Better English Pronunciation
Better English Pronunciation

Second edition

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Acknowledgements

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The responsibility for the book is mine; any credit I happily share with all those mentioned above.

J. D. O’C.
Foreword to the second edition

Since this book was first published, in 1967, my attention has been drawn by users of it to various errors and omissions, and suggestions have been made for improving its usefulness. In this second edition I have now remedied the errors and omissions and I have adopted those suggestions which I think improve the book. To all those readers who were kind enough to write to me on these matters I offer my sincere thanks.

My old readers will no doubt consider the greatest change in this edition to be the use of a different phonetic transcription, and I agree. The reason why I decided to change the transcription is this: when the book was first published I used the transcription of Daniel Jones’s English Pronouncing Dictionary (Dent), which I considered to be the best guide to English pronunciation for foreign learners (as I still do). The present editor of the dictionary, A. C. Gimson, decided, rightly in my opinion, to change his transcription for the 14th edition of 1977. This meant that my transcription no longer corresponded to any of those found in the major dictionaries commonly used by foreign learners. I have now rectified this quite unacceptable situation by adopting the Gimson transcription which is also used in the Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (1978) and the Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English (4th edition 1980).

There have often been understandable complaints from students that different writers on English pronunciation used different transcriptions. It seems to me that there is at least a movement towards using a standard transcription, namely, the one now used in this book, and this is a wholly welcome development.

The new transcription differs from the old only in the matter of symbols for the English vowels, and for the convenience of old readers I list both old and new forms below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Old form</th>
<th>Key word</th>
<th>New form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>iː</td>
<td>feel</td>
<td>iː</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>fill</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e</td>
<td>fell</td>
<td>e</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ix
Foreword

Vo: fall  v:
u: full  u
u: fool  u:
ai: fail  ei
ou: foul  eu
ai: file  ai
au: foul  eu
i: foil  i
æ: cat  æ
c: cot  c
Λ: cut  Λ
ə: curt  i:
ɔ: cart  o:
iə: tier  iə
eə: tear  eə
uə: tour  uə
ə: banana  e

Vowels which were previously differentiated only by the length mark (ː) are now distinguished both by the length mark and by letter-shape, e.g. fiː/ fiː. This makes for easier visual recognition and underlines the fact that the pairs of vowels differ not only in length but also in quality.

A recording of all the practice material is available on cassettes. The symbol [in the text indicates exactly what is recorded.

The book has been entirely re-designed and re-set, and the diagrams have been re-drawn; for this and much other help my thanks are due to the Cambridge University Press.

I hope that my book will continue to serve a useful purpose for both teachers and learners of English in helping them towards a better English pronunciation.