# Transcription exercises

General remarks: There are essentially two types of transcription, phonetic and phonemic (phonological). Phonetic transcription is more complex, showing detailed articulatory characteristics of individual sounds. In these lessons, we will be learning <u>phonemic transcription</u>, which only uses a limited number of symbols representing sounds which are in a certain language able to distinguish meanings in words. There are 44 such sound in English (20 vowels and 24 consonants) and we call them <u>phonemes</u>. (study the phonemic chart). In addition, you will be asked to mark features of minor importance which, however, cause problems to Czech speakers of English: (1) aspiration /khæt/, (2) dark /ł/ x clearl /l/ /lɪp x phrł/ (3) linking r /ðərɪz/ (4) syllabic consonants, especially /l/ /mɪdł/, /phɜ:sn/

# **Transcription exercise 1:**

In Britain and around the world, the image of the family continues to change. The traditional "Victorian family", in which the man was the breadwinner, the woman the homemaker and the children numerous and obedient, is giving way to new ideas about what the modem family should look like.

/ in britan ən(d) ə'raund ða waːłd / ði imidz əv ða fæmili kənthinju:z ta tʃeindz // ða tradiʃənţ vik'tha:rian fæmili / in witʃ ða mæn waz ða bredwina / ða wuman ða haummeika / ən(d) ða tʃitdran nju:maras ən/d/ abi:diant / iz givin weis ta nju: ai'diaz ə'baut wat ða madan fæmili ʃad luk laik // /

Notes: The first step is to learn well all the 44 symbols of the phonemic chart. Next step is to check pronunciation in a good monolingual English dictionary (Cambridge, Oxford, Collins, Longman).

- 1)There is a tendency to reduce strong English vowels in unstressed syllables to a weak vowel, especially 'schwa' (ə) /brɪtən/, /ə¹raund/, /wumən/ or /i/ at the end of words like /fæmɪli/. /i/ is not a phoneme, therefore it is optional; it indicates that the quality of the final sound is not that of an /ɪ/ used in stressed syllables
- 2)In the word "world" the /l/ sound is dark because it precedes a consonant. In the word "family" the /l/ sound is clear (like the Czech /l/) because it precedes a vowel.
- 3)Please note in diphthongs /aɪ/, /au/ we use a special symbol in the first part /a/ as opposed to "cut" /khat/, "cart" / khatt /

# **Transcription exercise 2:**

One of the most obvious characteristics of the new family is that there are not always two parents. Due mostly to the rise in divorces since World War II, single-parent families are becoming more and more frequent and accepted in British society. Usually, it is the mother who takes responsibility for raising the child, and she has to balance the pressures of earning a living and raising her children at the same time.

/ wan əv ðə məust obviəs khærəktəristiks əv ðə nju: fæmili iz ðət ðərə not oxhwəz thu: pheərənts // dju: məustli tə ðə raiz in divo:siz sins waxhd wo: wan / singh pheərənt fæmiliz ə bi'khamın mə:rən mə: fri:kwənt ən(d) əlkseptid in briti∫ səlsaiəti // ju:ʒuəli / it iz ðə maðə hu theiks risponsəbiləti

# fə reizin ðə tʃaɪłd / ən(d) ʃi hæz tə bæləns ðə $p^h$ reʃəz əv s:nıŋ ə liviŋ ən(d) reiziŋ (h)ə tʃɪłdrən ət ðə seim $t^h$ aım // /

Notes: 1) In the word "one" /wʌn/, the vowel is short, the symbol used is therefore /ʌ/ as opposed to "car" /kʰɑː/

- 2) In the word "takes"  $/t^heiks/$ , /t/ is aspirated. It is because it is found in a stressed syllable before a vowel. The same rule applies not only to /t/, but also to /p/ and /k/.
- 3) Note that ng at the end of words is never pronounced  $/\eta k$ , but only  $/\eta$ ! Although it does not affect intelligibility, this is not done by RP speakers.
- 4) The word "and" is one of the **weak forms**, i.e. words like prepositions, auxiliary verbs etc. have two possible pronunciations strong: /ænd/ and weak /ənd/, /ən/, /n/. Under normal circumstances the weak pronunciation is used. Weak pronunciation can have a couple of variants.

#### **Transcription exercise 3:**

However, even in families with both parents present, many mothers are giving up the role of homemaker and pursuing their own careers. Some go on maternity leave after their children are born and then take up part-time work when the child is old enough to go to school. Others feel that their careers come first and wait until they have fully established their career before having children.

/ həuevə / i:vən ın fæmılız wið bəuθ pheərənts phrezənt / meni maðəz ə givin ap ðə rəul əv həummeikər ən(d) pəhsiyi:nət yən kəhriəz // sam gəu un məthə:nəti li:v u:ftə ðə tʃihdrən ə bə:n ən(d) ðen theik ap phu:thaim wəik wen ðə tʃaihd iz əuhd inaf tə gəu tə sku:h // aðəz fi:h ðət ðə kəhriəz kham fə:st / ən/d/ weit anthih ðei (h)əv fuli istæblift ðə kəhriə bihfə: hævin tʃihdrən // /

Notes: 1) The word "are" is one of the weak forms. Although its strong pronunciation is /ɑː/, it is not used as much as Czech speakers often think, usually only when the word is stressed, e.g. "You're saying that John and Mary are not at school today, but they *are*". However, normally "are" is unstressed and weak: "John and Mary are at school today." /ərətskuːɬ/
2) In British English final /r/ is not pronounced – "there" /ðeə/, of which the weak form is /ðə/. If the following word starts with a vowel, /r/ is pronounced and we call it **linking r**. "their own" /ðərəun/

3) The pronunciation of the plural ending s depends on the pronunciation of the preceding sound. If the preceding sound is voiced, then the plural s is pronounced as z (family – families /fæmɪliz/, mothers /mʌðəz/. All the vowels are automatically voiced, so if the plural s is preceded by a vowel, it is always read as z.

Other cases: voiced final consonant dog – dogs /dpgz/

Voiceless final consonants parent – parents /phearants/

4) The simple past tense ending of regular verbs (-ed) can also be pronounced in three ways /t/, /d/ and /id/. If preceded by a voiceless consonant, it is pronounced as /t/ (established /i'stæbli $\int t/$ ). If preceded by a voiced consonant or a vowel, it is pronounced as /d/ live - lived

/lɪvd/, play – played /phleɪd/. Finally, if preceded by /t/ or /d/, the past ending (-ed) is pronounced as /ɪd/ - wanted /wɒntɪd/, traded /threɪdɪd/.

5) The word "then" is **not** a weak form. It is a word with a full meaning. Therefore it cannot be reduced to \*/ðən/. /ðən/ is a weak form for "than", for which the strong pronunciation would be /ðæn/

#### **Transcription exercise 4:**

Another area which has changed significantly is what happens before marriage. In the past, people lived with their parents until they got married, and each marriage was supposed to be a "white wedding". Today, living together before marriage and premarital sex are considered normal, and many people "tryout" their relationship by living together before getting married.

/ ən'nðər eəriə witʃ əz tʃeindʒd sı'gnifikəntli iz wot hæpənz bı'jfɔ: mæridʒ // in ðə pha:st / phi:pl livd wið ðə pheərənts nnthil ðei got mærid / ən(d) i:tʃ mæridʒ wəz sə'phəuzd tə bi(:)ə wait wedin // tədei / livin təgeðə bifɔ: mæridʒ ən(d) primæritl seks ə kən'sidəd nɔ:ml / ən(d) meni phi:pl thrai aut ðə rileiʃənʃip bifɔ: getin mærid // /

Notes:1) Linking r – another area /əˈnʌðəreərɪə/

- 2) /əz/ weak form of auxiliary "has"
- 3) /tʃeɪndʒd/ the ending –ed has to be pronounced /d/ because the preceding sound /dʒ/ is voiced, see also marriage /mærɪdʒ/.
- 4)  $/p^h$ q:st/ /p/ is aspirated it is in a stressed syllable before a vowel. However, if /p/, /t/, /k/ are preceded by /s/, aspiration does not take place, e.g. school /sku: $\frac{1}{2}$ /, not  $\frac{1}{2}$ /sk $\frac{1}{2}$ /
- 5)  $/sap^hauzd/$  the rule for aspiration is in operation /p/ is in a stressed syllable before a vowel
- 6) /phi:pl/, /prilmærɪtl/, /nɔ:ml/ examples of syllabic /l/ the syllabic consonant replaces a vowel in an existing syllable.

#### **Transcription exercise 5:**

These changes together with other changes such as mixed marriages, have altered the face of British society. Some people deplore them as a breakdown of traditional values. Others praise them as expressions of greater tolerance and diversity. But one thing is for sure: British families are changing and will continue to change.

/ ði:z tʃeɪndʒız / təgeðə wið aðə tʃeɪndʒız satʃ əz mikst mæridʒız / həv ɔ:\təd ðə feis əv britiʃ sə\saiəti // sam p\hi:p\text{di\phi} di\phi\lambda: ðəm əz ə breikdaun əv trə\di\fan\text{vælju:z // aðəz p\hreiz ðəm əz ikspre\fanz əv greitə t\hat\bar{v}\lambda tənd) dai\v3:səti // bət wan \text{0}ij iz \( \)\undersighta britiʃ fæməliz ə t\( \)\end{ai\text{v}} eindzij ən(d) wi\text{kənt\hriju: tə t\( \)\end{ai\text{v}}

Notes:

- /ði:z tʃeɪndʒɪz/ if the plural ending is preceded by a sibilant ( /s/, /z/, /ʃ/, /dʒ/, /tʃ/, /dʒ/ ), then it is pronounced and transcribed as /ɪz/, alternatively /iz/. See also /mærɪdʒɪz/
- 2) In the word "mixed" the **ed** ending is pronounced /t/ because the preceding consonants /ts/ are voiceless. In the word "altered" /ɔːɬtəd/, the –ed ending is pronounced as /d/ because of the voiced vowel preceding it.
- 3) /bət/ is one of the typical weak forms. The strong pronunciation of the word /bʌt/ is usually used only under stress and/or before a pause.
- 4) /darvɜːsəti/ in some words more variants can be found in dictionaries. Although for a transcription exercise any existing form is acceptable we tend to prefer British variants for our purposes.

#### **Transcription exercise 6:**

Since many newspapers – especially their headlines – have little space to explain things in depth, they have developed a special vocabulary of their own. It features short words and tends to leave out articles and auxiliary verbs. Thus, they use "back" for "support", "deal" for "agreement", "ban" for "prohibit", "talk" for "discussion, negotiation", "probe" for "investigate", and so on. It also includes colourful words to draw the eye and add interest to a story. So prices don't "go up quickly", they "rocket", police don't "hurry" to the scene of the crime, they "race", and so on. A headline that reads "Drugs probe backs cig ban" might translate as "An investigation into drug abuse supports the prohibition of cigarette smoking. (taken from Advanced Conversation Practice – Teacher's Book – p. 101)

/ sins meni nju:zpeipəz / is'pefəli ðə hedlamz / hæv lit‡ speis tu iksplein θinz in depθ / ðei (h)əv di'velopt ə spefəł və'khæbjuləri əv ðər əun // it fi:tʃəz ʃɔ:t wɜ:dz / ən(d) thendz tə li:v aut ɑ:tik‡z ən(d) ɔ:gziliəri vɜ:bz // ðʌs / ðei ju:z bæk fə səphɔ:t / di:t fə ə'gri:mənt / bæn fə prə'hibit / thɔ:k fə diskʌʃən / nigəuʃieiʃən / phrəub fər in'vestigeit / ən(d) səu ɒn // it ɔ:tsəu iŋkhlu:dz khʌləfət wɜ:dz tə drɔ: ði ai ən(d) æd int (ə)rist tu ə stɔ:ri // səu phraisiz dəunt gəu ʌp khwikli / ðei rokit / pə'li:s dəunt hʌri tə ðə si:n əv ðə khraim / ðei reis ən(d) səu ɒn // ə hedlam ðət ri:dz drʌgz phrəub bæks sig bæn mait trənzleit əz ən investigeiʃən intə drʌg əbju:s sə'phɔts ðə prəuibiʃən əv sigəret sməukiŋ // /

#### Notes:

- 1) /meni/, /ɪspeʃəli/ use the weak variant of /ɪ/, i.e. i, because it is found in final, unstressed syllable of the words. The use of /i/ for our purposes is optional.
- 2) /hæv/ has to remain strong because here it is not used as an auxiliary but as a full verb meaning "to possess"

- 3) /tu/??? uses the weak variant of /u/ because it is located in an unstressed syllable of a weak form. The use is again optional. However, in pronouncing the word "to" we must distinguish whether a vowel is following /tu ɪkspleɪn/ or a consonant "to go" /tə gəu/. In this case "to" is pronounced with a schwa /ə/.
- 4) /dɪskʌʃən/ can alternatively be transcribed as /dɪskʌʃn/
- 5) In the word  $/k^h$  raim/ aspiration still asserts itself. This happens whenever /p/, /t/, /k/ are followed by /l/, /r/, /w/, /j/ and consequently by a vowel.
- 6) /θτηz/ does not have /g/ in pronunciation; /ŋ/, which is voiced, is simply followed by a regular voiced variant of the plural ending, whereas thinks /θτηks/ does have /k/ in pronunciation. Note that **ng** at the end of a word is pronounced as /ŋ/, **nk** at the end of a word is pronounced as /ηk/.
- 7) The diphthong /pu/ does not exist in English. Therefore, words like "probe" and "negotiations" must be pronounced as /phrəub/ and /nɪgəuʃɪeɪʃənz/.

# **Transcription exercise 7:**

This was the first time I had ever cared for AIDS patients. AIDS is often considered a social and moral disease, so it is difficult for some to be compassionate and objective. These patients need aggressive nursing care, as they are susceptible to pneumonia, fungal infections, diarrhoea, skin breakdown, malnutrition, and incontinence. Their diet must be high in calories and protein, with in-between-meal snacks and important necessity. In spite of all the medications, pulmonary treatments, oxygen therapy, daily nursing assessments, and frequent repositioning, the patient still is a human being – frightened, isolated, and with a deep fear of losing control. He needs to talk and express himself, he needs reassurance, and he has the right to have his questions answered truthfully. This is a challenge for any nurse who really cares.

(from Nursing is My Bag by M. Kurz George, 1989, p. 113 - taken from Advanced Conversation Practice – Teacher's Book – p. 89)

/ ðis wəz ðə fɜ:st tʰaim ai əd evə kʰeəd fər eidz pʰeiʃənts //
eidz iz pfən kənsidəd ə səuʃɨ ən(d) mə:rəɨ drˈzi:z / səu it iz
difikɨt fə sam tə bi kəmpʰæʃənit ən əbdʒektiv // ði:z
pʰeiʃənts ni:d əˈgresiv nɜ:siŋ kʰeə / əz ðei ə səˈseptəbɨ tə
nju:ˈməuniə / fʌŋgɨ infekʃənz / daiəriə / skin breikdaun /
mæɨnjuˈtʰriʃən ənd iŋˈkʰpntinəns // ðə daiət mast bi hai iŋ
kʰæləriz ənd pʰrəuti:n / wið in br'tʰwi:n mi:ɨ snæks ən
impʰə:tənt niˈsesəti // in spait əv ɔːɨ ðə medikʰeiʃənz /
pʰaɨməneri tʰri:tmənts / pksidʒən θerəpi / deili nɜ:siŋ
əˈsesmənts / ənd fri:kwənt ri:pəˈziʃəniŋ / ðə pʰeiʃənt
stil iz ə hju:mən bi:ŋ / fraitənd / ˈaisəleitid / ənd wið ə di:p
fiər əv lu:ziŋ kəntʰrəuɪɨ // hi ni:dz tə tʰɔ:k ən ikspres
himseɨf / hi ni:dz riəʃuərəns / ənd hi hæz ðə rait tə hæv

(h)iz  $k^h$ west $\int$ ənz a:nsəd  $t^h$ ru: $\theta f(a)$ li // ðisiz a t $\int$ ælindz fər eni na:s hu riəli  $k^h$ eaz // /

### **Transcription exercise 8:**

Tomorrow will be another fine day with temperatures reaching the mid twenties. A bit cool early in the morning with some showers likely but this will clear up towards midmorning and most areas will have prolonged sunshine for most of the afternoon. Wednesday's not looking so good, rather dull and overcast with winds light to moderate and rain and drizzle spread over much of the south of the country. Temperatures around 15 to 17 degrees Celsius dropping as low as 12 degrees overnight in hilly areas, possibly a few patches of fog in lowlying areas.

(taken from Advanced Conversation Practice – Teacher's Book – p. 101)

/ təmprəu wił bi ληλόρ fain dei wið themprit∫əz ri:t∫iŋ ðə mid thwentiz // ə bi:t khu:ł ɜ:li in ðə mə:niŋ wið sʌm ʃauəz laikli bət ðis wił khliər ʌp təˈwə:dz midmə:niŋ ən məust eəriəz wił hæv prəˈlɒŋd sʌnʃain fə məust əv ði ɑ:ftəˈnu:n // wenzdiz nɒt lukiŋ səu gud / rɑ:ðə dʌl ən əuvəkhɑ:st wið windz lait tə mɒd(ə)rit ən rein ən drizṭ spred əuvə mʌtʃ əv ðə sauθ əv ðə khʌntri // themprit∫əz əraund fif 'thi:n tə sevən'thi:n digri:z selsiəs drɒpiŋ əz ləu əz thwetv digri:z əuvə nait in hili eəriəz phɒsəbli ə fju: phæt∫iz əv fɒg in ləu lain eəriəz // /

# **Transcription exercise 9:**

This book grew out of my study of the experiences of other women. It is built on the stories of eighty women who said no, who made changes in their lives. All of them left successful careers to find, as I did, their right livelihood. Some have permanently downshifted to part-time jobs in order to make time in the day for other interests, such as art, volunteer work, self-development, spiritual interests and travel. A number of others have created their own small businesses: two own bookstores; one runs a sheep farm; three operate day-care centers. Some have become consultants, others writers. All have given to the word success a very personal definition.

(from Work of Her Own by Susan Wittig Albert, Ph.D., - taken from Advanced Conversation Practice – Teacher's Book – p. 39)

/ ðiz buk gru: aut əv mai stadi əv ði iks'phiəriəns əv aðə wimin // it iz biht on ðə stə:riz əv eiti wimin hu sed nəu / hu meid tſeindʒiz in ðə laivz // ə:l əv ðəm left səksesfl kə'riəz tə faind / əz ai did / ðə rait laivlihud // sam (h)əv pha:mənəntli daunʃiftid tə pha:tthaim dʒbz in ə:də tə meik thaim in ðə dei fər aðərintrists / satʃ əz a:t / vɒlənthiə

w3:k / sełfdr'veləpmənt / spiritʃuəl intrists ənd tʰræv‡ // ə nʌmbər əv ʌðəz (h)əv kri'eitid ðər əun smɔːł biznisiz / tʰu: əun bukstɔːz / wʌn rʌnz ə ʃiːp fɑːm / θri: ppəreit deikʰeə sentəz // sʌm (h)əv biˈkʰʌm kənsʌłtants / ʌðəz raɪtəz // ɔːl əv givən tə ðə wɜːd səˈkses ə veri pʰɜːsənṭ definiʃn // /

# **Transcription exercise 10:**

The word "furnished" means different things to different people. You will normally find the essential: stove, refrigerator, beds, chairs, sofa, tables, lamps. Minimal china and glass, basic kitchen supplies, curtains, and some pictures may be supplied. Sometimes, but very rarely, there is a small supply of bed, bath, and table linens and blankets. You will need to bring your favourite kitchen utensils, some table linens or mats, extra lamps, coat hangers, whatever electrical appliances you want – such as toasters and irons. Your own pictures, books, decorations, and the like will make it seem more like home to you. The word "unfurnished" means different things, but generally a stove and refrigerator are included – also towel racks, light fixtures and other built-in items.

/ ðə wad famít mimz difrənt θiŋz tə difrənt phipţ // ju wił nə:məli famd ði i'senʃəlz // stəuv / ri'fridʒəreitə / bedz / tʃeəz / səufə / theib‡z / læmps // minimţ tʃainə ən gla:s / beisik khitʃən səphlaiz / kha:tinz / ən səm phiktʃəz mei bi sə'phlaid // samthaimz / bət veri reəli / ðəz ə sməːt səphlai əv bed / ba:ð ən theibţ liminz ən blænkits // ju wit ni:d tə brin jə feiv/ə/rit khitʃən ju'thens‡z / səm theibţ lininz ə: mæts / ekstrə læmps / khaut hænəz / wə:thevər ilektrikəl ə'phlaiənsiz ju wont / satʃ əz thautəz ənd aiərənz // jər əun phiktʃəz / buks / dekəreifənz ənd ðə laik / wit meik it si: / mə: laik həum tə ju // ðə wa:d 'anfa:niʃt mi:nz difrənt dinz / bət dʒenərəli ə stəuv ən ri'fridʒəreitər ər inklu:did / ə:tsəu thauət ræks / lait fikstʃəz ən aðə bitt in aitəmz // /