

Practice in Reading Transcription, Part II

To help you in learning transcription, here is a sample passage, written in a fairly broad phonemic transcription. The transcription represents my own speech, which is a fairly neutral variety of American English. I've include ligatures for diphthongs and affricates, but no length marks, since their use for American English is a matter of dispute. The original punctuation is included for clarity, though this is not part of the IPA. Capitalization is *not* reflected, since the IPA has no way of depicting capital/lower case distinction. A caution: many "little words" (grammatical words) have special pronunciations when used in a sentence. Thus *for* is [ˈfoɹ] by itself, but [fə] in (say) *go for broke*. Also, consonants are often dropped from long consonant sequences in connected speech; I've occasionally reflected this in the transcription as well.

The answer (orthographic version) to the transcription is given on the next page.

Feedback on this new exercise (including corrections and complaints) is welcome.

A similar exercise with a different text can be obtained from the course website,
<http://www.linguistics.ucla.edu/people/hayes/103/>

[ɪn kənˈsɪdərɪŋ ði ˈoʊədʒən əv ˈspɪʃɪz, ɪr ɪz ˈkwɑɪt kənˈsɪvəbəl ðər ə ˈnæʃjələst, ɪˈflektɪŋ ɔn
ðə ˈmjʊtʃuəl əˈfɪnərɪz əv oʊˈgænɪk ˈbɪnɪz, ɔn ðeɪ ˌembɹiəˈlɑdʒɪkəl ɪˈleɪʃənz, ðeɪ ˌdʒiəˈɡɹæfəkəl
ˌdɪstrəˈbjʊʃən, ˌdʒiəˈlɑdʒəkəl səkˈseʃən, ən ˈʌðər ˌfæktɪz, maɪt ˈkʌm tə ðə kənˈkluʒən
ðər ˈɪtʃ ˈspɪʃɪz həd ˈnɑt bən ˌɪndəˈpendentli kɪˈeɪrəd, bər əd dəˈsendəd, laɪk vəˈɹaɪərɪz, frəm
ˈʌðər ˌspɪʃɪz. ˌnevəðəˈles, ˈsʌtʃ ə kənˈkluʒən, ˈivən ɪf ˈwel ˈfaʊndəd, wəd bi ˌʌnsærəsˈfæktəi,
ənˌtɪl ɪt kəd bi ˈʃoʊn ˈhaʊ ði ɪˈnumərəbəl ˈspɪʃɪz ɪnˈhæbərɪŋ ˌðɪs ˈwɜːld həv bən ˈmɑrəˈfaɪd soʊ əz tu
əˈkwɑɪt ðæt pəˈfektʃən əv ˈstɪʌktʃər ən ˌkoʊ-ædæpˈteɪʃən wɪtʃ ˌmoʊs ˈdʒʌsli əkˈsaɪts ɑɪ
ˌædməˈleɪʃən. ˈnæʃjələsts kənˈtɪnjuəli ɪəˈfɜː tu əkˈstɜːnəl kənˈdɪʃənz, sətʃ əz ˈklaɪmət, ˈfʊd, ɛt
ˈserə, əz ði ˈoʊnli ˈpasəbəl ˈkɔz əv ˌveɪˈeɪʃən. ɪn ˈwʌn ˈveɪ ˈlɪmərəd ˈsens, əz wi ʃəl hiˈæftər
ˈsi, ðɪs ˈmeɪ bi ˈtʃu, bər ɪr ɪz pɹəˈpastəs tu əˈtʃɪnbjʊt tə ˈmiː əksˈtɜːnəl kənˈdɪʃənz, ðə ˈstɪʌktʃər,
fə ɪnˈstəns, əv ðə ˈwʊdˌpekər, wəd əts ˈfɪt, ˈteɪl, ˈbɪk ən ˈtʌŋ, soʊ ˈædməˈəbli əˈdæptəd tə ˈkæʃ
ˈɪnsɛkts ˌʌndə ðə ˈbaɪk əv ˈtʃɪz. ɪn ðə ˈkeɪs əv ðə ˈmɪsəlˌtoʊ, wɪtʃ ˈdʒɪʊz ɪts ˈnɜːʃmənt frəm

ˌsɜːtɪ ˈtʃiːz, wɪtʃ ˌhæz ˈsɪdz ðæt məs bi ˈtʃiːnɪzˈpoʊrəd baɪ ˌsɜːtɪ ˈbɜːdz, ən wɪtʃ ˌhæz ˈflaʊəz wəθ
ˈsep.rət ˈseksəs ˌæbsəˈlutli ˌæˈkwɑɪɪŋ ði ˈeɪdʒənsi əv ˌsɜːtɪ ˈɪnsekts tə ˈbɪŋ ˈpʌlən frəm ˈwʌn
ˈflaʊə tə ði ˈʌðə, ɪf ɪz ˈɪkwəli pɹəˈpɑːstəs tu əˈkaʊnt fə ðə ˈstɪktʃə əv ˌðɪs ˈpeɪəsaɪt, wɪð əts
ˌɪˈleɪʃəns tu ˈseɪnəl oʊˈgænɪk ˈbɪŋz, baɪ ði əˈfekt əv əkˈstənəl kənˈdɪʃəns, ə əv ˈhæbət, ə əv
ðə vəˈlɪʃən əv ðə ˈplæ̃ ɪtˈself.

— frəm “ˌɪntɪˈjəˈdʌkʃən” tu ən ði ˈoʊədʒən əv ˈspɪʃɪz baɪ ˈmɪnz əv ˈnætʃərəl səˈleɪʃən, baɪ
ˈtʃaɪlz ˈdaɪwən]

Answer:

In considering the Origin of Species, it is quite conceivable that a naturalist, reflecting on the mutual affinities of organic beings, on their embryological relations, their geographical distribution, geological succession, and other such facts, might come to the conclusion that each species had not been independently created, but had descended, like varieties, from other species. Nevertheless, such a conclusion, even if well founded, would be unsatisfactory, until it could be shown how the innumerable species inhabiting this world have been modified so as to acquire that perfection of structure and co-adaptation which most justly excites our admiration. Naturalists continually refer to external conditions, such as climate, food, etc., as the only possible cause of variation. In one very limited sense, as we shall hereafter see, this may be true; but it is preposterous to attribute to mere external conditions, the structure, for instance, of the woodpecker, with its feet, tail, beak, and tongue, so admirably adapted to catch insects under the bark of trees. In the case of the misseltoe, which draws its nourishment from certain trees, which has seeds that must be transported by certain birds, and which has flowers with separate sexes absolutely requiring the agency of certain insects to bring pollen from one flower to the other, it is equally preposterous to account for the structure of this parasite, with its relations to several distinct organic beings, by the effects of external conditions, or of habit, or of the volition of the plant itself.

— from “Introduction” to *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection* by Charles Darwin (1859)