## Pronunciation Guide

### American English Pronunciation of Consonant Sounds with Symbols

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phonemic Symbol</th>
<th>AHD Symbol</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Phonemic Symbol</th>
<th>AHD Symbol</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/b/</td>
<td>/b/</td>
<td>boy, cabin</td>
<td>/p/</td>
<td>/p/</td>
<td>pink, hip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/tʃ/</td>
<td>/ch/</td>
<td>cheer, watch, cello</td>
<td>/r/</td>
<td>/r/</td>
<td>rest, far</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/d/</td>
<td>/d/</td>
<td>dog, bed</td>
<td>/s/</td>
<td>/s/</td>
<td>sink, bus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ʃ/</td>
<td>/ch/</td>
<td>watch</td>
<td>/ʃ/</td>
<td>/sh/</td>
<td>she, special,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/g/</td>
<td>/g/</td>
<td>go, log</td>
<td>/t/</td>
<td>/t/</td>
<td>tiny, little</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/h/</td>
<td>/h/</td>
<td>his, cohort</td>
<td>/θ/</td>
<td>/th/</td>
<td>the, bathe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/dʒ/</td>
<td>/j/</td>
<td>joy, giant, budge</td>
<td>/θ/</td>
<td>/th/</td>
<td>thin, bath</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/k/</td>
<td>/k/</td>
<td>cat, king, lack</td>
<td>/v/</td>
<td>/v/</td>
<td>view, weave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/l/</td>
<td>/l/</td>
<td>long, ill</td>
<td>/w/</td>
<td>/w/</td>
<td>win, when</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/m/</td>
<td>/m/</td>
<td>my, team</td>
<td>/j/²</td>
<td>/y/</td>
<td>you, mayor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/n/</td>
<td>/n/</td>
<td>no, knife</td>
<td>/z/</td>
<td>/z/</td>
<td>zoo, rise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ŋ/</td>
<td>/ŋ/</td>
<td>sing, think</td>
<td>/ʒ/</td>
<td>/zh/</td>
<td>leisure, beige</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 American Heritage Dictionary

2 While the IPA symbol for this sound is /j/, I will use the AHD symbol of /y/
Characteristic Difficulties with English for Speakers of Niger-Congo Languages

1. Languages in the family
   a. Volta languages: Ewe, Krahn
   b. Bantu languages: Swahili, Kikongo, Kirundi

2. 16 noun classes with prefix markers
   a. Six classes for singular nouns
   b. Five classes for plural nouns
   c. One class for abstract nouns
   d. One class for verbal infinitives used as nouns
   e. Three classes to indicate location

3. Nouns have concords or affixes that relate the word to the rest of the sentence

4. Words contain grammatical particles

5. Niger-Congo languages are phonetic

6. Tonal languages (basically all but Swahili)
   a. Words may have multiple meaning based on the tone attached to the word.
   b. Example from Kikongo: (') = high tone, ('') = low tone
      i. Mbàlà: time
      ii. Mbalá: yam

7. Teach stress-timing and English question asking intonation
   a. Focus on important words
   b. Use correct inflection when asking questions

8. Only 5 vowel sounds
   a. a = /a:/ as in “father”
   b. e = /ɛ/ as in “bed”
   c. i = /i:/ as in “ski”
   d. o = /ɔ/ as in “north”
   e. u = /u:/ as in “soon”
9. Tend to assign one of five Swahili vowel sounds to English words
   a. Short i sound /ɪ/ becomes long e sound /i:/ (“bid” becomes “bead”)
   b. Short e sound /ɛ/ may shift to long a sound /ei/ (“bed” becomes “bade”)
   c. In East Africa, /ɜ/ becomes /ei/ (“bird” becomes “bade”)
   d. In West Africa /ɜ/ become /ɒ/ (“bird” becomes “bod”)
   e. /ɒ/ becomes /æ/ (“hard” become “had”)
10. No consonant clusters; all words end with a vowel sound
11. Normal pattern is CV or CVV
12. Stress usually falls on the penultimate syllable
13. L and r used interchangeably:
   a. lead and read
   b. led and red
14. R trilled
   a. Similar to the “rolled r” in Spanish
   b. Needs to be pulled back to a standard English r
15. Dropped h sound
   a. Similar to the stereotypical “cockney” h in British English
   b. Ed for head, arm for harm
16. G/k ; b/p ; j/-ch substitutions
   a. Think for thing
   b. Hib for hip
   c. Jance for chance
17. Replacing /ʃ/ with /s/
   a. Sew for show
   b. Sip for ship