

Assignment #1 Due: in class, Tuesday, Sept 9, 2008

September 4, 2008

There are many phonetically based transcription systems. Most of the time we will try to use the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). However, older texts like the K&K 1979 textbook and the H&C workbook use what is called the American transcription system. It is important to know both.

1 IPA transcription

- Read Chapter 1 of “A First Course in Phonetics” by Peter Ladefoged
- Do exercises 1-29 on pages 32-33 of this reading and on page 39, exercises A and B.
- Performance exercises at end of the Ladefoged’s chapter are encouraged but not required!
- Visit <http://www.phonetics.ucla.edu/course/chapter1/consonants1.html> and listen to some of the sounds.

2 American transcription

- Read Chapter 1 of “Generative Phonology” by Michael Kenstowicz and Charles Kisseberth.
- Answer the following questions:
 1. Compare the IPA symbols to those used by K&K (e.g., charts on p. 12, p. 17) and list at least five differences you can find (I’ve gotten you started). The symbols used by K&K are often referred to as “American”. This is to minimize confusion as you read different texts with different alphabets.

K&K	IPA
ü	y

2. In H&C Workbook, do p. 37 #1, even numbers. Write both an American and IPA transcription. Also, do #2 even numbers.

3 Questions

1. Think about the difference discussed on p. 2 between accidental and inherent properties of language. Other than consulting our intuitions as linguists, how can we tell which category a given generalization belongs in? Provide a couple of ideas.
2. For the following IPA symbols, describe the articulations involved in producing the sounds. The first one shows an example.
 1. [ŋ]
[ŋ] is a velar nasal. The tongue reaches the rear of the soft palate and the air flows through the nasal cavity since the velum is lowered.
 2. [β]
 3. [ç]
 4. [x]
 5. [r]
 6. [ɹ]
 7. [l]
 8. [ʔ]
3. On pages 21-23, what are some of the reasons K&K provide for the idea that individual sounds are better represented, or understood, as a collection of phonetic properties (usually called *phonological features*)?