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## Week 6: Vowels & Suprasegmentals

### Solutions

*Note that this week also includes transcription practice, which involves consonants (from last week)!*

(1) Write the phonetic symbol representing each of the following sounds (remember to use square brackets). The last one is given as an example:

- (a) high front tense unrounded vowel
- (b) mid back lax rounded vowel
- (c) mid front lax unrounded vowel
- (d) low back lax unrounded vowel
- (e) high back lax rounded vowel - [ʊ]

**Solution**

- (a) [i], (b) [ɔ], (c) [ɛ], (d) [ɑ]
- 

(2) Write the four-part articulatory descriptions for the vowel sounds represented by the following symbols. The last one is given as an example.

- (a) [ɪ]
- (b) [ʌ]
- (c) [ɛ]
- (d) [u]
- (e) [æ]
- (f) [ʊ]
- (g) [ə] - **mid central unrounded lax**

**Solution**

- (a) high front lax unrounded  
(b) mid central lax unrounded  
(c) mid front lax unrounded  
(d) high back tense rounded  
(e) low front lax unrounded  
(f) high back lax rounded
- 

(3) Give the IPA symbol for the vowel that occurs in each word.

- (a) *sues*

- (b) sis
- (c) sees
- (d) suss
- (e) sews

**Solution**

(a) [u], (b) [ɪ], (c) [i], (d) [ʌ], (e) [oʊ]

(4) What is the difference between a consonant and a vowel?

**Solution**

Consonants are produced with a constriction somewhere in the vocal tract that impedes the airflow, while vowels are produced with a relatively open vocal tract.

(5) Circle all of the symbols below that represent voiced sounds:

[s]   [d]   [g]   [ð]   [tʃ]   [b]   [t]   [ʔ]   [ɹ]   [θ]   [p]

**Solution**

[d], [g], [ð], [b], [ɹ]

(6) Give the conventional spelling for the following phonetically transcribed words (note that some may have more than one possible spelling). The first one is given as an example.

- (a) [sloʊp] - **slope**
- (b) [sʌni]
- (c) [seɪ]
- (d) [wɔɹm]
- (e) [ɹʊt]
- (f) [liːz]
- (g) [sɹɪʃt]
- (h) [kɹʊd]
- (i) [ɹɪdʒ]
- (j) [ɹɪʃ]
- (k) [peɪn]
- (l) [wɛnzdeɪ]
- (m) [kənʃəs]
- (n) [θʌznd]
- (o) [fʌdʒ]

**Solution**

- (a) slope, (b) sunny/sonny, (c) sail/sale, (d) warm, (e) root/route, (f) leisure, (g) searched, (h) crude/crewed, (i) ridge, (j) reach, (k) pain/pane, (l) Wednesday, (m) conscious, (n) thousand, (o) fudge

(7) Transcribe the following words. The first one is given as an example.

- (a) touch - [tʌtʃ]  
 (b) woman  
 (c) women  
 (d) flood  
 (e) wrapped  
 (f) prays  
 (g) brood  
 (h) ghoul  
 (i) torch  
 (j) stood  
 (k) move  
 (l) breathe  
 (m) breath  
 (n) lose  
 (o) loose

**Solution**

- (a) [tʌtʃ], (b) [wʊmən], (c) [wɪmɪn], (d) [flʌd], (e) [ræpt], (f) [preɪz], (g) [brʊd], (h) [ɡuːl], (i) [tɔːtʃ], (j) [stʊd], (k) [muːv], (l) [breɪð], (m) [breθ], (n) [luːz], (o) [luːs]

(8) Correct the mistakes in the following phonetic transcriptions of English words, if there is a mistake.

- (a) [ʃut] shut  
 (b) [swɪt] swift  
 (c) [fəlv] follow  
 (d) [trʌd] trod  
 (e) [lɛft] left  
 (f) [tʃɪld] child

**Solution**

- (a) [ʃʌt], (b) [swɪft], (c) [fəlv], (d) no correction, (e) no correction, (f) [tʃaɪld]

(9) Read the phonetically transcribed sentences below and write them out in ordinary spelling. These transcriptions represent the pronunciation of a particular speaker on a particular occasion and thus may differ from your own pronunciation in certain minor details, but this should not cause you any difficulty. These passages are from Woody Allen's book *Without Feathers*.

- (a) [ɪf ju ʌ sɪksstɪn ɔː ʌndʒ tʌɪ nɑːt tə goʊ bɑːld]
- (b) [mʌni ɪz nɑːt ɛvriθɪŋ bʌt ɪt ɪz bɛtə ɔː ðæn hæviŋ wʌnz hɛlθ]
- (c) [ðə sæfɑɪɹ wʌz ɔːɹɪdʒənəli oʊnd bɑɪ ə sʌltən hu dɑɪd ʌndʒ mɪstɹɪəs sɪkəmstænsɛz wɛn ə hænd ɹɪtʃt ʌt əv ə boʊl əv sʊp hi wʌz ɪtɪŋ n stɹæŋɡld hɪm]

**Solution**

- (a) If you are sixteen or under, try not to go bald.
- (b) Money is not everything, but it is better than having one's health.
- (c) The sapphire was originally owned by a sultan who died under mysterious circumstances when a hand reached out of a bowl of soup he was eating and strangled him.

(10) Read the following pairs of sentences aloud. Words in capital letters indicate the presence of a pitch accent and should be said with special prominence. Both sentences in each pair contain exactly the same words, but they differ in intonation and have different meanings. Paraphrase what the two sentences in each pair mean.

- (a) John called Paul a Republican and then he **INSULTED** him.  
John called Paul a Republican and then **HE** insulted **HIM**.
- (b) John even gave his daughter a new **BICYCLE**.  
John even gave his **DAUGHTER** a new bicycle.

**Solution**

- (a) (1) John called Paul a Republican, and additionally, John insulted Paul.  
(2) John called Paul a Republican, and then Paul insulted John.
- (b) (1) John has given his daughter many new things, including (of all things) a bicycle.  
(2) John has given his son(s) new bicycles, and (surprisingly), he also gave his daughter one.

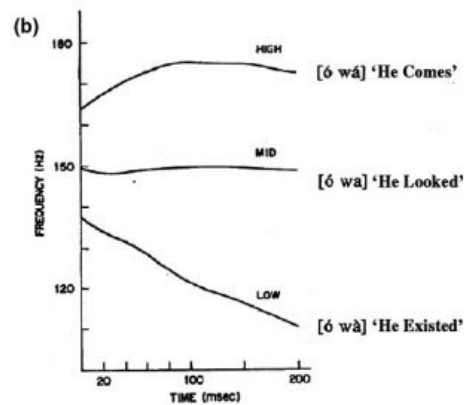
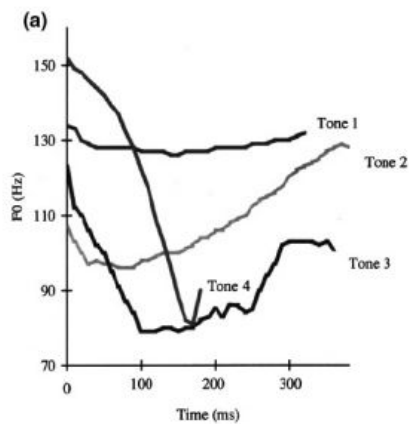
(11) Turn each of the strings of words below into two sentences with different meanings by adding punctuation or other visual markers of phrase tones that can serve to differentiate the two meanings. Then paraphrase the different meanings.

- (a) when danger threatens your children call the police
- (b) I met Mary and Elena's mother at the mall yesterday

**Solution**

- (a) (1) When danger threatens, your children call the police. (When your children see some sort of danger, they will call the police).  
 (2) When danger threatens your children, call the police. (When your children are threatened by danger, you should call the police).
- (b) (1) I met Mary, and Elena's mother, at the mall yesterday. (I met two women at the mall yesterday, Elan's mother and Mary)  
 (2) I met (Mary and Elena)'s mother at the mall yesterday. (I met one woman at the mall yesterday, the mother of both Mary and Elena.)

(12) Figure (a) shown Mandarin and figure (b) shows Yoruba. Which of these tone languages would be described as level and which as contour? How do you know?

**Solution**

Mandarin (a) is contour and Yoruba (b) is level. Yoruba has three relatively steady tones while Mandarin has tones that glide from one level to another.

