

Phonetic Alphabet

The phonetic alphabet

a writing system in which each letter corresponds to a particular sound in a language

Phonetic alphabet : letters of Latin alphabet
a number of letters and symbols

The Significance of the Phonetic Alphabet

Problems

1. no one-to-one correlation between spelling and sounds in many languages

Different sounds are spelled the same way

call /ɔ/

bough /o/

many /ɛ/

cough /ɒf/

late /e/

tough /ʌf/

part /a/

though /o/

thanks /æ/

through /u/

above /ə/

thought /ɔ/

cash /k/

salt /s/

ocean /ʃ/

sugar /ʃ/

receipt /s/

easy /z/

cello /tʃ/

pleasure /ʒ/

Different spelling are used for the same sound

/i/

me

field

see

people

seat

key

receive

/u/

to

threw

two

through

too

truth

true

The Phonetic Alphabet in the Dictionary

several types of phonetic alphabets in use
the most common : IPA

Phonetic Transcription

the spelling of a word using the phonetic to show its
pronunciation

Type of Phonetic Transcription

1. Broad Transcription or Phonemic Transcription

- shows differences between sounds which are used to convey different meanings
- only use a basic set of symbols (phonemes)

- marked by slanting lines or slant brackets / /

thigh = / θ aɪ /

fan = / fæn /

2. Narrow Transcription or Phonetic Transcription

- shows the physical process involved in the production of sounds as many details of sounds as possible
by using a wide range of symbols and the diacritic marks

- square brackets are used []

pin = [p^hɪn]

the symbol [p^h] small h indicates aspiration

Phonemic Transcription

Phonetic Transcription

Come

/kʌm/

[k^hʌ:m]

Pin

/pɪn/

[p^hɪn]

Take

/tek/

[t^he:k^h]

The Guiding Principles of Transcription

1. The transcription must represent all the sound heard

train 4 sounds : /tren/

initial consonants = tr /tr/

vowel = ai /e/

final consonant = n /n/

2. Silent sounds are not transcribed

bone /bon/

knee /ni/

4. Double Consonants must be transcribed only once.

but**tt**on /bʌtən/

mid**dd**le /mɪdəl/

3. Words with different spelling but pronounced alike must be
transcribed the same.

son /sʌn/

sun /sʌn/

4. Words with same spelling but pronounced differently must be transcribed differently.

bow (V) /baʊ/

bow (n) /bo/

5. Read aloud and don't be misled with spelling.

graph /graf/

6. Every sound heard or pronounced must be transcribed.

friend /frɛnd/

family /fæmɪlɪ/

Website for IPA typing

<https://ipa.typeit.org/>