

TA Tips for Transcribing

Transcribing your speaker can be very different from the transcription practice that we do in class. They may speak quickly or quietly, making it difficult to determine the minute details that contribute to accented speech.

Luckily, we have them recorded, which means we can rewind as much as necessary to figure it all out!

Here are some tips to help you with your project:

- ***Choose the section of speech with the strongest accent*** – the more different it is from GAE, the easier it will be for you to spot the differences.
- ***Listen to a small section*** (two to three words) each time, not a whole sentence. You should listen to the section more than once, but no more than five times.
- ***Download an audio file editor***, such as Wavesurfer – you can select a small section of speech to listen to instead of the whole file. Just save a backup copy first, in case you delete something by accident!
- ***Print out your gloss*** (written in English) with enough space between the lines to ***handwrite your corpus*** (narrowly transcribed in IPA) below each one. Use a large font so that you have plenty of space to transcribe. (see the Final paper example)
- ***Use a landscape orientation*** – it's harder to accidentally miss a line of transcription.
- ***Don't be afraid to use IPA symbols from their native phonology!*** If there's something you're hearing that isn't GAE, it could be a sound from their first language that's influencing their speech.
- ***Apply the 13 rules*** when appropriate – only leave them out in situations when you don't think they're present.
- ***Use the diacritics found on the inside covers*** of your textbook to indicate minor differences from GAE, such as fronted or extra short vowels.
- ***Don't forget the suprasegmentals!*** Make sure to pay close attention to intonation and stress, as both can add to the perception of an accent.
- ***Check with Dr. Katz or the TA*** to make sure that you're transcribing correctly. We will check the first few lines of the transcription and let you know what parts need more work.