

ANSWERS

- 1 How does L2 or second-language English differ from L1 English as spoken in the British Isles, North America and Australia-New Zealand? What are the main points of difference? 5%

Main points:

- L₂ speakers of English have usually learnt it at a literate stage, with emphasis on the written form. They tend to pronounce words as they are written. The main effect here is that they do not use weak vowels.
- They tend to speak English with the phonological system of their L₁ as far as it is applicable. This has an impoverishing effect: different English sounds which are not distinguished in the speaker's L₁ may be merged into a single sound. Examples from Icelandic: both u: and ʊ may be pronounced as u:, and s and z may be pronounced as s.

- 2 What is the difference in the position of the tongue between close and open vowels? How do we show this difference on the vowel chart? 2.5%

NB "tongue" (not *tounge*!).

Close vowels are pronounced with the tongue high in the mouth, and open with the tongue low. This is shown by placing the vowels high or low on the vowel chart.

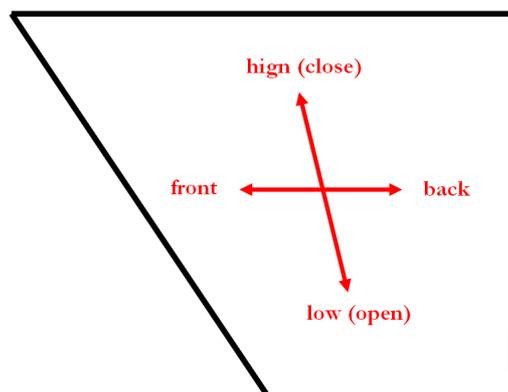
Note: the teeth and jaw do not necessarily open and close. It's the position of the tongue which is important.

- 3 What is the difference in the position of the tongue between front and back vowels? How do we show this difference on the vowel-chart? 2.5%

Front vowels are pronounced with the tongue thrust forward towards the lips, and back vowels with the tongue retracted towards the back. On the vowel chart front vowels are placed on the left, back vowels on the right.

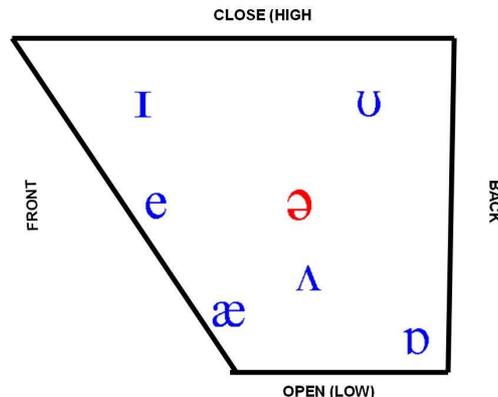
Note: it was not necessary to mention rounding of the lips. Although in European languages front vowels are typically unrounded and back vowels typically rounded, this is by no means always the case.

This figure is for both questions 2 and 3.



- 4 Draw the vowel chart and show the positions of the English lax vowels. Give their symbols. 5%

(It was not necessary to show schwa.)



- 5 What are the main differences between RP and General American vowels? 5%

- There is less length-distinction between lax and tense vowels in GA than in RP, and GA lax vowels can be lengthened for emphasis. (NB tense vowels are NOT shortened!)
- Since GA is rhotic, there are no centring diphthongs; for SQUARE, NEAR and CURE GA uses a lax vowel + r.
- RP distinguishes between BATH and TRAP vowels, and uses the PALM vowel for BATH words. GA does not, using the TRAP vowel for both.
- RP LOT does not occur in GA, which uses PALM instead. Some American dialects use THOUGHT or LOT for *some* LOT words (e.g. dog, forest).
- In large areas of the USA and Canada the PALM vowel is used for THOUGHT (call, law, fought)

- 6 Sort the following 10 words into 2 groups: DRESS-vowels and TRAP-vowels. ONE word does not fit either group. 5%

DRESS: dress said send penny any guess

TRAP: sand canny gas

(LOT: want)

-½ for each mistake. Most people got “any” wrong. “Said” sometimes has the FACE vowel, for instance in Scottish English, but not in RP or GA.

- 7 Sort the following 10 words into 2 groups: STRUT-vowels and LOT-vowels. ONE word does not fit either group. 5%

STRUT: front country money lunch rough what (in GA)

LOT: pond crop song what (in RP)

(MOUTH: round)

-½ for each mistake. “Front” was the surprise here.

- 8 a What English (RP or GA) vowel is lax, front and close ? **I** 2.5%
 b What English (RP or GA) vowel is tense, back and open? **ɑː** 2.5%
 c What English (RP or GA) diphthong rises from an open position towards a close back position? **aʊ** 2.5%
- 9 What mistakes are Icelandic speakers most likely to make when pronouncing the word 'stage'? 5%

The English pronunciation is /steɪdʒ/. Only **dʒ** presents a problem for Icelanders:

- **dʒ** is voiced, but Icelanders have no voiced final consonants, so they would unvoice it in the direction of **tʃ**
- **dʒ** and **tʃ** are post-alveolar, which is not an articulatory position in Icelandic, so an Icelandic speaker would probably substitute an alveolar articulation, giving **ts**, or a palatal, giving **tj**
- You could also mention that if they said /steɪts/ this means that "stage" and "states" would merge into one word. But note that in English /steɪts/ would have a clipped vowel in front of a fortis consonant, while the vowel in /steɪdʒ/ would be unclipped (long). Icelanders would however probably leave the vowel unclipped, producing **steɪts** - a form which does not occur in English, either for "stage" OR "states"!

- 10 Give the PLACE, VOICING and MANNER of the **initial** consonants in the following words: 5%

Examples: **false** - labiodental fortis fricative. **day** - alveolar lenis plosive.

1 nest	n	alveolar nasal
2 quick	k	velar fortis plosive
3 grill	g	velar lenis plosive
4 well	w	bilabial approximant
5 shop	ʃ	postalveolar fortis fricative
6 this	ð	dental lenis fricative
7 usual	j	palatal approximant
8 fast	f	labiodental fortis fricative
9 door	d	alveolar lenis plosive
10 chat	tʃ	postalveolar fortis affricate

1, 4 and 7 are voiced, but since there is no fortis-lenis distinction in nasals and approximants, it was not necessary to mention voicing here.
 - ½ for each mistaken feature.

- 11 a What do we mean by fortis and lenis? Mention voicing and as many of the other features as you can. What are the eight fortis/lenis pairs? 2.5%

The eight pairs are p-b, t-d, k-g, f-v, θ(β)-ð, s-z, ʃ-ʒ, tʃ-dʒ

- Voicing: Fortis consonants are unvoiced, lenis are voiced. Lenis fricatives are voiced, but lenis plosives can be partially or fully unvoiced. The lenis affricate can be partially unvoiced.
- Length (**NB not 'length'!**): fortis consonants are generally longer than lenis (and they 'clip' preceding vowels).
- Strength (**NB not 'strenght'!**): fortis consonants are pronounced with more 'force' than lenis. The terms 'fortis' and 'lenis' are Latin for 'strong' and 'weak'.
- Aspiration: fortis plosives have (post-) aspiration when they occur before stressed vowels, unless /s/ precedes them. They may also have weaker aspiration in other positions. **tʃ** can also have postaspiration. Lenis consonants are not aspirated.
- Glottalization. Fortis plosives, particularly t, can be "reinforced" by a glottal stop in final positions and in some consonant clusters – that **ð æ ʔt**, rat-race **r æ ʔtr eɪ s**. This also happens to **tʃ**: matches **m æ ʔtʃ ɪ z**.

I was far too lenient on this question. If you simply named the five features you probably got full marks. Disgraceful.

b In the following list, UNDERLINE the words in which tense vowels are affected by fortis clipping. 2.5%

fate age make look coach stone blues light voice pit teach patch

look, pit and patch end in fortis consonants, but their vowels are lax

12 items; $-\frac{1}{2}$ for each mistake

12 Mark unvoiced **r** and **l** in the following words by writing ⓪ below them (r̥ l̥): 5%

t̥r̥end **rep̥l̥y** **grace** **glint** **p̥lead** **strike** **c̥lass** **p̥rint** **sprung** **blaze**

- $\frac{1}{2}$ for each mistake. In 'strike' and 'sprung' there is a preceding s.

13 Explain:
$$/l/ \rightarrow \begin{cases} [l̥] / \text{---} V \\ [l] \end{cases}$$
 5%

This rule says "The phoneme (/l/ is realised as the allophone [l̥] (light l) when it occurs before a vowel, otherwise as the allophone [l]." Full marks for saying substantially the same as this.

Note that the rule as given here is incomplete; a fuller form would be:

$$/l/ \rightarrow \begin{cases} [l̥] / ^l[\text{fortis plosive}] \text{---} V \\ [l] / \text{---} V \\ [l] \end{cases}$$

14 Add the s-ending (-s, -z or -IZ) to the following noun and verbs: 5%

voice IZ **box IZ** **deny Z** **fear Z** **singer Z**

stop S **lick S** **game Z** **store Z** **push IZ**

15 Add the past tense ending (-t, -d or -Id) to the following verbs: 5%

avoid **ɪd park **t** obey **d** mate **ɪd** slip **t**
stare **d** reason **d** raise **d** pull **d** fetch **t****

(reɪzd = raised, reɪst = raced. - parkd, feɪd, are impossible)

16 a Explain what we mean by ‘rhotic’ and ‘non-rhotic’ accents of English (explain the difference WITHOUT referring to the letter *r* in spelling).

b Why does ‘Intrusive R’ not occur in rhotic dialects? 5%

a) In a non-rhotic accent /r/ does not occur without a vowel following it. In rhotic accents /r/ can occur without a vowel following it.

- Several people said that in non-rhotic accents /r/ only occurs after non-high vowels, if another vowel follows. But this is the rule for r-insertion (r-linking). In the words *run* and *carry* (rʌn, kærɪ) for instance, there is no non-high vowel preceding the /r/!

If you said “the r is not pronounced unless a vowel follows” you were talking about the spelling (what other “r” is there?), and so lost marks.

b) Now you have to mention spelling. Intrusive r occurs when r is inserted between a non-high vowel and another vowel according to the linking-r rule, but this r is not historical, i.e. it is not there in the spelling. The rule for r-insertion does not exist in rhotic languages.

(Actually, as one student has pointed out, intrusive r DOES occur occasionally in rhotic speech. He’s right. But very few people would agree with this, and it’s difficult to find examples ...)

17 Underline the words in the following sentence which *may* lose their initial *h* in R.P.: 2.5%

He was holding her glass in his left hand and had already helped himself to another ham roll with his right.

/h/ is dropped in all structural words here except for *He* which comes at the beginning of the utterance.

Note that there is no /h/ in ‘another’, ‘with’ or ‘right’!!

-1/2 for each mistake (10 h’s in the sentence.)

18

a Transcribe the following passage. 10%

b Show all sentence stresses (^ˈ before stressed syllables). 5%

c Make sure you are using weak forms wherever applicable. 5%

At the top of the hill she turned and looked back. The horse was still following her, but the two dogs had vanished. Clouds brushed the hillsides, and drops of rain started falling. She knew that it had all been too late.

(turn page)

GA in blue. Weak forms underlined.

ət ðə 'tɒp 'tɑ:(z)p əv ðə 'hɪl ʃi 'tɜ:nd 'tɜ:(z)rnd
ən 'lʊkt 'bæk
ðə 'hɔ:s 'hɔ:(z)rs wəz 'stɪl 'fɒləʊɪŋ ə 'fɑ:(z)ləʊɪŋ ər
bət ðə 'tu: 'dɒgz dɑ:(z)gz/dɔ:(z)gz əd 'vænɪʃt
 'klaʊdz 'brʌʃt ðə 'hɪlsaɪdz
ən 'drɒps 'dra:(z)ps əv 'reɪn
 'stɑ:tɪd 'stɑ:(z)rtɪd/-əd 'fɔ:lɪŋ 'fɑ:(z)lɪŋ
 ʃi 'nju: 'nu: ðət ɪt əd 'ɔ:l 'ɑ:(z)l bɪn (bɪ:n) 'tu: 'leɪt

On your exam paper I record 3 types of mistakes:

tr (transcription mistakes): 10 points, -1/2 for each mistake

w (weak forms missing): 5 points, -1/3 for each mistake

str (wrong or missing stresses): 5 points, -1/3 for each mistake

- *looked*: a common mistake was lʊkt, which would be *luket* (to rhyme with *naked*.)
- *turned*: a common mistake was something like tʌnd, i.e. *tunned*.
- *brushed*: a common mistake was brɜ:ʃt, which would be *brershed*.
- *looked, brushed*: even people who did well on question 15 wrote lʊkd, brʊʃd. Fatal.
- *horse*: a common mistake was hɔrs or even hɒs. Actually, hɒs is a dialectal form, both in England and the southern States ('Git on yo' hoss an' git outa town, dude'). But I marked it wrong. hɔ:rz was also common (= whores).
- Many people had a stress and/or a strong form on the first word: 'æt. Wrong.
- Many had a stress on 'bɪ:n. I let it go.