

Homework assignment #1: Phonetics and romanization

Due **Tuesday, August 29**

Please submit your assignment on paper (use a separate sheet!) at the beginning of class. HW assignments may be handwritten or typed. If you prefer to type, note that IPA symbols and Japanese characters can be copied from course PDFs or web pages and pasted into your documents.

- (1) For each of the following phonetic symbols, give a phonetic description that includes **voicing**, **place of articulation**, and **manner of articulation** (for consonants), or **height**, **backness**, and **rounding** (for vowels).

| | | |
|---------|---------|---------|
| (a) [ç] | (c) [w] | (e) [u] |
| (b) [ŋ] | (d) [r] | (f) [a] |

- (2) For each of the following phonetic descriptions, give the appropriate phonetic symbol.

| | |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| (a) voiced bilabial stop | (d) voiced alveolar affricate |
| (b) voiceless alveopalatal affricate | (e) high front unrounded vowel |
| (c) voiced palatal approximant | (f) mid back round vowel |

- (3) The *Genki* Japanese textbook (p 21, footnote 2) makes the following statements about the pronunciation represented by the hiragana symbol <ん>. Answer questions (a)–(e).
 - “Followed by *n, t, d, s,* and *z* sounds, ん is pronounced as ‘n.’”
 - (a) What do “*n, t, d, s,* and *z* sounds” have in common phonetically?
 - “Followed by *m, p,* and *b* sounds, ん is pronounced as ‘m.’”
 - (b) What do “*m, p,* and *b* sounds” have in common phonetically?
 - “Followed by *k* and *g* sounds, ん is pronounced as ‘ng’ as in ‘song.’”
 - (c) What do “*k* and *g* sounds” have in common phonetically?
 - (d) What is the phonetic symbol for “‘ng’ as in ‘song’”?
 - (e) Now consider your answers to questions (a)-(c) along with the pronunciation of ん in each of these contexts. Can you make a broader generalization (a single statement) about how ん is pronounced?

- (4) Sound files for this assignment have been posted to Canvas in Modules. Listen to the sound file and transcribe each word using **phonetic symbols**, as shown on our handout “Phonetic symbols — Reference charts for Japanese”. Some may be tricky — give it a try!

| | | | |
|-------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| (a) ‘fair’ | (c) ‘opposite’ | (e) ‘air route’ | (g) ‘worsening’ |
| (b) ‘hobby’ | (d) ‘black (n.)’ | (f) ‘dirt’ | |

- (5) Use the **online kana charts** to transliterate the following hiragana spellings into **kunrei** romanization *as used in the charts*. You may use your browser’s search function to find kana on the charts!

| | | | | |
|-------|-------|--------------------|-------|-------|
| (a) さ | (c) ふ | (e) か ³ | (g) に | (i) を |
| (b) ち | (d) じ | (f) の | (h) で | (j) は |

Notes:

- For item (i), give the romanization appropriate for its use as the **accusative case suffix**.
- For item (j), you should find two romanizations; give **both** and **explain** when the special one is used.