel a clear vocal cord vibration. This is one of the many ways to experience the difference between voiced and voiceless consonants. Here, we will discuss 24 consonants.

[](https://www.google.nl/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&docid=U-UsDsdPsewISM&tbnid=ELQSGd2Y-t8k6M:&ved=0CAUQjRw&url=https://scottthornbury.wordpress.com/tag/rp/&ei=gykPVOqKMobOObTPgbAK&bvm=bv.74649129,d.bGQ&psig=AFQjCNHqBWkPFWpkaZHfzxFKYsRQMWnDvA&ust=1410366099106503)

NL: De enige parameter die we hier in deze cursus gaan leren is de stemhebbend/stemloos parameter. Wanneer een medeklinker stemhebbend is, voel je een vibratie in bij je stembanden wanneer je deze medeklinker uitspreekt. Dit kun je zelf heel erg goed voelen op het moment dat je twee vingers tegen je strottenhoofd houd en dan het woord ‘*miss*’ zegt. Als het goed is voel je nu nagenoeg geen vibratie bij je stembanden. Probeer dit nu nog eens, maar dan met het woord ‘*hazy*’. Voel je nu wel een duidelijke resonantie? Dit is één van de vele manieren om het verschil tussen stemhebbend en stemloos zelf goed te ervaren. In deze cursus gaan we het over 24 verschillende medeklinkers hebben.

**Exercises: Monophthongs**

Exercise 1: Vul in Λ of α: en vertaal.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Word | Transcription | Translation |
| Cup | /k …………………………. p/ |  |
| Arm | / …………………………… m/ |  |
| Sun | /s …………………………. n/ |  |
| Hut | /h …………………………… t/ |  |
| Sum | /s ………………………… m/ |  |
| Father | /f ………………………… ðə/ |  |
| Son | /s …………………………… n/ |  |
| After | / …………………….. ftə/ |  |
| Castle | /k ………………….…….. sḷ/ |  |
| Carnival | /k ……………………. nɪvḷ/ |  |

Exercise 2: Vul in æ of e en vertaal.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Word | Transcription | Translation |
| Bed | /b…………………………d/ |  |
| Black | /bl………………………….k/ |  |
| Cat | /k…………………………..t/ |  |
| Sat | /s……………………………t/ |  |
| Sweat | /sw…………………………t/ |  |
| Bat | /b…….……………………..t/ |  |
| Bad | /b……………………………d/ |  |
| Dead | /d…………………………..d/ |  |
| Brackets | /br…………………..kɪts/ |  |
| Test | /t ………………………… st/ |  |

Exercise 3: Vul in ə of ɜ: (en symbolen die je in voorgaande lessen hebt geleerd) en vertaal.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Word | Transcription | Translation |
| Turn | /t ……………………….. n/ |  |
| Cinema | /sɪn ………… m …………../ |  |
| Burn | /b ………………………….. n/ |  |
| Oblivion | /…………………..… blɪvɪən/ |  |
| Starter | /st ………….. t ………….…/ |  |
| Learn | /l ………………………….. n/ |  |
| Again | /……………………..… gen/ |  |
| Urn | / ………………………..... n/ |  |
| Blur | / bl …………………………./ |  |
| Paper | / peɪp ……………………../ |  |

Exercise 4: Vul in ɪ of i: (en symbolen die je in voorgaande lessen hebt geleerd) en vertaal.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Word | Transcription | Translation |
| Teen | /t ………………………... n/ |  |
| Keen | /k …………..…………… n/ |  |
| Sip | /s ………………………… p/ |  |
| Leave | /l …………………………. v/ |  |
| Chin | /tʃ ………………………… n/ |  |
| Drink | /dr ……………………….ƞk/ |  |
| Simple | /s …………………….. mpḷ/ |  |
| Lean | / l .……………………..... n/ |  |
| Seen | / s …………………………. n/ |  |
| Tick | / t …………………………. k/ |  |

Exercise 5: Vul in ɒ of ɔ: (en symbolen die je in voorgaande lessen hebt geleerd) en vertaal.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Word | Transcription | Translation |
| On | / ………………………. n/ |  |
| Call | /k …………………….. l/ |  |
| Hall | / h …………………….. l/ |  |
| Rock | / r ……………………… k/ |  |
| Four | / f ……………………… / |  |
| For | / f ……………………… / |  |
| Sock | / s …………………….. k/ |  |
| Tall | / t …………………….. l/ |  |
| Wall | / w ……………………. l/ |  |
| Mock | / m ……………………. k/ |  |

Exercise 6: Vul in ʊ of u: (en symbolen die je in voorgaande lessen hebt geleerd) en vertaal.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Word | Transcription | Translation |
| Blue | /bl ………………………. / |  |
| Could | /k ………………………. d/ |  |
| Should | /ʃ ……………………….. d/ |  |
| Through | /θr ………………………. / |  |
| Wood | / w …………………….. d/ |  |
| Loot | /l ………………………… t/ |  |
| Good | /g ………………………… d/ |  |
| Crew | /kr ………………………../ |  |
| Do | /d …………………………/ |  |
| Would | /w ………………………. d/ |  |

Exercises: Diphthongs

Exercise 1: Vul in aɪ of aʊ (en symbolen die je in voorgaande lessen hebt geleerd) en vertaal.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Word | Transcription | Translation |
| Mine | /m …………………….. n/ |  |
| How | /h ……………………….. / |  |
| Cow | /k ……………………….. / |  |
| Shine | / ʃ ……………………... n/ |  |
| Decline | /d ………… kl …………. n/ |  |
| Bow | /b ……………………… / |  |
| Time | /t ………………………. m/ |  |
| Now | /n ………………………… / |  |
| Refine | /r ………… f ………….. n/ |  |
| Owl | / …………………………. l/ |  |

Exercise 2: Vul in eɪ of əʊ (en symbolen die je in voorgaande lessen hebt geleerd) en vertaal.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Word | Transcription | Translation |
| Take | /t ……………………… k/ |  |
| Paint | /p …………………….. nt/ |  |
| So | /s ………………………. / |  |
| Suppose | /s ………. p ……….. z/ |  |
| Don’t | /d …………………… nt/ |  |
| Eight | / …………………….. t/ |  |
| Complaint | /k …….. mpl ………. nt/ |  |
| Both | /b ……………………... θ/ |  |
| Know | /n ………………………… / |  |
| Joke | / dʒ ……………………… k/ |  |

Exercise 3: Vul in ɔɪ of eə (en symbolen die je in voorgaande lessen hebt geleerd) en vertaal.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Word | Transcription | Translation |
| Boy | /b ………………………… / |  |
| Air | / ………………………….. / |  |
| Alloy | / ……….. l ……………. / |  |
| Toy | /t ……………………….. / |  |
| Where | / w …………………….. / |  |
| Area | / ………………….. rɪə/ |  |
| Boy band | /b ……... / /b ……..… nd/ |  |
| Heir | / ………………………….. / |  |
| Joy | /dʒ ……………………… / |  |
| Mare | /m ………………………. / |  |

Exercise 4: Vul in ɪə of ʊə (en symbolen die je in voorgaande lessen hebt geleerd) en vertaal.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Word | Transcription | Translation |
| Here | /h ……………………… / |  |
| Steer | /st …………………….. / |  |
| Endure | /ɪndj ………………….. / |  |
| Leer | /l ………………………. / |  |
| Sure | /ʃ ………………………. / |  |
| Allure | / ……… lj ………….. / |  |
| Peer | /p ……………………… / |  |
| Pure | /pj …………………….. / |  |
| Fear | /f ……………………….. / |  |
| Dear | /d ………………………. / |  |

Exercises: Consonants

Exercise 1: Vul in s, z, p of b (en symbolen die je in voorgaande lessen hebt geleerd) en vertaal.

**Engelse gezegdes**

1. An apple a day keeps the doctor away: | ....n .... ....ḷ .... k...... ð…. d....kt....r ...w...... ||

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2. Travel broadens the mind: | tr....vḷ ....r....dṇ.... ð.... m.......nd ||

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3. Look before you leap: | l........k .........f........ j.... l............. ||

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

4. Might is right: | m...........t ........ r..........t ||

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

5. There’s no smoke without fire: | ð........ n...... .....m.....k w....ð.....t f....... ||

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

6. First come, first served: | f.........t k....m | f..........t ..........vd ||

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

7. If the cap fits, wear it: | .....f ð...... k......... f....t.... | w........r .....t ||

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

8. Once bitten, twice shy: | w......n...... .........tṇ | tw............ ʃ......... ||

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Exercise 2: Vul in t, d, f of v (en symbolen die je in voorgaande lessen hebt geleerd).

**Jokes and riddles**

1. What gun is like the earth? | w........... g.........n ........z l.........k ð...... .......θ ||

A revolver. | ......... r...............l................ ||

2. What can you put in the fridge | w......... k...........n j.......... p.......... .....n ð.......

that will stay hot? ......r.....dʒ ð.......... w......l s............ h............. ||

Mustard. | m........s.............. ||

3. What runs ‘round the house but | w....... r......nz r........n.... ð.... h.....s b........ n..........

never moves and inch? m..........s .....n ......ntʃ ||

A fence. | ...... ..........ns ||

Exercise 3: Vul in m, n, ʃ of ʒ (en symbolen die je in voorgaande lessen hebt geleerd), vertaal daarna de woorden waarbij je letters hebt ingevuld.

**Jokes and riddles**

peɪ……ṇt || aɪv ə pɪkju:ljə kə…….pleɪ…….t ( ) dɒktə ||

dɒktə || wɒt ɪz ɪt ||

peɪ……ṇt ( ) || wel aɪ ki:p θɪƞkɪƞ ðər ə tu: əv ….ɪ (me) ||

dɒktə || pα:dṇ | wʊd jʊ rɪpi:t ðæt pli:z

ṇ ðɪs taɪ…… ( ) dəʊ……..t ( ) bəʊθ spi:k ət wΛns ||

**Children’s rhymes:**

1. kΛt ….aɪ ( ) θrəʊt ṇ waɪp ɪt draɪ | ɪf aɪ tel aɪl … ʊəlɪ ( ) daɪ ||

2. \*d……..ɔ:d……ɪ (Georgie) \*pɔ:gɪ pʊdɪƞ ṇ paɪ |

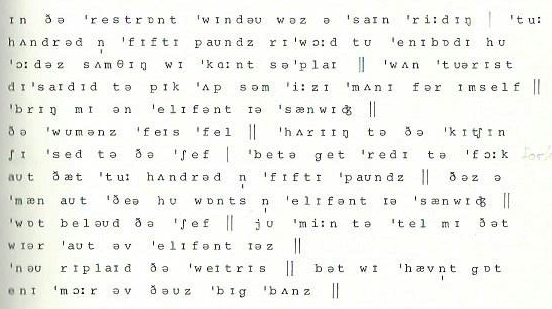
kɪst ðə gɜ:lz ṇ …….eɪd ( ) ðə……. ( ) kraɪ ||

wen ðə bɔɪz keɪ……. ( ) aʊt tə pleɪ |

hɪ kɪst ðə…… ( ) tu: | hɪz fΛ……ɪ ( ) ðæt weɪ ||

Exercises: Reading and speaking

Lees de volgende tekst hardop voor en schrijf dan de transcriptie op. Gebruik zo nodig een woordenboek.



§3.2: The kids

Diek, Kiki and Silvy were my very first actual students. I provided them with books and lessons in phonetics, I even tortured them by letting them sit tests, but when the pedal hit the metal, they proved themselves to be diligent, lovely students. Every lesson, the kids learnt something new, something they had never heard of before. Most children probably would have quit after the third lesson, but, as they told me, they felt like they had actually improved in speaking after lesson three. We started off easy, with the ‘rooftop’, ‘the fish with the colon’, the ‘bed-vowel’ and the difficult ‘is it an e or is it an a’-vowel. Whenever we discussed a new vowel or a new consonant, I would ask them to come up with a word that has the vowel or consonant in it. For vowels, they found themselves struggling, so they usually just called the /ɔ:/ a ‘mirrored c’ and the /ʊ/ a ‘little cup’. They would come up with the smartest labels for different vowel sounds.

My students were incredibly fast learners. By lesson 9, they were tired of having to transcribe so much and wanted to start practicing how they had to pronounce these phonetic symbols. By the end of lesson 10, they could read phonetic script rather fluently: the sneaky kids had already practiced at home!

I could not be more proud of them, especially since they helped me out so well. Diek, Kiki and Silvy dedicated a bit of their free time to voluntarily attend a course that could have either made or broke my profile assignment. Diek, Kiki and Silvy made it happen.

I still owe you introductions of the mysterious Diek, Kiki and Silvy. Just one more page, and you will know their face and their strengths and weaknesses. Every child has its own story and should be considered a unique human being. No child is the same, and no child learns the same as the other. Children are something magical, or so I believe. The clever questions they ask, the sudden remarks they make in class and that one moment when you finally see that they finally understand what you mean: that light bulb above their heads, suddenly lighting up, as if someone turns on a switch. I have enjoyed teaching them phonetics as well as English, and I am more than ever sure that I want to study to become a teacher.

The analyses of the children consist of:

1. An introduction
2. Their first video clip
3. The analysis of the video clip
4. Test 1, with answers and corrections
5. Test 2, with answers and corrections
6. An analysis of test 2
7. Their oral exam
8. An analysis of their oral exam

* Kiki

Hi, this is Kiki. Kiki is 12 years old and is quite a football fan. Kiki is in the same class as Diek and Silvy, of whom I still owe you an introduction.

I met Kiki on the 8th of September last year. I asked their English teacher if he could spare some students for my profile assignment. He came up with three students, and Kiki was one of them. Kiki’s main motive to apply for this course was that she needed the tutoring I promised in return. Not quite my idea of a nice motive, but who blames her?

Kiki has been a lovely child to teach. She surely has strengthened her skills in speaking throughout the 12 lessons.

Kiki fell ill in the second week of the course. She said she had a massive headache and that she felt really sick. Kiki missed about 5 out of 12 lessons, and because of the progress she had made, I may just be a slight bit more proud of her than of the rest. Kiki can distinguish sounds in a word rather easily, though reading and writing phonetic script came to her as quite a task, because she had missed so much information during the first couple of lessons. Kiki always enthusiastically participated in the educational games we played in class.

Kiki proved herself to be a great student, but at the same time I could see how she sometimes felt very insecure when I asked her a question in class. She would say ‘I do not know’ 1 out of 10 times, because she seemed to feel too insecure to actually give an answer, even while the answers she had up for me were mostly correct. Kiki is quite a brain box, even though she does not believe so herself. Kiki has done ever so well in class, yet I do not believe that I have achieved my goal with Kiki. She has not achieved perfection in speaking, which I was aiming for. But frankly, who does achieve perfection in just 12 lessons? However, I can say that Kiki’s accent has actually improved since lesson 1. Kiki is a bright girl who sometimes really underestimates herself.

Because Kiki fell ill during the second lesson, no video clip of Kiki was made. However, Kiki did the tests I presented to my students. You can find Kiki’s answers to the first test on the next page. **Test Phonetics 1**

This test consists of terminology and transcribing. You already know the words you have to transcribe. You are not allowed to use your book during the test.

A. Fill in the meaning of the terms. Try to be as precise as you can. 2 pts

1. √ Voiced Een trilling in je stem
2. √ Parameter Een meetbare eigenschap/een meetbaar iets

Come up with an example for the terms as well as filling in their meaning. 6 pts

* 1. x Diacritic “ You forgot to tell what they mean!
  2. x Monophthong black You forgot to tell what they mean!
  3. x Consonant cup You forgot to tell what they mean!

B. You see the description of a term in Dutch. Fill in the right term. 3 pts

1. √ Een tweeklank Diphthong
2. √ Een geluid waarbij je stembanden niet trillen Voiceless
3. √ Een klinker Vowel

C. Fill in the right vowel sounds. 5 pts

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| English | Transcription | Dutch |
| √ Cup | /k ʌ p/ | Kopje |
| x Black | /bl ~~α:~~ æ k/ | Zwart |
| x Turn | /t ~~ə~~ ɜ: n/ | Beurt |
| √ Drink | /dr ɪ nk/ | Drinken |
| x Blue | /bl ~~ʊ~~ u: / | Blauw |

D. Fill in the right vowel sounds. 4 pts

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| English | Transcription | Dutch |
| √ See | /s i: / | Zien |
| x Again | / ~~α~~ ə gen/ | Opnieuw |
| x Dead | /d ~~æ~~ e d/ | Dood |
| ½ Arm | / ɑ(:) m/ | Arm |

Kiki scored 11,5 out of 20 points and with that scored 58%. She had made 8,5 errors. Here, we have someone who forgets to read really carefully, as you can see in assignment A. Kiki forgot the read the assignment (which was in Dutch on the test) well enough to read that she also had to explain what the terms mean. The words the students had to transcribe had all been used as keywords and had all been translated before. Of course, I cannot blame Kiki for not knowing many of the vowel sounds just yet, since she was not around during the lessons I explained those to the kids. If she had been around during those lessons, and I know this for sure, since Kiki is a hard-working student, she would have definitely scored a brilliant pass mark instead of 58%.

On December 12, 2014, the students had to sit their second test. The test included transcribing 20 words they already knew and transcribing 7 words they did not know. With this test, I wanted to see if they could transcribe on their own, without my help. I calculated the census with the aid of a very helpful census chart, that can be turned to on http://www.cultuureducatie.nl/cultuurpleinagenda/downloads/tentamen\_tabel.pdf.

**Test 2**

This test consists of 27 words you have to transcribe. You already know 20 of these words. Seven of them, you do not know. Read the assignment well, just so to make sure you prevent making slight mistakes due to misreading something. Good luck!

1. Transcribe these 10 words and names, written in phonetic script, to Latin script and translate.

–2½ pts

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Phonetic script | Latin script | Translation |
| √ √ /gз:l/ | Girl | Meisje |
| ½ /\*lɪndə/ | Linde (Linda) | Linde (Linda) |
| √ √ /fʊtbɔ:l/ | Football | Voetbal |
| √ X /maʊθ/ | Mouth | ~~Berg~~ (Mond) |
| √ √ /nəʊz/ | Nose | Neus |
| √ √ /ʃɒp/ | Shop | Winkel |
| √ √ /peə/ | Pear | Peer |
| √ X /\*dʒi:n/ | Jean | ~~Broek~~ (Jean) |
| √ √ /laik/ | Like | Leuk |
| √ √ /ɪlevn/ | Eleven | Elf |

1. Transcribe these 10 words and names, written in Latin script, to phonetic script and translate.

-11 pts

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Phonetic script | Latin script | Translation |
| X √ ~~/jəuz/~~ /jɪəz/ | Years | Jaren |
| X √ ~~/bɔ:/~~ /bɔɪ/ | Boy | Jongen |
| X √ ~~/epəl/~~ /æpl/ | Apple | Appel |
| X √ ~~/ʊərs/~~ /ɪəz/ | Ears | Oren |
| √ √ /\*sʊzən/ | Susan | Susan |
| X X ~~/dʌklɪng/~~ /dʌklɪŋ/ | Duckling | **-----------** Eendje |
| X X ~~/ʤʊʒ/~~ /ʤʊʤ/ | Judge | / ~~Jungle~~ Rechter |
| X √ ~~/telf~~ /teləfəʊn/ | Telephone | Telefoon |
| X √ ~~/sji:/~~ /ʃaɪ/ | Shy | Verlegen |
| X √ ~~/gaɪm/~~ /geɪm/ | Game | Spel |

1. Transcribe these 7 animals, written in Latin script, to phonetic script and translate.

-6 pts

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Phonetic script | Latin script | Translation |
| √ X /dɪə/ | Deer | Beer Ree |
| X √ ~~/dɔ:g/~~ /dɒg/ | Dog | Hond |
| X √ ~~/krɔ:kɒdaɪl/~~ /krɒkədaɪl/ | Crocodile | Krokodil |
| √ √ /maʊs/ | Mouse | Muis |
| X √ ~~/caɪt/~~ /kæt/ | Cat | Poes |
| X √ ~~/poɪni:/~~ /pəʊni:/ | Pony | Pony |
| X √ ~~/eləfʌnt/~~ /eləfənt/ | Elephant | Olifant |

Kiki scored 63% by making 19½ errors. When I came to analyse Kiki’s test, There were a couple of things I immediately noticed, and a couple of things that I just thought very amusing.

At last, I discovered what has been going on in Kiki’s mind: Kiki falls short of knowledge about several monophthongs and diphthongs because she has not been around when I introduced these to the class. Let’s take a quick peek at assignment C: Kiki did not seem to make any bad mistakes on the ‘obvious’ monophthongs, as they always called them, such as /i:/ and /ə/, the one I taught them when we first met. It is rather funny how Kiki finally learnt to write this schwa correctly, since before this test, she would always draw the schwa upside-down! But then, we get to a couple of monophthongs and diphthongs Kiki clearly does not quite yet know the sound of, such as /ɔ:/ in C.2. and /ʌ/ in C.7. The diphthongs however, I find rather interesting. She finally seemed to understand the /ɪə/ diphthong and the rather ‘easy’ /aʊ/ diphthong. However, the typically English /əʊ/ is more of a problem to her, as she transcribed ‘pony’ in C.6. as /poɪni:/. This ‘oɪ’ she speaks of, does not exist in the IPA. Not much later (I usually correct my tests criss-cross), I felt rather surprised by the fact she got confused with /ɪə/ in B.4, ‘ears’. In C.1. she had used it perfectly, whilst in B.4. she transcribed ‘ears’ as /ʊərs/, when it should be transcribed as /ɪəz/. This could be the case because she did not carefully listen when I read this word out loud in class the week before. Also, little things such as forgetting that a /\*/ before a phonetic transcription means that it is a transcribed name, are only a bother to Kiki herself. It is not something I will be harsh about whatsoever. There is nothing wrong with Kiki’s translations, even though she should have studied a bit harder to memorise those (due to the fact that they had three tests that day, I do not feel like I can actually blame her for not studying, as she voluntarily attends this phonetics course and because whether she fails or passes her tests, is irrelevant for her passing the year at school). Kiki surely improved in transcribing Latin script to phonetic script, but she still has a long way to go before she can actually say she knows the IPA by heart.

At the very end of the course, my students had to sit an oral exam. It was just a small test, recorded with a video camera. The students had to read a small amount of text to me, out loud. This bit of text would be written by themselves, in phonetic script, and corrected by me before they would sit their oral exam. Kiki had only been present for about 6 lessons and so did not write any text whatsoever. Kiki has been dismissed from her duties as one of my ‘guinea pigs’ and so was only present at the oral exam so to say good-bye to me.

* Silvy

This is Silvy. Silvy loves football and is in Diek’s class. She always has this big smile on her face and this kind of humour that could easily make your day okay again, if you had a bad day.

Silvy needed the tutoring I offered in return, if she would help me out with my profile assignment.

Silvy has been a true gift throughout the course. Silvy worked hard, she would ask questions if she did not understand and she would always raise her hand if she thought she knew the answer to a question. Silvy always did her homework perfectly and paid attention in class. Silvy always came to class with a big smile on her face, letting me know she really enjoyed phonetics.

Silvy always proved herself to be a very enthusiastic student. I have never seen Silvy coming into class without a smile on her face: she is always enthusiastic about everything and really makes me enjoy teaching her phonetics (or phonics, as she tends to call it every now and then). Even though she has been so enthusiastic about the course, Silvy seemed to be rather insecure about herself. She would get nervous for a test and she would always lower her raised hand when I asked her to answer a question I posed. Whenever I let the kids work on their homework in class, Silvy would say ‘I cannot do this’ while she was actually doing really well most of the time. She would always be the first to raise her hand in class to answer a question, and she would always ask questions if she did not completely understand something I was saying. Though Silvy is gifted with the ability to reproduce sounds flawlessly, I still do not feel like as if I have achieved my goal with Silvy. Silvy can reproduce sounds flawlessly when she has heard these sounds once or twice. Putting these sounds into a word was slightly more difficult to her, but she could do it when she tried really hard. Yet, I have not achieved my goal with Silvy because my goal was to give her a proper RP English accent. Silvy’s pronunciation has greatly improved since lesson 1, but I still cannot say that she now has a proper RP English accent. I did not achieve my goal with Silvy, although she has come furthest of all of my students.

Silvy was a little afraid to try and say a word out loud sometimes, because she seemed to be anxious to do it wrong, but whenever she did say a word out loud, she did very well and I felt very proud of her.

Silvy consented in me making two short video clips of her, so I could analyse her pronunciation. In the first video clip, she said the following text:

*Hello, I am Silvy Hoevenaars, I live in Venhorst and I am thirteen years old.*

*My hobbies are soccer and drawing.*

*I have one brother, his name is Jarne.*

*In my free time, I like to be with my friends and I like playing with my dog.*

*I now study phonetics and I hope to have a good accent.*

*Bye!*

***Analysis***

*The audio- and videofiles were lost by the end of December, due to a malfunction in my PC’s hard drive. Therefore, they are not included with this profile assignment.*

In the first video clip, Silvy was allowed to read off a paper, on which she had written down what she wanted to say. She was rather nervous and felt tongue-tied.

As far as I could see and hear, Silvy has no problems whatsoever reading out loud, though I found her accent rather interesting. Most people would say that her accent is a perfect example of ‘Dunglish’, Dutch English.

Let’s take a look at the first line of the text:

*“Hello, I am Silvy Hoevenaars” →* As I expected, she pronounces her own name with a Dutch accent. Nothing wrong with that. ‘I am’ is contracted. ‘Hello’ is pronounced with a sharp /e/. ‘Hello’ is supposed to be pronounced as /heˈləʊ/, whereas Silvy pronounces it as /heˈlɔ:/: the American way. Something she had to unlearn, since I only take RP English for an answer.

*“I live in Venhorst and I am thirteen years old.”* → “I live in Venhorst” is again very Dutch-ish, since the word ‘Venhorst’ changes the entire pronunciation of the rest of the sentence. “and” is pronounced as the Dutch ‘en’, or the Essex ‘and’, but in RP English we do actually pronounce the ‘d’ at the end! “I am” is again contracted, yet now we get to a very fascinating and interesting point: ‘thirteen’ is pronounced /ˌtɜ:rˈti:n/, whilst ‘thirteen’ should be pronounced as /ˌθɜːˈtiːn/. The difference? The ‘th’ sound and the ‘r’ in ‘thir’. The ‘r’ is not to be uttered, and the ‘th’ sound... Yeah, that is pretty difficult for most Dutch people, since that is, to us, an unfamiliar sound. The Greek, for example, already know this ‘th’ sound as their ‘theta’, much like the ‘th’ sound they use in the word ‘ανθρωπος’ (‘man’), which is the same one we use in phonetics. To them, pronouncing this ‘th’ sound can still be a big deal, since they have a slightly different ‘th’ sound from the English. But that is nitpicking, is it not?

*“My hobbies are soccer and drawing.” →* She has done really well here. I think she may not have noticed, but she was subconsciously using a ‘linking r’ → /maɪ ˈhɒbɪz ə ˈsɒkər ənd ˈdrɔːɪŋ/. The underlined word has an /r/ in it, which we call the ‘linking r’. If the next word start with a vowel, most English people use a ‘linking r’ so they will not have to use any glottal sounds that may come out rather awkwardly.

*“I have one brother, his name is Jarne.” →* There we go again: ‘brother’. Silvy pronounces this word as /ˈbrɒdər/, while it should be pronounced /ˈbrʌðə/. “His name is” is uttered almost perfectly, though in an American accent.

*“In my free time, I like to be with my friends and I like playing with my dog.”* → Very Dunglish, but I can hardly find anything that really sets my teeth on edge. There is nothing I have not discussed yet, such as the ‘linking r’ and the ‘th’ sound.

*“I now study phonetics and I hope to have a good accent.”* → “I hope to have a good accent”. “Accent” is pronounced like the Dutch ‘accent’. She did make a remark on that after we were done shooting the video clip. “O-oh, I said ‘accent’!”. “I now stoedy phonics”. Not sure if I should find this adorable or embarrassing. ‘Study’ should be pronounced /stʌdi:/, whilst Silvy pronounces it as /stʊdi/. Slight difference in pronunciation, big impact on where people think you are from. Saying “phonics” instead of phonetics is rather cute though, is it not? Come on, it is.

*“Bye!”* → Nothing wrong about her ‘bye’, since there is not much that can actually go wrong when saying ‘bye’.

Before we go on to the second and last video clip, I want to discuss Silvy’s results on her tests first. The first test was definitely the easiest one. The first test was about the words they could find in the glossary in their textbooks, and the monophthongs they had to learn. They had to transcribe a few words. I was rather hard on them with the census, but for a small test like that, I only found that reasonable. The maximum was 8 errors for 60%, which means that every mistake cost them 0.5 points on their final mark.

**Test Phonetics 1**

This test consists of terminology and transcribing. You already know the words you have to transcribe. You are not allowed to use your book during the test.

A. Fill in the meaning of the terms. Try to be as precise as you can. 2 pts

1. √ Voiced Een geluid waarbij je stembanden trillen
2. √ Parameter Een meetbare factor die aangeeft hoe iets moet

Come up with an example for the terms as well as filling in their meaning. 6 pts

* 1. x Diacritic ~~Tweeklank~~ Diphthong. You forgot to give examples!
  2. x Monophthong Eenklank You forgot to give examples!
  3. x Consonant Medeklinker You forgot to give examples!

B. You see the description of a term in Dutch. Fill in the right term. 3 pts

1. x Een tweeklank ~~Diacritic~~ Diphthong
2. √ Een geluid waarbij je stembanden niet trillen Voiceless
3. √ Een klinker Vowel

C. Fill in the right vowel sounds. 5 pts

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| English | Transcription | Dutch |
| Cup | /k ʌ p/ | Beker |
| Black | /bl ~~e~~ æ k/ | Zwart |
| Turn | /t ~~ɔ:~~ ɜ: n/ | ~~Proberen~~ Beurt |
| Drink | /dr ɪ nk/ | Drinken |
| Blue | /bl u: / | Blauw |

D. Fill in the right vowel sounds. 4 pts

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| English | Transcription | Dutch |
| See | /s i: / | ~~Zee~~ Zien |
| Again | / ~~ɒ~~ ə gen/ | Opnieuw |
| Dead | /d ~~æ~~ e d/ | Dood |
| Arm | / ~~ɜ:~~ ɑ: m/ | Arm |

Silvy scored 43% on her test by making 10,5 errors. Silvy forgot to carefully read exercise A2 and she got confused in exercises C and D. The words the students had to transcribe had all been used as keywords and had all been translated before, so if Silvy had made notes, she would definitely had scored over 80%.

On December 12, the students had to sit a second test. The test included transcribing 20 words they already knew and transcribing 7 words they did not know. With this test, I wanted to see if they could transcribe on their own, without my help. I calculated the census with the aid of a very helpful census chart, that can be turned to on http://www.cultuureducatie.nl/cultuurpleinagenda/downloads/tentamen\_tabel.pdf.

**Test 2**

This test consists of 27 words you have to transcribe. You already know 20 of these words. Seven of them, you do not know. Read the assignment well, just so to make sure you prevent making slight mistakes due to misreading something. Good luck!

A. Transcribe these 10 words and names, written in phonetic script, to Latin script and translate.

–2 pts

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Phonetic script | Latin script | Translation |
| √ /gз:l/ | Girl | Meisje |
| √ /\*lɪndə/ | Linda | Linda |
| √ /fʊtbɔ:l/ | Football | Voetbal |
| X X /maʊθ/ | ~~Match~~ Mouth | ~~Wedstrijd~~ Mond |
| √ /nəʊz/ | Noos (nose) | Neus |
| √ /ʃɒp/ | Shop | Winkel |
| √ /peə/ | Pear | Peer |
| √ /\*dʒi:n/ | Jean | Jean |
| √ /laik/ | Like | Leuk |
| √ /ɪlevn/ | Eleven | Elf |

B. Transcribe these 10 words and names, written in Latin script, to phonetic script and translate.

-9½ pts

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Phonetic script | Latin script | Translation |
| X ~~/jeəs/~~ /jɪəz/ | Years | Jaren |
| X ~~/bɔi:/~~ /bɔɪ/ | Boy | Jongen |
| √ /æpl/ | Apple | Appel |
| X X ~~/i:s/~~ /ɪəz/ | Ears | **----------** Oren |
| √ /\*sʊzən/ | Susan | Susan |
| √ /dʌklɪŋ/ | Duckling | Eend |
| X X ~~/ʤəʒ/~~ /ʤʌʤ/ | Judge | Rechter |
| ½ ~~/telfəʊn/~~ /teləfəʊn/ | Telephone | Telefoon |
| X X ~~/saɪ/~~ /ʃaɪ/ | Shy | Lucht Verlegen |
| X **--------** /geɪm/ | Game | Spel |

C. Transcribe these 7 animals, written in Latin script, to phonetic script and translate.

-4½ pts

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Phonetic script | Latin script | Translation |
| X X ~~/di:/~~ /dɪə/ | Deer | **------------** Ree |
| √ /dɒg/ | Dog | Hond |
| √ /krɒkədaɪl | Crocodile | Krokodil |
| √ /maʊs/ | Mouse | Muis |
| X ~~/ket/~~ /kæt/ | Cat | Poes |
| ½ /pɔ:ni:/  ! This is AE!!  RP = /pəʊni:/ | Pony | Pony |
| X ~~/elfʌnt/~~ /eləfənt/ | Elephant | Olifant |

Silvy scored 72% by making just 15 errors. Now, let us take a look at her previous test: Silvy scored 43% on her previous test by making 10,5 errors, whereas the maximum of errors to have a minimum score of 60% was 8 errors. On this test, the students got to make a whole 21,5 errors to score 60%. It might just be me, but I think it is clear to see that Silvy made an impressive amount of progress. But then again, this test was much unlike the previous test they had to sit. When I came to analyse her test, a couple of things definitely caught my eye.

Silvy seemed to find only little difficulty in translating the words. I can see how she uses an General American English accent when she reads the words, e.g. take a look at C.6: /pɔ:ni:/. This is almost a completely correct GA transcription of the word ‘pony’, which is transcribed in RP English as /pəʊni:/. This example shows perfectly well how she reads words in a GA accent. On the telly and on the internet, the main spelling and pronunciation of words is in a GA accent. You see soaps, TV documentaries and cartoons that are narrated by an American narrator. Kids nowadays grow up with the American accent, so it is in no single way strange that Silvy reads the words in a GA accent. It is my honour to make sure that, from now on, she only thinks in RP when she reads English words.

Silvy only seemed to make slight, simple mistakes, such as being confused with /æ/ and /e/ (take a look at C.5). Silvy would definitely benefit from memorising the following rule: if you do not know what sound it is, write down a /ə/: most of the time, you will be right (B.8. and C.7.). Silvy made a couple of errors concerning the diphthongs, e.g. B.1: /jɪəz/, ‘years’, which she transcribed as /jeəs/, and B.10: /geɪm/, ‘game’, which she did not transcribe. After the test, she claimed to have had a black-out and so did not remember anything anymore. Silvy should always remember that not filling in any answer at all always costs points on a test. Always try to fill in the blanks, even though you might have to guess. Diphthongs are not the most difficult aspect of phonetics, or so I believe, but need to be memorised well.

I found two other errors that really stood out against the rest, in my honest opinion. It is one of those mistakes that even I still make, even though I have been studying phonetics for almost a year now: B.1. (/jɪəz/, ‘years’) and B.4. (/ɪəz/, ‘ears’) both have a /z/ as the last consonant of the word. This rather subtle /z/ is very different from the steady, hissing /s/ Silvy transcribed these words with. Many words that end on an ‘s’ end with a /z/ in their phonetic transcription. Why? I am still to find out. All I know is that it is merely something you will have to just learn by heart.

At the very end of the course, my students had to sit an oral exam. It was just a small test, recorded with a video camera. The students had to read a small amount of text to me, out loud. This bit of text would be written by themselves, in phonetic script, and corrected by me before they would sit their oral exam. Silvy wrote the following bit of text and made the following transcription.

**Telling tales**

“Once upon a time, there was a princess.

Her name was Snowwhite.

Her stepmother had a mirror.

The mirror talked, and said she was the prettiest of the country.

When Snowwhite was older, the mirror said: ‘Snowwhite is the prettiest of the country!’

The stepmother was angry.

Snowwhite left to the woods, and she saw a house.

She knocked on the door, but there was no one.

She saw beds and she fell asleep.

The stepmother gave Snowwhite a poisoned apple.

The little men discovered her, and cried.

Then came the king, and he kissed Snowwhite.

She lived long and happily.”

**The transcription**

| wʌns əˈpɒn ə ˈtaɪm | ðə wəz ə prɪnˈses |

| hə ˈneɪm wəz snəʊˈwaɪt |

| hə ˈstepmʌðə həd ə ˈmɪrə |

| ðə ˈmɪrə ˈtɔːkt | ənd ˈsed ʃiː wəz ðə ˈprɪtɪɪst əv ðə ˈkʌntriː |

| wen snəʊˈwaɪt wəz ˈəʊldə | ðə ˈmɪrə ˈsed | snəʊˈwaɪt s ðə ˈprɪtɪɪst əv ðə ˈkʌntriː |

| ðə ˈstepmʌðə wəz ˈæŋɡriː |

| snəʊˈwaɪt left tə ðə wʊdz | ənd ʃiː ˈsɔː ə ˈhaʊs |

| ʃiː nɒkt ɒn ðə dɔː | bət ðə wəz nəʊ wʌn |

| ʃiː ˈsɔː ˈbedz ənd ʃiː fel əˈsliːp |

| ðə ˈstepmʌðə ɡeɪv snəʊˈwaɪt ə ˈpɔɪzn̩d ˈæpl̩ |

| ðə ˈlɪtl̩ men dɪˈskʌvəd hə | ənd kraɪd |

| ðen keɪm ðə kɪŋ | ənd hiː kɪst snəʊˈwaɪt |

| ʃiː lɪvd ˈlɒŋ ənd ˈhæpɪliː |

If it were to be for her transcription, Silvy would have scored an A+. I really feel like Silvy has finally got that going for her. Alas, speaking is more difficult than transcribing, or so she told me! In the analysis, you will be able to see if Snowwhite saved Silvy’s mark.

***Analysis***

In the analysis, we take a closer look at every single word and every single phrase, then zoom out to look at her performance in general. In class, during the oral exam, I recorded her on audio so to be able to take a look at how she had performed, later on.

First sentence

**What it should have been:** | wʌns əˈpɒn ə ˈtaɪm |

**What I hear:** | wʌns əˈpɒn ə ˈtaɪm |

**Analysis:** Even though she speaks with a Dutch accent, it does not even sound all that bad, really. I can hear that she is not ‘rounding’ her vowels all too nicely, but apart from that, at least every consonant is pronounced quite the way they should be pronounced. Vowel sounds are not always accurately uttered.

Second sentence

**What it should have been:** | ðə wəz ə prɪnˈses |

**What I hear:** | ðə wəs ə prɪnˈses |

**Analysis:** She seems to know every vowel sound and every consonant by heart, and seems to know how they are supposed to sound: but every single time she tries, it comes out slightly more ‘Dutch’ than she wanted to, or so she told me after the oral exam. /s/ sounds more like a /z/, it is not the hissing /s/ we know from RP English. But well, let’s cut her some slack, shall we?

Third sentence

**What it should have been:** | hə ˈneɪm wəz snəʊˈwaɪt |

**What I hear:** | hə ˈneɪm wəs snɔːˈwaɪd |’

‘

**Analysis:** I cannot hear aspiration, anywhere! I cannot hear the ‘llama’ we talked about in class either. Yes, we actually talked about llamas. Reason why? Llamas spit when you come too close. I used llamas to explain how the RP English /t/ works. This voiceless dental fricative is uttered with a certain friction that causes this fricative to be very ‘present’ in the RP English accent. It is best explained when you use the word ‘attack’ (/əˈtʰæk/) → the /t/ is very present in this word. This fricative should have been just as present in ‘Snowwhite’, whilst Silvy uttered a /d/ instead of a /t/. Apart from that, she did rather well on this line.

Fourth sentence

**What it should have been:** | hə ˈstepmʌðə həd ə ˈmɪrə |

**What I hear:** | hə ˈstepmɒdə had ə ˈmɪrɒr |

**Analysis:** I was slightly gobsmacked by what happened over there. It is like as if she has completely lost the /ʌ/. Also, I found a spontaneous /r/ in ‘mirror’, which really does not belong there. Or well, it does not belong there in RP English. Her rather perfect /ð/ turns into a sloppy /d/, which I think is quite a shame, as we practiced this ‘eth’ for weeks. Her pronunciation is more like GA English than RP English. I am starting to doubt whether I have taught Silvy how to pronounce every symbol well enough. However, she has her ‘schwa’ in /ˈstepmʌðə/ under control. Something I am quite glad about, is that I do not hear anything like an /ɹ/, which is pronounced much like the ‘Scottish ‘r’’ (or like the ‘r’ most people who live in the Randstad utter in certain words containing an ‘r’).

Fifth sentence

**What it should have been:** | ðə ˈmɪrə ˈtɔːkt |

**What I hear:** | də ˈmɪrɒr ˈtɔːlkt |

**Analysis:** Yeah, I kind of think that this is a big shame. The /ð/ is again a /d/, and again I can hear slight mistakes in /ˈmɪrə/. Silvy should also watch her /r/’s! They tend to sound more like a /w/. Something else that I think is a pity, is the /l/ in /tɔːkt/. RP English long vowels (the ones with the triangular colons behind the vowel sound) usually indicate that the lenis consonant behind it is not to be pronounced. With words such as /dɔː/, the removal of /r/ is always the case, since this ‘r’ has been replaced by a ‘schwa’ in most words. This counts for several consonants in several occasions as well, as I have explained before.

Silvy’s accent became even more Dutch in this sentence. I kind of started to wonder whether this would continue to worsen.

Sixth sentence

**What is should have been:** | ənd ˈsed ʃiː wəz ðə ˈprɪtɪɪst əv ðə ˈkʌntriː |

**What I hear:** | ən ˈsed ʃiː was ðə ˈprɪtɪɪst əf də ˈkaʊntriː |

**Analysis:**  I think that the gut feeling that I had earlier, concerning Silvy transcribing words in her head, was quite right. Her transcription of this sentence was again perfect, but I heard her utter things that did not even sound like anything close to the transcription. /was/ does not exist in RP English. /ˈkaʊntriː/ sounded more American than I she had meant it to. This pronunciation of ‘country’ is a perfect example of the category ‘I am not even reading my transcription as it was supposed to be read’, or at least, that is the feeling Silvy is giving me. Yet, we cannot simply go on being so pessimistic about Silvy. There are several things she does really well or that even seem to improve. Silvy finally got the hang of the ‘schwa’, which can be uttered in many several ways. Even more so, her ‘eth’ is almost perfect, and hey, I can even hear a /t/!

Seventh sentence

**What is should have been:** | wen snəʊˈwaɪt wəz ˈəʊldə |

**What I hear:** | wen snɔːˈwaɪt wəs ɒldə |

**Analysis:** Oh, things seem to get better here. There are a couple of errors due to nuance, but they are not the massive vowel-errors she has made earlier. The typical /əʊ/ sound in RP English is something Silvy should still work on, because this line sounded more like GA English than like RP English, but it is something I do not want to be too harsh about: I cannot expect any of my students to speak RP English flawlessly after just 12 lessons. Her ‘schwa’ is consistent and correct, she really knows how to do it!

Eight sentence

**What it should have been:** | ðə ˈmɪrə ˈsed |

**What I hear:** | ðə ˈmɪrɒ ˈsed |

**Analysis:** I think it is rather funny how the last /r/ in /mɪrɒ/ disappeared. In class, we talked about llama-t’s, as I told you before, and ‘subtle’ d’s. Her /d/ in /sed/ is really good, it is the alveolar plosive that I needed!

Ninth sentence

**What it should have been:** | snəʊˈwaɪt s ðə ˈprɪtɪɪst əv ðə ˈkʌntriː |

**What I hear:** | snəʊˈwaɪt s ðə ˈprɪtɪɪst əv ðə ˈkʌntriː |

**Analysis:** Silvy is consistent in her errors, but is yet as consistent in doing things right. I was rather gobsmacked when I heard her say /prɪtɪəst/: she uttered a /t/! I could not be more delighted. She has made quite the same errors as in sentence 6, but it sounded less Dutch, if you ask me.

Tenth sentence

**What it should have been:** | ðə ˈstepmʌðə wəz ˈæŋɡriː |

**What I hear:** | ðə ˈstepmʌðə wəz ˈæŋɡriː |

**Analysis:** The damage is done, really. In /æŋgwiː/ her /r/ turned into a /w/. Her /æ/ is good nonetheless. Her /s/ in /wəs/ sounds a little more like the /z/ it was supposed to sound like, but it was too much of an /s/, still.

Eleventh sentence

**What it should have been:** | snəʊˈwaɪt left tə ðə wʊdz |

**What I hear:** | snɔːˈwaɪt left tʊ ðə wʊdz |

**Analysis:** Very good. Her accent is still rather ‘Dunglish’. She keeps saying /snɔːˈwaɪt/ instead of /snəʊˈwaɪt/, but I think I might as well just count that as a repetitive GA English error.

Twelfth sentence

**What it should have been:** | ənd ʃiː ˈsɔː ə ˈhaʊs |

**What I hear:** | ənd ʃiː ˈsɑːw ə ˈhaʊs |

**Analysis:** A /ˈsɑː/ is a ‘saw’, an object with which you cut down trees. ‘Saw’, as in the past simple version of ‘see’, is transcribed as /ˈsɔː/. /ʃ/ is okay, but tends to sound like an /s/.

Thirteenth sentence

**What it should have been:** | ʃiː nɒkt ɒn ðə dɔː |

**What I hear:** | ʃiː nɒkt ɒn ðə dɔː |

**Analysis:** Perfect! There is only little I can say about this line, which is that it still sounds slightly Dunglish, but I am nevertheless rather surprised about her pronunciation in this sentence!

Fourteenth sentence

**What it should have been:** | bət ðə wəz nəʊ wʌn |

**What I hear:** | bət ðə wəs nɔː wʌn |

**Analysis:** Apart from the fact that it still sounds more like GA English, her pronunciation of the vowels and consonants were more or less correct. The only thing I can remark here is that she has difficulty switching between /s/ and /z/.

Fifteenth sentence

**What it should have been:** | ʃiː ˈsɔː ˈbedz ənd ʃiː fel əˈsliːp |

**What I hear:** | ʃiː ˈsɑːw ˈbeds ən ʃiː fel əˈsliːp |

**Analysis:** I can only say that I think that Silvy has been doing some hard work before the exam. Except for /sɑːw/, where she made the same error as in sentence 12, there is not much I can say about this line. Still, some errors because of just nuance, but that is something I will hardly look at.

Sixteenth sentence

**What it should have been:** | ðə ˈstepmʌðə ɡeɪv snəʊˈwaɪt ə ˈpɔɪzn̩d ˈæpl̩ |

**What I hear:** | ðə ˈstepmɒðə ɡɪv snɔːˈwaɪt ə ˈpɔɪn̩tɪd ˈæpl̩ |

**Analysis:** Wait, what? A pointed apple? What is a pointed apple? I am rather confused now. She goes with the same errors as before, but I am still rather disappointed about ‘pointed’. I do not even know where that came from.

Seventeenth sentence

**What it should have been:** | ðə ˈlɪtl̩ men dɪˈskʌvəd hə |

**What I hear:** | ðə ˈlɪdl̩ men dɪˈskɒvərd hər |

**Analysis:** B..b..bu..but Silvy! You were doing such a good job on the ‘t’s’ and you left out the ‘r’s’ so perfectly! Such a bummer, but I have to count them in as errors nonetheless. /ˈlɪdl̩/ is American.

Eighteenth sentence

**What it should have been:** | ənd kraɪd |

**What I hear:** | ən kraɪd |

**Analysis:** That was not so bad, after all! The /d/ can actually be left out, if need be. So apart from that, she did a great job on this sentence.

Nineteenth sentence

**What it should have been:** | ðen keɪm ðə kɪŋ |

**What I hear:** | ðen | ten keɪm ðə kɪŋ |

**Analysis:** Such a bummer. Silvy corrected herself incorrectly, after saying /ðen/ almost perfectly. Apart from that, all of it only sounded slightly Dutch, but that is something Silvy can still work on.

Twentieth sentence

**What it should have been:** | ənd hiː kɪst snəʊˈwaɪt |

**What I hear:** | ənd hiː kɪs snɔːˈwaɪt |

**Analysis:** Silvy started off rather well, then she forgot to utter a consonant and made ye ol’ mistake with /snɔːˈwaɪt/ again.

Twenty-first sentence

**What it should have been:** | ʃiː lɪvd ˈlɒŋ ənd ˈhæpɪliː |

**What I hear:** | siː lɪvəd ˈlɒŋ ənd ˈhepɪliː |

**Analysis:** Ooph, this is going to cost Silvy a couple of points on her final mark. This is the perfect example of transcribing phonetic script to Latin script in the mind and uttering what you think the Latin transcription should sound like. There seems to be nothing left of her /ʃ/.

On this final oral exam, Silvy scored 73%. Silvy finished the course with an overall score of 63% (72%+72%+43%/3=63%).

* Diek

Meet Diek. Diek is a 12-year-old boy who loves cracking jokes. He loves football and I have never seen him without a massive smile on his face. Diek currently attends the second year of the athenaeum.

Diek has been enthusiastic throughout the entire course. He would ask questions if he did not understand what I was saying, and he would always try his best to give the correct answers in class. Diek has been an amazing student for 12 lessons, and I am ever so sure he will get there.

Diek is a bright little lad, who proved himself a very diligent and hard-working boy. Diek would always pay attention and ask questions in class. Given the fact that Diek has been rather busy with his regular school work and with so many other things, like growing up, for instance, I find it absolutely remarkable that Diek has done so well. Diek’s accent has, in my opinion, impressively improved. Just like Silvy, Diek can reproduce sounds amazingly well, even those sounds that I usually niggled about, such as the /əʊ/ sound. Moreover, Diek has scored well on his tests, which showed me that he actually made good effort to acquire the art of phonetics and phonology. Hitherto, Diek has greatly improved, and I hope he will keep on practicing his speaking and reading skills, and that he will not stop practicing phonetics, for Diek has really shown that phonetics and phonology do make a difference. Frankly, when I started this very project, I pretty much scrutinised the possibility that phonetics can make a difference with kids of Diek’s age, but Diek certainly proved the opposite. No such thing could I have imagined or hoped for, at least, not in this magnitude. Given that Diek has worked so hard to help me successfully write this profile assignment, I am still flabbergasted when I think of where Diek started and where he made a finish with a last dash: once again, I need to say that Diek has greatly improved. Diek was never afraid to raise his hand in class and would never reconsider asking me anything; Diek is a very straight-forwarded lad, and asked the intelligent questions only a child with his capacity and brains could do. The first sound Diek learnt was the ‘schwa’ (/ə/), as we discussed that one when we first met. Diek was enthusiastic almost immediately, even though he had only applied for the course to get the free tutoring in English that I reciprocally promised.

Even Diek assented to let me shoot a quick video of Diek, in which he told me a little bit about himself. He had written down the text by himself and, without my help, read this out loud to the camera. Diek said the following text in the video clip:

*Hello, I am Diek Beniers.*

*I am thirteen years old.*

*I like playing soccer.*

*I live in Gemert.*

*And I have a little brother called Joes, and he is eleven years old.*

*And I have a little sister, called Suus and she is nine years old.*

*I now study phonetics and I hope to have a good accent.*

*Goodbye!*

**Analysis**

*The audio- and videofiles were lost by the end of December, due to a malfunction in my PC’s hard drive. Therefore, they are not included with this profile assignment.*

Again, I found a perfect example of a speaker of ‘Dunglish’, Dutch English.

*“Hello, I am Diek Beniers.”* → ‘Hello’ is pronounced /heˈlɔ:w/, rather Dutch but nicely rounded, even though he used the wrong vowel sound. ‘Hello’ should be pronounced /heˈləʊ/ in RP English, but for a introduction video, I do not think that this is a bad start. ‘I am’ is contracted, yet again sounds very Dutch. It is rather funny though, how Diek tries to pronounce his own name in an ‘English’ accent. Good effort!

*“I am thirteen years old.”* → ‘I am’ is contracted, nothing wrong with that. Just like Silvy, Diek is thirteen years old and pronounces this number as /ˌtɜ:rˈti:n/, while it should be pronounced as /ˌθɜːˈtiːn/. ‘Years’ is pronounced as /ji:rz/: it should be pronounced as /jɪəz/. ‘Old’ is pronounced as /ɔ:ld/, while this is a word that has this typically English sound in it and should be pronounced as /əʊld/.

*“I like playing soccer.”* → ‘I like’ is almost perfectly pronounced, as is ‘playing’, though the diphthong /eɪ/ in /ˈpleɪɪŋ/ is not as nicely rounded as most native English speakers would utter it. ‘Soccer’ should be pronounced as /sɒkə/, though Diek pronounces it like /sɒkər/, with an /r/. The ‘schwa’ (/ə/) is basically the only remaining trace of this /r/. You can see this clearly when you compare RP English with GA (General American) English. In GA English, this /r/ at the end of most words is still there, whilst in RP English this r is left out and usually transcribed with a schwa.

*“I live in Gemert.”* → | ˈaɪ lɪf ɪn ˈɣeɪmərt | really did surprise my eardrums. ‘Live’ is incorrectly pronounced as /lɪf/ and should be pronounced as /lɪv/. For me, it would have been complete if Diek had tried to say the word ‘Gemert’ with an English accent as well. Apart from that, it just really sounds ‘Dunglish’, which is a shame and a motivation to work really hard on Diek’s accent.

*“And I have a little brother called Joes, and he is eleven years old.”* → It all sounds so American and Dunglish at the same time! I honestly think that Diek can do so much better. After 12 lessons in phonetics, I hope I get to see improvement. Due to the Dutch name ‘Joes’ in the sentence, the entire sentence goes all Dunglish, which is a real shame, because I think that Diek could have given me more insight on his accent by leaving that out.

*“And I have a little sister, called Suus and she is nine years old.”* → Diek can obviously do it. He uttered the word ‘called’ perfectly, after correcting himself. ‘Called’ should be pronounced as /kɔːld/. Credit where credit is due: well done, Diek.

*“I now study phonetics and I hope to have a good accent.”* → Wow. Credit where credit is due, I said? Forget about that. This is a real disappointment, after the previous line. Ah well, it can only get better, right? I really should start teaching Diek about emphasising syllables. Diacritics, where are you when I need you?!

*“Goodbye!”* → Nothing wrong with that, as only little can go wrong with a nice and kind ‘goodbye!’.

Diek also had to sit the tests I tortured my students with. Diek scored brilliant marks throughout the course. The following test is the first test Diek, Silvy and Kiki had to do. Below, you can find Diek’s answers to the questions and the corrections. The census was 1 error = ½ mark. 8 errors would make for a score of 60%.

**Test Phonetics 1**

This test consists of terminology and transcribing. You already know the words you have to transcribe. You are not allowed to use your book during the test.

A. Fill in the meaning of the terms. Try to be as precise as you can. 2 pts

1. √ Voiced Als je stembanden trillen wanneer je iets zegt.
2. √ Parameter Een meetbare eigenschap die aangeeft hoe iets werkt.

Come up with an example for the terms as well as filling in their meaning. 6 pts

* 1. √ Diacritic Geeft aan waar de klemtoon ligt. Vb. /ˈdi:k/
  2. √ Monophthong Eenklank Vb. /kʌp/
  3. x Consonant Medeklinker ~~Vb. /aɪ/~~ ← This is a diphthong

B. You see the description of a term in Dutch. Fill in the right term. 3 pts

1. √ Een tweeklank Diphthong
2. √ Een geluid waarbij je stembanden niet trillen Voiceless
3. √ Een klinker Vowel

C. Fill in the right vowel sounds. 5 pts

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| English | Transcription | Dutch |
| √ √ Cup | /k ʌ p/ | Beker |
| √ √ Black | /bl æ k/ | Zwart |
| √ X Turn | /t ɜ: n/ | ~~Poging~~ Beurt |
| √ √ Drink | /dr ɪ nk/ | Drinken |
| √ √ Blue | /bl u: / | Blauw |

D. Fill in the right vowel sounds. 4 pts

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| English | Transcription | Dutch |
| √ √ See | /s i: / | Zien |
| √ √ Again | / ə gen/ | Nog een keer |
| √ √ Dead | /d e d/ | Dood |
| √ √ Arm | / ɑ: m/ | Arm |

Diek made only 2 errors, and so scored 90% on his test. I was pretty much flabbergasted when I corrected his test; I just stared at it and tried to find other errors, as I could simply not believe how he had done it, but Diek is an ambitious boy who works really hard. He had actually studied for this test, something I had not expected from any of my students.

On December 12, the students had to sit a second test. The test included transcribing 20 words they already knew and transcribing 7 words they did not know. With this test, I wanted to see if they could transcribe on their own, without my help. I calculated the census with the aid of a very helpful census chart, that can be turned to on http://www.cultuureducatie.nl/cultuurpleinagenda/downloads/tentamen\_tabel.pdf.

**Test 2**

This test consists of 27 words you have to transcribe. You already know 20 of these words. Seven of them, you do not know. Read the assignment well, just so to make sure you prevent making slight mistakes due to misreading something. Good luck!

1. Transcribe these 10 words and names, written in phonetic script, to Latin script and translate.

–3½ pts

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Phonetic script | Latin script | Translation |
| √ /gз:l/ | Girl | Meisje |
| √ /\*lɪndə/ | Linda | Linda |
| ½ /fʊtbɔ:l/ | Futhbool (Football) | Voetbal |
| ½ X /maʊθ/ | Mauth (Mouth) | ~~Bergen~~ Mond |
| ½ /nəʊz/ | Neuz (Nose) | Neus |
| √ /ʃɒp/ | Shop | Winkel |
| ½ /peə/ | Peer (Pear) | Peer |
| ½ /\*dʒi:n/ | Gien (Jean) | Gien (Jean) |
| √ /laik/ | Like | Leuk |
| √ /ɪlevn/ | Eleven | Elf |

1. Transcribe these 10 words and names, written in Latin script, to phonetic script and translate.

-9 pts

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Phonetic script | Latin script | Translation |
| X √ ~~/ʤi:s/~~ /jɪəz/ | Years | Jaren |
| X √ ~~/boi/~~ /bɔɪ/ | Boy | Jongen |
| √ √ /æpl/ | Apple | Appel |
| X X ~~/i:s/~~ /ɪəz/ | Ears | Aardig Oren |
| X √ ~~/\*sʌsən/~~ /\*sʊzən/ | Susan | Susan |
| √ √ /dʌklɪŋ/ | Duckling | Eend |
| X X ~~/ʤɜ:dg/~~ /ʤʌʤ/ | Judge | Judge Rechter |
| X √ ~~/teləfɒn/~~ /teləfəʊn/ | Telephone | Telefoon |
| √ √ /ʃaɪ/ | Shy | Verlegen |
| X √ /gɜ:m/ /geɪm/ | Game | Spel |

1. Transcribe these 7 animals, written in Latin script, to phonetic script and translate.

-5 pts

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Phonetic script | Latin script | Translation |
| X X ~~/di:/~~ /dɪə/ | Deer | ~~Beer~~Ree |
| √ √ /dɒg/ | Dog | Hond |
| X √ ILLEGIBLE /krɒkədaɪl/ | Crocodile | Krokodil |
| √ √ /maʊs/ | Mouse | Muis |
| X √ ~~/ket/~~ /kæt/ | Cat | Poes |
| √ √ /pəʊni:/ | Pony | Pony |
| X √ ~~/elə/~~ /eləfənt/ | Elephant | Olifant |

Diek clearly did not score a brilliant pass mark like he did on his previous test, but with 17,5 errors he made it to the humble 68%. It is definitely not what I am used to with Diek, but they already had sat 3 tests that day, so I do not blame him. Nonetheless, I am ever so proud of him, especially when it comes down to transcribing. C.4 and C.6. both show that Diek understands the very basics of transcribing and that he can think in an RP English accent, since, when you look at C.6, you can see that Diek correctly transcribed the word ‘pony’. In RP, this is transcribed as /pəʊni:/, whereas the /əʊ/ is a typically English sound. Though, minor errors such as in B.4. show that Diek should definitely work on learning the vowel sounds by heart, because diphthongs still are a bit difficult to him, especially the diphthongs that end in a /ə/ quality. Errors such as in C.3, transcribing ‘crocodile’ with something I could hardly read, are merely a case of sloppiness. Diek could have scored points on these.

Diek definitely scored well on his translations, something I counted in a little too harshly, since the transcriptions should have been perfect. On that very side, I felt disappointed. I had hoped that my students had actually learnt enough from the lessons that I would have received neigh perfect transcriptions on their tests. Yet, at the same time, they did have other things, more important things, to do apart from phonetics, so I should not have had such high expectations of them. Besides, phonetics is quite a difficult course, if not too difficult for children their age.

It was only after seeing the difference between B.9 and B.2. that I realised that I should have repeated the information they got from me in the earlier lessons a bit more often in the later period of the course, since IPA symbols such as /ʃ/ are used correctly by Diek, whilst the diphthong /ɔɪ/ should have been used in B.2: Diek used /oi/, a diphthong that does not even exist. During class, I forgot to pay attention to IPA symbols I had taught them beforehand, now looking at how the first monophthongs and the first diphthongs are incorrectly used, such as in C.5. and B.10.

What did surprise me, however, were Diek’s translations in assignment A. Regarding the fact that we had talked about the same words in class only one or two weeks before the test (I even had them write it down so they would not forget), he still translated them incorrectly. I had to count ½ errors on misspelling a word and 1 error if the word was translated incorrectly or if the transcription came to be the wrong word. I can imagine how they sometimes do not know a word, such as ‘duckling’ in B.6, but words like ‘mouth’ and ‘nose’ seem like very common words to me. Maybe it is best if, after the course, I will help them out with their English just a little more, because, as far as I know, parts of the body are discussed in year 1.

Evermore, Diek has made effort to score high on his test. I hope that, by the time he has to do his oral exam, he will be ready to show off an improved accent.

At the very end of the course, my students had to sit an oral exam. It was just a small test, recorded with a video camera. The students had to read a small amount of text to me, out loud. This bit of text would be written by themselves, in phonetic script, and corrected by me before they would sit their oral exam. Diek wrote the following bit of text and made the following transcription. For the correct transcription, take a look at the transcription below Diek’s.

**There was a basketball**

Once upon a time, there was a basketball.

It was orange and black.

It was very beautiful, so women thought.

And he thought: I am beautiful and I am the best.

He had many friends and he was very rich.

But one day, there was a stupid boy, and he bought the basketball.

The basketball went to his house.

He lost his money and his friends and he was lonely forever.

**The transcription**

| wʌns əˈpɒn ə ˈtaɪm | ðə wəz ə ˈbɑːskɪtbɔːl |

| ɪt wəz ˈɒrɪndʒ ənd blæk |

| ɪt wəz ˈveri  ˈbjuːtəfl̩ | ˈsəʊ ˈwɪmɪn ˈθɔːt |

| ənd hi ˈθɔːt | ˈaɪ əm ˈbjuːtəfl̩ | ənd ˈaɪ əm ðə best |

| hi həd ˈmeni frendz ən hi wəz ˈveri rɪtʃ |

| bʌt wʌn deɪ ðə wəz ə ˈstjuːpɪd ˌbɔɪ ənd hi ˈbɔːt ðə ˈbɑːskɪtbɔːl |

| ðə ˈbɑːskɪtbɔːl ˈwent tu ɪz ˈhaʊs |

| hi lɒst ɪz ˈmʌni ənd ɪz frendz ən hi wəz ˈləʊnli fəˈrevə |

***Analysis***

In the analysis, we take a closer look at every single word and every single phrase, then zoom out to look at her performance in general. In class, during the oral exam, I recorded her on audio so to be able to take a look at how she had performed, later on. Diek scored 62% on his final exam. Diek’s overall score comes down to 73% (62%+68%+90%/3=73%), which is a brilliant overall score.

First sentence

**What it should have been:** | wʌns əˈpɒn ə ˈtaɪm |

**What I hear:** | wʌs əˈpɒn ə ˈtaɪm |

**Analysis:** Diek kind of lost track of the /n/ in /wʌns/, but apart from that, it sounds good. /ˈtaɪm/ is not too nicely rounded, but that is okay.

Second sentence

**What it should have been:** | ðə wəz ə ˈbɑːskɪtbɔːl |

**What I hear:** | tʰə wəs ə ˈbɑːskɪtbɔːl |

**Analysis:** Nice one on the /ˈbɑːskɪtbɔːl/! Diek does not fully get the use of /ə/ yet, but the use of this ‘schwa’ is usually rather difficult. Diek utters an aspirated ‘t’ instead of /ð/, which sort of proved that we did not pay enough attention to that in class.

Third sentence

**What it should have been:** | ɪt wəz ˈɒrɪndʒ ənd blæk |

**What I hear:** | ɪt wəs ˈɒrəndz ən blæk |

**Analysis:** /blæk/ is nicely pronounced. I get the error Diek made in /ˈɒrəndz/, since the /dʒ/ is something we do not really have in the Dutch language.

Fourth sentence

**What it should have been:** | ɪt wəz ˈveriː  ˈbjuːtəfl̩ |

**What I hear:** | ɪt wəs ˈveriː  ˈbjuːdɪfəl |

**Analysis:** Usual ‘Dutchie’ errors here: Dutch people hear the American accent every day. I thought I had ‘kicked his bum’ enough to get that out, but /ˈbjuːdɪfəl/ proves otherwise. Diek also has to work on the difference between /z/ and /s/.

Fifth sentence

**What it should have been:** | ˈsəʊ ˈwɪmɪn ˈθɔːt |

**What I hear:** | ˈsɔː ˈwɪmɪn ˈtʰɔːt |

**Analysis:** There it goes: the typically English diphthongs /əʊ/ went to the wall, and is replaced by the ever so American /ɔː/, and again, Diek aspirates the /t/ instead of uttering a ‘theta’ or an ‘eth’. Good job on /ˈwɪmɪn/ and the /ɔː/ in /ˈtʰɔːt/, though! Nicely rounded!

Sixth sentence

**What it should have been:** | ənd hiː ˈθɔːt |

**What I hear:** | ən hiː ˈtʰɔːt |

**Analysis:** Same, same, I presume. There is no actual error in leaving the /d/ out in /ənd/. Again an aspirated /t/ in /tʰɔːt/, which should have been a /θ/.

Seventh sentence

**What it should have been:** | ˈaɪ əm ˈbjuːtəfl̩ |

**What I hear:** | ˈaɪm ˈbjuːdəfl̩ |

**Analysis:** Contraction in /aɪm/, which is okay by me. Again a /d/ instead of a /t/ in /bju:dɪfl̩/.It does sound slightly better the the first time he said ‘beautiful’, though.

Eight sentence

**What it should have been:** | ənd ˈaɪ əm ðə best |

**What I hear:** | ənd ˈaɪm ðə best |

**Analysis:** Whoop, whoop, he did the ‘eth’! Not a perfect one, but it got very close to an actual ‘eth’! Again, he uses contraction, which I still could not be less bothered about. I have no remarks about this sentence whatsoever. Okay, he sounds Dutch, but you cannot really bash that out of someone in less that 12 lessons of 45 minutes, can you?

Ninth sentence

**What it should have been:** | hiː həd ˈmeni frendz ən hiː wəz ˈveri rɪtʃ |

**What I hear:** | hiəd ˈmeni fɹends end hiː wəs ˈveri rɪtʃ |

**Analysis:** Here is the /ɹ/ I talked about earlier, which I always call the ‘Scottish r’. ‘He had’ is contracted by Diek to /hɪəd/, which I, unfortunately, have to correct, as it is an error. Apart from that, all I can see is that Diek really struggles with /s/ and /z/.

Tenth sentence

**What it should have been:** | bʌt wʌn deɪ ðə wəz ə ˈstjuːpɪd ˌbɔɪ ənd hiː ˈbɔːt ðə ˈbɑːskɪtbɔːl |

**What I hear:** | bət wʌn deɪ tʰeə wəs ə ˈstjuːpɪd ˌbɔɪ ənd hiː ˈbɔːt tʰə ˈbɑːskɪtbɔːl |

**Analysis:** No problem with /bət/, as it is just the unstressed form of /bʌt/. /tʰeə/... too bad. Proud of his diphthong /eə/, less proud of his aspirated /t/. /stjuːpɪd/, well done! /bɔːt/ is pronounced with perfection. Again, good work on /bɑːskɪtbɔːl/!

Eleventh sentence

**What it should have been:** | ðə ˈbɑːskɪtbɔːl ˈwent tuː ɪz ˈhaʊs |

**What I hear:** | tʰə ˈbɑːskɪtbɔːl ˈwent tuː ɪz ˈhaʊs |

**Analysis:** If it were for rounding of the vowels, I would have given Diek a fail mark. But, the aim of the oral test was to read exactly what was on the paper and Diek has done really well on that, this time. Except for the consistent aspiration of /t/, there is only little I can nag about.

Twelfth sentence

**What it should have been:** | hiː lɒst ɪz ˈmʌniː ənd ɪz frendz ən hiː wəz ˈləʊnliː fəˈrevə |

**What I hear:** | hɪ lɒst hɪs ˈmɒniː end hɪs frendz ən hiː wəs ˈləʊnliː fəˈrevə |

**Analysis:** Too bad Diek kind of rushed towards the end: the first part of the sentence was worth crying over. Yet, the last part was far better. /frendz/ is better than his previous /fɹends/. Shame he said /end/ instead of /ənd/. If it had been /ænd/, it would have been the stressed version of ‘and’, which would have been more or less correct and would not have been counted in as another error.

* The author of this profile assignment

Not just Kiki, Silvy and Diek have made progress during class. I, as a teacher-to-be, also seem to have made quite some progress as well. At the 7th of November, during the 6th lesson, student teacher Robert de Leijer from the Hogeschool Utrecht came to visit my class to analyse my didactical skills and my knowledge of phonetics. Robert de Leijer has attended phonetics for two years now, and found it great to come over and analyse me. Mr. De Leijer has written down a couple of things that he noticed when I was teaching my students phonetics:

*Observation Anne Manders 07-11-2014*

*You immediately told the kids what you were about to do this lesson. This really draws attention to what you are about to say, so that is good. Maybe you should paraphrase this a bit more clearly, because you tend to be rather chaotic.*

*You immediately repeat what you have done during the previous lesson, which is good.*

*You ask when your students say they know about something. One moment you asked the children ‘do you know what it was about?’. The kids replied ‘yes’. You asked ‘what was it again, then?’. That was really good.*

*Yet, you’re not consistent in this. Every now and then you give away answers or you assume that the students already know something.*

*Make sure you do not give irrelevant information, this could make your lesson rather chaotic.*

*You should also look at your class when writing information on the whiteboard every now and then. But: learn how to use a whiteboard!*

*Keywords could help students to memorise vowels. It also makes it easier to talk about a vowel if you call it a ‘lot-vowel’ instead of ‘that upside-down a’.*

*The atmosphere in the classroom is good, yet make sure you do not become their ‘best friend’ whatsoever. This is difficult when you are teaching only a small class like yours, but try to keep that in mind.*

*When one of your students needs more time, let the other students check their homework with an answer sheet or something like that. This makes sure that you can keep up the pace of your lessons.*

*Repetition is the mother of science, well done!*

*Robert de Leijer, student teacher Hogeschool Utrecht*

So far Mr. De Leijer’s comments on how I teach. These notes have indeed helped me to become a better teacher for children and make sure to get the best out of every student. Robert de Leijer made me feel out of my comfort zone when he was in my classroom, yet he was very supportive and made me feel at ease when we discussed the results. Mr. De Leijer has been of great help and I am ever so grateful he travelled from Best to Gemert to check up on me.

**Survey**

Beside the fact that Mr. De Leijer came to visit my class for a quick check-up, the students also provided me with valuable feedback. The survey consisted of 10 questions, 5 of them were questions they could give a written answer to, and another 5 in which they had to rate my skills as a teacher. The survey was made on http://www.surveymonkey.com and was filled in by the students anonymously. Here are the 10 questions and the replies (which I have translated from Dutch to English) to them:

# 1. You have had 2 lessons in phonetics by now. Did you like it?

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Not at all | Not really | A little | Very much |
| 0,00% | 0,00% | 33,33% | 66,66% |

# 2. What do you like about the lessons and is there something you do not like about the lessons?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Answer 1 | “I’m glad you honestly listen to us. I guess that’s why we listen to you. It’s 50/50 fair play.” |
| Answer 2 | “I just really like the lessons. You give really nice lessons.” |
| Answer 3 | “You give clear instructions.” |

**3. Do you think the teacher arranged his/her lessons well?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Answer 1 | “So far, it’s not too much to comprehend at once. The learning material is evenly divided over the lessons” |
| Answer 2 | “Well and clear.” |
| Answer 3 | “It’s enough for one lesson. You don’t discuss too much, nor too little during a lesson. You slice the information you want to share with us into small portions, so it’s easier for us to understand.” |

**4. What do you think of the way you teacher teaches you?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Answer 1 | “You’re fun!” |
| Answer 2 | “I think it’s really good.” |
| Answer 3 | “You don’t just stand there, as if you don’t have to do anything. You are also not too serious-faced.” |

**5. What is your opinion on the textbook your teacher gave you at the start of the course?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Answer 1 | “So far, I could find everything I needed to know in the textbook.” |
| Answer 2 | “It was really good!” |
| Answer 3 | “It’s easy to find something in the textbook. You also translated the information in both Dutch and English, so it’s easy to understand.” |

**6. Did you think the exercises in your textbook clear?**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Answer 1 | “I did.” |
| Answer 2 | “Yes.” |
| Answer 3 | “Very clear.” |

**7. You get to rate your teacher now. For every skill, you get to rate your teacher, starting with didactics (how the teacher teaches you, how she gives you the information you need to know). 1 = awful, 10 = perfect.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Score |
| 0,00% | 0,00% | 0,00% | 0,00% | 0,00% | 0,00% | 33,33% | 33,33% | 33,33% | 0,00% | **8.67** |

**8. Rate your teacher: standing in front of students.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Score |
| 0,00% | 0,00% | 0,00% | 0,00% | 0,00% | 0,00% | 0,00% | 66,66% | 33,33% | 0,00% | **8.33** |

**9. Rate your teacher: lay-out of the lessons and lay-out of what you got to work with.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Score |
| 0,00% | 0,00% | 0,00% | 0,00% | 0,00% | 33,33% | 0,00% | 0,00% | 33,33% | 33,33% | **8.33** |

**10. Rate your teacher: Pedagogy (what is his/her approach towards you as a student?).**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | Score |
| 0,00% | 0,00% | 0,00% | 0,00% | 0,00% | 0,00% | 0,00% | 0,00% | 33,33% | 66,66% | **9.67** |

Chapter 4: Answers to questions

Websites and applications like Babbel, Duolingo and Italki can teach you how to use English phrases, Swedish sayings and Greek words. They might even have a built-in computer that allows you to have every Russian word you want to learn to be said out loud, just so you can hear what it should sound like. Is there perfection in reproduction? There can be, but I would rather focus on something that has proved me right: phonetics. However: I have greatly overestimated phonetics, regarding what it can do for a child’s accent. I think the student who did best in the experiment was Silvy, yet her accent still gives away where she is from rather clearly. This is not what I had hoped for in the very beginning, but hey; it is a start!

§4.1: The subsidiary questions

Question 1: Is it difficult to learn and understand phonetics?

Obviously, finding difficulty in something is a very personal aspect of learning. One can experience more stumbling-blocks when learning French than someone else does. This is just the same with phonetics. I believe that you need to be rather open-minded in the first place, to learn phonetics. It is not quite a subject that you just do for fun. It has to catch your interest. In other words: it has to appeal to you. Phonetics is not difficult, in my eyes, but you need to be rather determined to learn phonetics to actually succeed. Then again, understanding and learning something are two completely different things. I think it is easier to learn phonetics than to actually understand phonetics. Phonetics is rather abstract, if you do not get all the information needed to make it concrete information again. The results from my experiment with my three students show that phonetics is not too hard to learn, but rather difficult to understand and work with. It took my students far more time to actually understand how to apply the rules and sounds they learnt in class than to actually learn what the symbols looked like and what they sounded like.

Unfortunately, phonetics is more than just writing down funny symbols and learning how to utter them: phonetics is about opening doors inside a language, learning what it looks like and what it sounds like. Phonetics is taught at teacher training schools, but if you really want to make a profession out of phonetics, you have to do a Master in Linguistics. Phonetics is, to me, not fair, too difficult, but more interesting than anything else in the world, and I frankly hope that all of my students have experienced phonetics as such.

**Conclusion:**

Phonetics can be difficult to understand, but my experiment shows that it is not very difficult to learn. I assume it mostly depends on how diligent and determined the students are. Then again, finding difficulty in something is a very personal aspect of learning, which makes the answer to this question neither a ‘yes’ or a ‘no’. Every student is unique and should be treated as such.

Question 2: Is it possible to teach a 12-15-year-old phonetics?

My experiment has shown that it is indeed possible to teach a 12-15-year-old phonetics, even if it is just a tad of it. I think it mainly depends on how much time you have got to discuss phonetics with your students. Teaching a student everything about phonetics in just one year, is neigh impossible since phonetics and phonology cover a massive load of information, which would ask for complete dedication and all the time a student has.

I think the answer to this question lies where you draw lines as to what you read the question like. Some might say that it is impossible to teach a 12-15-year-old phonetics, because they believe that the question reads ‘phonetics’ as in ‘everything about phonetics and phonology’. In that case, I do not agree nor disagree with that very person. As I have said earlier; I think it all depends on how much time you have.

A course like I prepared for my students would certainly suffice. A book that would be of great help to both the teacher and the students (I would also highly recommend the use of this book as the main textbook) is *Phonetics and Phonology: an introduction* by Philip Carr. His book pretty much taught me all the basics and some little insights of phonetics and phonology. This book contains all the information that I personally think is important to know about when you want to learn phonetics. It also has a very clear lay-out and it is basically written in layman’s terms. Though, it is written in English. Expertise in the English language is not required to be able to read this book, because, as I said earlier, it is written in absolute layman’s terms, yet students should at least be at Cambridge FCE level to be able to properly read this book.

**Conclusion**

Whether it is possible to teach a 12-15-year-old phonetics depends on the conditions, really, and it also depends on what you count in as ‘teaching phonetics. If it should mean that the students should be proficient in phonetics after attending the course for a year, then no, it would not be possible to teach any 12-15-year-old phonetics. Taken the course I presented to my students, I think that it is indeed possible to teach any 12-15-year-old phonetics. However, this means that the students do not know everything about phonetics and phonology, only some essential things that will help improving their pronunciation. If we accept a course like mine as a ‘proper’ phonetics course, then yes, it is actually possible to teach any 12-15-year-old phonetics. Again, there is neither a perfect ‘no’ or a perfect ‘yes’ to this question.

Question 3: Should phonetics be a part of each English course at each secondary school or would it make the course too difficult for children who already find themselves struggling with English?

I would honestly not recommend phonetics for VMBO-students, because it might be slightly too difficult for them to teach them the full course. A course like I did with my students would be just fine, I presume, but I only taught my students a small aspect of phonetics and phonology. The full course contains learning where a vowel sound is articulated and which articulators are passive or active; I did not teach my students such things. I only taught them the very basics of phonetics and phonology, which would help them read and pronounce English words slightly better.

Given the fact that my students were al VWO-students, I do not think that my version of the phonetics course would hurt to try, as long as you take those students who do not have to spend several hours a day doing their regular homework and who struggle through the year. My recommendation would be to teach children between the age of 12 to 15 (years 1 to 3) phonetics, if a teacher is wanting to teach phonetics in the first place. I would only go with VWO-students and HAVO-students who do not have to work all too hard to get pass marks on their tests. In any case, I think it is not appropriate to make children who struggle with homework and tests attend a phonetics course. To those who seek a little more challenging tasks and those who are looking for intensification of their year, I think phonetics would not only be of help to those whose accent really does sound Dutch, but also to those who are simply bored in class. It is something new, something fresh, something they have probably never heard of before. I would, in the first place, recommend my version of the phonetics course, and if students want more information on the subject, they should be given some.

English teachers who have studied English at the university or at a teacher training school in The Netherlands have once been taught phonetics. Phonetics is a required course in teacher training schools over here, and provide all the information needed to even teach phonetics. A refresher course to those who want to teach phonetics would do no harm and would make sure that the information provided in class would be accurate.

**Conclusion**

Phonetics should not be part of each English course at each secondary school, because it would make the course far too difficult for children who already find themselves struggling with English. Students who pass their English tests with A’s, without having to study at all, would make candidates for a phonetics course as a part of an ‘interdisciplinary course’. But, apart from those students, I do not think that phonetics should be a course taught at secondary schools, not even for fun. Phonetics should definitely be taught at teacher training schools, however, since phonetics does hand you a ‘helping hand’ regarding pronunciation and getting to know the English language better.

Question 4: Why do regular English courses pay only little attention to speaking?

Yes... This was one of my subsidiary questions. I have been so utterly busy teaching the kids and writing my profile assignment, that I completely forgot to ask English teachers why they hardly pay any attention to speaking. At VAVO, we have to sit speaking exams in English. I think only VWO-students and HAVO-students get to actually develop this skill, as more is expected from them as from VMBO-students. I am deliberately going to answer this question with ‘I do not know’, because I do not want to lie, nor spread rumours about whatever may be the reason as to why regular English courses pay little attention to speaking.

**Conclusion:**

I do not know.

Question 5: What is the easiest way to teach a 12-15-year-old phonetics?

I do not think I can answer this question in all honesty and all certainty, for every student has his/her own way of learning. I presume that, just like when you want to learn the Greek language, starting with the alphabet can do no harm. Rules come later, they are not as important. I think that teaching a 12-15-year-old phonetics is like building a brick wall: the bricks are in their textbooks, you have to provide the concrete and the kids will start building. It merely depends on whether you, as a teacher, have actually done a good job and whether the kids comprehend what you tried to tell them. If any of these are out of balance, the brick wall will be built askew, whereas you get a perfect, levelled wall if all these things are perfectly balanced. The teacher tries to provide firm cement. Not every student knows how to work with this firm cement, they might need it to be even firmer or even slightly more aqueous cement. If you, as a teacher, can provide as many sorts and types and shapes of cement as the students might need, you make a good teacher. If you do not, you do not necessarily make a bad teacher. So, really... There is no ‘easiest way’ to teach a 12-15-year-old phonetics. Every student needs their own sort of concrete. There is no easiest way, teaching would be plain boring if there was.

**Conclusion**

There is no easiest way to teach a 12-15-year-old phonetics.

§4.2: The main question

Can phonetics help to improve someone’s pronunciation?

I was in doubt, whether the children had actually learnt how to pronounce certain vowel sounds flawlessly through phonetics, or whether they had been copying everything I had uttered during class. Silvy and Diek could reproduce sounds almost perfectly. For this very reason, I cannot tell whether Silvy and Diek had actually made any improvements whatsoever concerning their pronunciation due to phonetics. I think that the way their accents improved has been a mixture of both cases: the words they had heard me say earlier, and their knowledge of how to pronounce certain vowel sounds and consonants.

What does it take for a child aged 12-15 years old to actually make a difference in pronunciation? Was 12 lessons enough? Silvy has proved this right. Silvy has made quite an amount of progress in just 12 lessons, so an actual change in pronunciation can be seen after just 12 lessons. Whether it was due to practicing a lot or whether it was due to actually knowing what sounds these IPA symbols represented, it now does not really matter anymore.

But, yes! Yes, phonetics can help to improve someone’s pronunciation. My main question has given me the chance to actually find out if phonetics helps, in person. It has given me the opportunity to set up this big experiment that has cost me 12 weeks, the registered 50 hours of work, and so much more. It has been absolutely worth it, looking back at the results.

Phonetics can help to improve someone’s pronunciation in so many ways. Given that each and every IPA symbol tells you exactly where in the mouth it should be articulated, it guarantees that if you do this in the exact way as told, your accent should be perfect in the end. However, articulating an alveolar fricative like a palatal fricative changes the sound so immensely, that it might sound like a sound from a whole different language. IPA symbols tell you exactly what you need to say, and so it should warrant that you sound perfectly English when you utter these symbols the way they are supposed to be uttered.

Yet, phonetics and phonology can help improving someone’s RP English accent or GA English accent, but does that mean that other accents are wrong? Yes, phonetics and phonology contain all the different vowel sounds and consonants of every single language in the world, but the English IPA alphabet does not contain typical Scottish or Welsh sounds. But really, is that something we should be looking at?

Phonetics and phonology do help, as long as you do exactly what it tells you to do.

**The one big conclusion**

Phonetics and phonology is not too difficult to learn, but finding difficulty in learning something is completely personal. Every student is unique and should be treated as such. Whether it is possible to teach a 12-15-year-old phonetics depends on the conditions. If you think learning phonetics means just learning the IPA and learning how to pronounce these symbols, the answer is ‘yes’. If you count every single little bit of information about phonetics and phonology in as well, then no. Phonetics should not be a part of each English course, because students who find difficulty in English and regularly have fail marks would have even bigger problems keeping up with the rest. Phonetics could be taught as an interdisciplinary course, but only to those who do not struggle with English, or school in general, whatsoever. I do not know why regular English courses pay only little attention to speaking, but I really think that every school has a different way of teaching children English. Speaking is usually not as important to VMBO-students as writing and reading. Speaking is much more important to, for example, VWO-students. This goes for French and German as well, so with English it is just the same deal. There is no easiest way to teach a child aged 12-15 years old phonetics, because every student learns new things in a very unique way. Though, just like when you are learning the Greek language, it is just a case of getting to know the alphabet slowly. Once you know how that works, the real game begins. Phonetics and phonology can help to improve someone’s accent. It requires dedication and practice, but it can certainly help. Nothing is as intangible as the art of speaking, and should be considered a gift.

Sources

**Annotations**

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**Furthermore**

All images used in pages 10 to 14 derive from *English Phonetics and Phonology: an introduction* by Philip Carr, first published in 1999 by Blackwell Publishing Ltd, reprinted in 2000, 2001 (twice), 2002 and 2003, ISBN 0-631-19775-3

The pictures of the children were made by the children themselves and I received permission to use them in my profile assignment.

Postscript

This profile assignment has literally been my first step to get to the teacher training school in Tilburg, which would be a dream come true. If I had done everything just by myself, this entire thesis would have been a total mess. Therefore, I would like to thank a couple of people who have helped me throughout the process of writing this profile assignment.

First of all, I would like to thank my three students, Diek, Silvy and Kiki, who have spent many hours practicing and attending the course to help me out. They have been amazing, patient and enthusiastic.

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Last but never least, I want to say ‘thanks’ to my parents, who constantly gave me a very supportive ‘kick up my bum’, so to say, every time I felt lazy and did not want to write or teach.

I have truly enjoyed writing this profile assignment, and honestly, once I was done writing, I realised that this is what I want most: I want to be a phonetics teacher. I cannot say this often enough, but it really is true:

Phonetics rocks!

Anne Manders

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