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THE PRONUNCIATION OF MODERN ICELANDIC

A BRIEF COURSE FOR FOREIGN STUDENTS

(accompanied by exercises designed for use
in a language laboratory)

Third Edition

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Bók þessa má ekki afrita með neinum hætti,
svo sem ljósmyndun, prentun, hljóðritun
eða á annan sambærilegan hátt, að hluta eða
í heild, án skriflegs leyfis höfundar og
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Preface

This material is meant for use in the *Aðfaranám* in *Íslenska fyrir erlenda stúdenta* in *Heimspeklaríð Háskóla Íslands*. The purpose is that it may serve as an introduction for foreign students to the pronunciation of Modern Icelandic.

It should be clear from the start that this material does not give a detailed account of all problems nor is it intended to be a complete phonetic description.

I have tried to focus on the features of pronunciation that experience has shown to be problematic for foreigners (there is a „survey of problems“ in chapter 6.2). Moreover, I have tried to look at the problems from the standpoint of the spelling of the written language, which is presumably the standpoint from which the students of this course approach the study of Icelandic.

I have chosen to concentrate on the language of Reykjavík and neighbouring areas as this can be seen as a common language of most Icelanders. Dialectal differences are discussed in the *Appendix*.

My suggestion is that students carefully read the discussion of each problem and, following the phonetic transcription, practice the examples or exercises before class. In that way, students can make better use of their time in the language laboratory, concentrating on repetition of words and sentences.

In the language laboratory, it is suggested that students go through four stages in each exercise (at least in the beginning, when you are less advanced): 1) listen carefully to the native speaker; 2) practice; 3) listen again and compare to the native voice; 4) practice again.

It may be a good idea to use Exercise 52 in 6.1 as an introduction. It is also probably not a bad idea to do Exercise 21 in 4.2 before chapter 2 has been finished.



1. A few words on the phonetic symbols used

1.1

„o“ means „voiceless“

The little circle, „o“, indicates that a sound is voiceless. Thus, for instance, [n̥] like in *vanta* [vánta] is produced the same way as [n] in *vanda* [vánta] except that the [n̥] (in *vanta*) is voiceless whereas [n] (in *vanda*) is voiced, etc. (The terms „voiced“ and „unvoiced“ are discussed in 2.2.3).

1.2

„:“ means „long“

When a sound is long, it is followed by the symbol :. All other sounds are short. Thus the only long sound in the word *net* [nε:t] is the [ε], and all the sounds in the word *hestur* [hɛstyr] are short, etc. See 3.2.1.

1.3

Used here = I P A 's

[kʒ]	=	[c]
[kʒʰ]	=	[cʰ]
[j̥]	=	[ç]
[b]	=	[θ]
[i]	=	[e]
[y]	=	[ø]
[ö]	=	[œ]

In some respects our phonetic transcription deviates from that of the so-called IPA (International Phonetic Alphabet). In most cases the purpose is to make the transcription look more like the normal spelling.

Thus, we have [kʒ] and [kʒʰ] for IPA's [c] and [cʰ], respectively (please note that [kʒ] indicates one single sound, not two, and so does [kʒʰ]).

Furthermore, we use [j̥] instead of [ç] for the voiceless counterpart of [j].

We use [b] instead of [θ], [i] instead of [e], and [ö] instead of [œ].

Finally, we use [y] as a symbol for the sound represented in the Icelandic orthography by the letter *u* (instead of IPA's [ø]). This is done in accordance with the traditional Icelandic phonetic transcription.

(It may be added here that many books on Icelandic phonetics use the symbols [b̥], [d̥], [f̥], and [g̥] for the lax stops. Their phonetic value is exactly the same as in our [p], [t], [kʒ], and [k], respectively).

2. Letters and pronunciation

2.1 Vowels

2.1.1

<i>Letter</i>	<i>Pronunciation</i>	<i>As in</i>
Most Occurring often variants		
<i>i</i>	[i]	<i>bíddu</i> [pit:y] („(please) wait“)
<i>ý</i>	[i]	<i>sýndu</i> [sintu] („(please) show“)
<i>i</i>	[ɪ]	<i>listi</i> [lísti] („list“)
	[i] (_ng, _nk, _gi)	
<i>y</i>	[ɪ]	<i>synda</i> [sinta] („swim“)
	[i] (_ng, _nk, _gi)	
<i>e</i>	[ɛ]	<i>senda</i> [sénta] („send“)
	[ɛi] (_ng, _nk, _gi, _gj)	
<i>é</i>	[jɛ]	<i>sést</i> [sjést] („can be seen“)
<i>u</i>	[y]	<i>hundur</i> [hyntyr] („dog“)
	[u] (_ng, _nk)	
	[yi] (_gi)	
<i>ö</i>	[ö]	<i>hönd</i> [hönt] („hand“)
	[öy] (_ng, _nk, _gi)	
<i>ú</i>	[u]	<i>Rússi</i> [rus:i] („a Russian“)
<i>o</i>	[ɔ]	<i>loft</i> [løft] („air“)
	[ɔi] (_gi)	
<i>a</i>	[a]	<i>sandur</i> [santvr] („sand“)
	[au] (_ng, _nk)	
	[ai] (_gi)	
<i>ei</i>	[ɛi]	<i>neisti</i> [nɛistí] („spark“)
<i>ey</i>	[ɛi]	<i>heyrðu</i> [hɛirðY] („(please) listen“)

<i>au</i>	[öy]	<i>haust</i>	[höyst]	(„autumn“)
ó	[ou]	<i>bónði</i>	[pounti]	(„farmer“)
æ	[ai]	<i>læst</i>	[laist]	(„locked“)
á	[au]	<i>ást</i>	[aust]	(„love“)

NB I

i — *í*, *a* — *á* etc. differ in quality

Note that *i* and *í*, *a* and *á* etc. have different quality ([i] and [í], [a] and [au], respectively, etc.), i.e. the superscript mark, ', like in *á*, *í*, *é*, *ó*, *ú*, *ý*, is not a symbol of length, accent or anything of that sort.

*NB II***Vowels can be short or long**

All vowels can be either short or long (depending on the following consonantism, see 3.2.2). Thus, we have [i:] (long) in *bíða* [pi:ða] („to wait“) but [i] (short) in *bíðdu* [pit:y] („(please) wait“) etc.

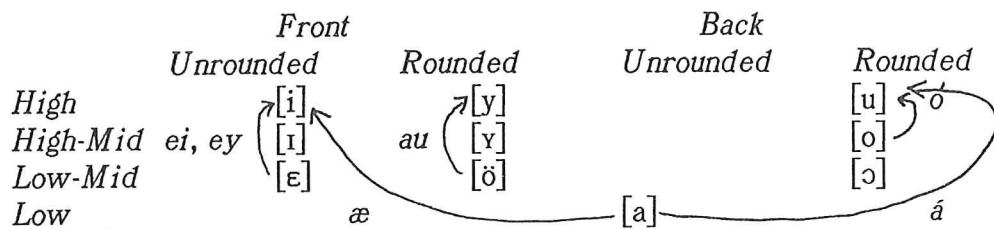
2.1.2

In order to get a better idea of the production of the vowels, both monophthongs and diphthongs, they can be shown in the following manner (if the terminology causes any problems, ask the teacher!):

1) monophthongs (eight sounds)

	Front		Back	
	Unrounded	Rounded	Unrounded	Rounded
High	\acute{i} , \acute{y} = [i]			\acute{u} = [u]
High-Mid	i, y = [ɪ]		u = [y]	
Low-Mid	e = [ɛ]	ö = [ö]		o = [ɔ]
Low			a = [a]	

2) diphthongs (five sounds)



The arrows show how the diphthongs [ɛi], [øy], [ou], [ai] and [au] are produced, which can be seen simply as „adding one vowel to another“.

NB III

$$\begin{array}{llll} \acute{i} & \text{and} & \acute{y} & = [i] \\ i & \text{and} & y & = [ɪ] \\ ei & \text{and} & ey & = [\varepsilon i] \end{array}$$

Note that the letters *i* and *y* represent the same sound, [ɪ]; \acute{i} and \acute{y} both represent [i]; *ei* and *ey* both represent [ɛi].

NB IV

Note the difference between the following sounds: \acute{i} , \acute{y} = [i]; *i*, *y* = [ɪ]; and *e* = [ɛ].

Many foreign students have difficulties in distinguishing between those three.

Exercise 1

a) („mouth opens gradually“) — read first horizontally, then vertically

<i>fýl</i>	[fi:l]	<i>lím</i>	[li:m]	<i>býð</i>	[pi:ð]
<i>fyl</i>	[fr:l]	<i>lím</i>	[li:m]	<i>bið</i>	[pr:ð]
<i>fel</i>	[fε:l]	<i>lém</i>	[le:m]	<i>beð</i>	[pε:ð]
<i>býst</i>	[pist]	<i>list</i>	[list]	<i>rífst</i>	[rifst]
<i>hist</i>	[hist]	<i>list</i>	[list]	<i>fyrst</i>	[fist]
<i>hest</i>	[hεst]	<i>lest</i>	[lest]	<i>fremst</i>	[frεmst]

b) („mouth closes gradually“)

<i>set</i>	[sε:t]	<i>ber</i>	[pε:r]	<i>net</i>	[nε:t]
<i>sit</i>	[sɪ:t]	<i>vil</i>	[vɪ:l]	<i>byl</i>	[pr:1]
<i>flyt</i>	[fli:t]	<i>Nil</i>	[ni:l]	<i>Krít</i>	[kʰri:t]
<i>leggur</i>	[læk:yr]	<i>heldur</i>	[hɛltyr]	<i>festa</i>	[fɛsta]
<i>liggur</i>	[lɪk:yr]	<i>hirðir</i>	[hɪrðir]	<i>kyssa</i>	[kjʰis:a]
<i>límdur</i>	[limtyr]	<i>hýddur</i>	[hit:yr]	<i>bíddu</i>	[pit:y]

NB V

Most foreign students find the sounds *u* = [y], *ö* = [ö] and *au* = [øy] hard to pronounce and to distinguish. Pay special attention to them from the beginning.

Exercise 2

<i>gul</i>	[ky:l]	<i>fura</i>	[fy:ra]	<i>sumar</i>	[sy:mar]
<i>söl</i>	[sö:l]	<i>flötur</i>	[flö:tvr]	<i>sögur</i>	[sö:γyr]
<i>rauð</i>	[röy:ð]	<i>sauður</i>	[söy:ðyr]	<i>laumast</i>	[löy:mast]
<i>fundur</i>	[fyntyr]	<i>hurð</i>	[hyrð]	<i>suddi</i>	[syt:i]
<i>lönd</i>	[lønt]	<i>Hörður</i>	[hørðyr]	<i>Sölví</i>	[sölví]
<i>haust</i>	[höyst]	<i>saurga</i>	[söyrka]	<i>nauðga</i>	[nøyðka]

NB VI

Diphthongs can be either long or short

Note that the diphthongs (*ei*, *ey*, *au*, *ó*, *æ*, *á*) can, like other vowels, be either long or short (depending on the following consonantism, see 3.2.2). Many foreign students have had difficulties in pronouncing the short ones, so let us practice this a bit (make sure you produce both parts of each diphthong):

Exercise 3

a) *long vs. short diphthongs*

<i>feitur</i>	[fei:tvr]	<i>neisti</i>	[n̥eistɪ]
<i>keyra</i>	[k; ^h ɛi:ra]	<i>reynsla</i>	[reinstla]
<i>laug</i>	[løy:γ]	<i>braust</i>	[prøyst]
<i>stór</i>	[stou:r]	<i>fólska</i>	[foulska]
<i>læti</i>	[lai:ti]	<i>næst</i>	[naist]
<i>kátur</i>	[k; ^h au:tvr]	<i>ást</i>	[aust]

b) *short diphthongs*

<i>ei, ey</i>	<i>seinn</i>	[sεitn],	<i>keyrsla</i>	[kj ^h eirstla],	<i>heyrdú</i>	[heirðy]
<i>au</i>	<i>fauskur</i>	[föyskyr],	<i>laust</i>	[löyst],	<i>rausn</i>	[röystn]
<i>ó</i>	<i>stóll</i>	[stoutl],	<i>ólga</i>	[oulka],	<i>hólf</i>	[houlv]
<i>æ</i>	<i>stærst</i>	[staist],	<i>hræddur</i>	[rait:yr],	<i>lægst</i>	[laixst]
<i>á</i>	<i>nást</i>	[naust],	<i>fálma</i>	[faulma],	<i>sársauki</i>	[saursöykj]

NB VII

bordunum = „bordonum“ etc.

In dat.plur.def. of nouns, like *borðunum* (from *borð* „table“), *konunum* (from *kona* „woman“), and *hestunum* (from *hestur* „horse“), the first *u* of *-unum* is usually often pronounced as an *o*.

2.1.3 Vowel exercises

Exercise 4

— long vowels —

<i>Lína</i>	[li:na]	<i>súr</i>	[su:r]
<i>nýra</i>	[ni:ra]	<i>bor</i>	[po:r]
<i>fita</i>	[fi:ta]	<i>eyra</i>	[ei:ra]
<i>mysa</i>	[mi:sa]	<i>leita</i>	[le:i:ta]
<i>fer</i>	[fε:r]	<i>færa</i>	[fai:ra]
<i>gul</i>	[ky:l]	<i>staur</i>	[stö:y:r]
<i>gröf</i>	[krö:v]	<i>náð</i>	[nau:ð]
<i>haf</i>	[ha:v]	<i>skór</i>	[skou:r]

Exercise 5

— short vowels —

<i>tísta</i>	[tʰista]	<i>kústur</i>	[kʰustyr]
<i>býsna</i>	[pistna]	<i>borga</i>	[pɔrka]
<i>rifna</i>	[ripna]	<i>neysla</i>	[neistla]
<i>frysta</i>	[frista]	<i>greindur</i>	[kreintyr]
<i>gestur</i>	[k;estyr]	<i>sæng</i>	[saiŋk]
<i>Gunnar</i>	[kyn:ar]	<i>spaug̑samur</i>	[spöyksamyr]
<i>bölva</i>	[pölvə]	<i>dást</i>	[taust]
<i>Baldur</i>	[paltyr]	<i>bólga</i>	[poulka]

Exercise 6

— simple sentences —

<i>Lína finnur ber</i> [li:na fin:yr pε:r]	(„Lína finds berries“)
<i>Símon lemur miг</i> [si:mɔn lε:myrmɪг]	(„Símon beats me“)
<i>Sýndu mér pennann</i> [sintymjær pʰen:an]	(„Show me the pen“)
<i>Gunnar þarf föt</i> [kyn:ar þarv fö:t]	(„Gunnar needs some clothes“)
<i>Sigga saumar buxur</i> [sík:a söy:mar pyxsyr]	(„Sigga sews trousers“)
<i>Mjólkini er súr</i> [mjoulkjiner su:r]	(„The milk is sour“)
<i>Ég málæði stólinn</i> [jε:γ mau:laði stou:lin]	(„I painted the chair“)
<i>Hún kom í strætó</i> [hunjkʰomi strai:tou]	(„She came on a bus“)

- Pau eru bæði heima* („They are both at home“)
 [þöy:ɛry paɪ:ði hɛi:ma]
Parna býr gömul kona („An old lady lives there“)
 [þatnapir kö:myl kʰɔ:na]

2.2 Consonants

2.2.1

Letter	Pronunciation		As in	
<i>p</i>	[pʰ]	<i>penni</i>	[pʰɛn:i]	(„pen“)
	[p]		[tʰa:pa]	(„lose“)
	[f]		[skjifta]	(„divide“)
<i>t</i>	[tʰ]	<i>taska</i>	[tʰaska]	(„hand-bag“)
	[t]		[lau:ta]	(„let“)
<i>k</i>	[k_jʰ]	<i>kista</i>	[k_jʰista]	(„coffin“)
	[kʰ]		[kʰasta]	(„throw“)
	[k_j]		[pʰɔ:k_ji]	(„bag“)
	[k]		[tʰa:ka]	(„take“)
	[x]		[raxt]	(„damp“ neutr.)
<i>b</i>	[p]	<i>bær</i>	[pai:r]	(„town“)
<i>d</i>	[t]	<i>dalur</i>	[ta:lyr]	(„valley“)
<i>g</i>	[k_j]	<i>gitar</i>	[k_ji:tar]	(„guitar“)
	[k]		[ka:t]	(„hole“)
	[x]		[haixt]	(„possible“)
	[γ]		[sa:γa]	(„story“)
	[j]		[li:jɪ]	(„a lie“)
<i>v</i>	[v]	<i>vasi</i>	[va:sɪ]	(„pocket“)

<i>f</i>	[f] [v] [p]	<i>fá</i> <i>lifa</i> <i>sofna</i>	[fau:] [li:va] [sɔpna]	(„get“) („live“) („fall asleep“)
<i>fn(+d)</i>	[m]	<i>hefnd</i>	[hɛmt]	(„revenge“)
<i>fn(+t)</i>	[m ^ø]	<i>nefnt</i>	[nɛmt]	(„called“ neutr.)
<i>ð</i>	[ð] [þ]	<i>úða</i> <i>iðka</i>	[u:ða] [iþka]	(„spray“) („practice“)
<i>p</i>	[þ]	<i>þurfa</i>	[þyrva]	(„need“)
<i>s</i>	[s]	<i>sól</i>	[sou:]	(„sun“)
<i>j</i>	[j] <i>hj</i> [j ^ø]	<i>já</i> <i>hjón</i>	[jau:] [jou:n]	(„yes“) („couple“)
<i>h</i>	[h] [k ^h] <i>hj</i> [j ^ø] <i>hé</i> [jε] <i>hr</i> [r] <i>hl</i> [l] <i>hn</i> [n ^ø]	<i>hundur</i> <i>hvað</i> <i>hjón</i> <i>hér</i> <i>hrópa</i> <i>hlusta</i> <i>hnútur</i>	[hyntyr] [k ^h va:ð] [jou:n] [jε:r] [rou:pa] [lysta] [nu:tvr]	(„dog“) („what“) („couple“) („here“) („yell“) („listen“) („knot“)
<i>x</i>	[xs]	<i>vaxa</i>	[vaxsa]	(„grow“)
<i>n</i>	[n] [n ^ø] [ŋ] [ŋ ^ø] [ŋ] [ŋ ^ø]	<i>nú</i> <i>vanta</i> <i>enginn</i> <i>banki</i> <i>fingur</i> <i>banka</i>	[nu:] [van ^ø ta] [eipkjɪn] [pauŋkʃɪ] [fiŋkvr] [pauŋka]	(„now“) („need“) („nobody“) („bank“) („finger“) („knock“)
<i>m</i>	[m] [m ^ø]	<i>mús</i> <i>lampi</i>	[mu:s] [lamp ^ø]	(„mouse“) („lamp“)
<i>l</i>	[l] [l ^ø]	<i>lás</i> <i>sulta</i>	[lau:s] [sylt ^ø a]	(„lock“) („jam“)
<i>r</i>	[r] [r ^ø]	<i>rós</i> <i>orka</i>	[rou:s] [ɔrk ^ø a]	(„rose“) („energy“)

NB VIII

The word *guð* („God“) is pronounced as if it were spelled „*gvuð*“: [kvý:ð], i.e. with an inserted *v*. Subsequently, this happens also in all words derived from *guð*, like *guðsþjónusta* („mass“) etc. and proper names like *Guðrún*, *Guðmundur* etc.

NB IX

c	=	s, k
q	=	k
w	=	v
z	=	s

The letters *c*, *q*, *w* and *z* are left out in the list above as they are not a part of the official spelling system. These letters do, however, sometimes occur in the written language, *c*, *q* and *w* only in foreign words, though.

c is usually pronounced as an *s*, as in *celsíus* [selsiys], but sometimes as a *k*, as in *Cortina* [kʰɔrtína].

q is pronounced like a *k*, as in *questor* [kʰvɛstɔr].

w is pronounced as a *v*, as in *Winston* [vinstó:n].

z was a part of the official orthography until quite recently when its use was abolished. Therefore, a lot of the written material you may come across is likely to contain *z*. In all cases the pronunciation is the same as for *s*; *bezt* [pɛst] („best“).

2.2.2

In order to get a better idea of the articulation of the consonants they can be shown in the following manner (the terms voiced, unvoiced, aspirated and unaspirated are discussed in 2.2.3, for other terminology problems, check handbooks or ask the teacher).

<i>manner of articulation</i>	<i>place of articulation</i>						
	<i>lips</i>	<i>teeth/ lips</i>	<i>teeth</i>	<i>alveoli</i>	<i>palatum</i>	<i>velum</i>	<i>glottis</i>
stops							
aspirated	p ^h			t ^h	k _j ^h		k ^h
unaspirated	p			t	k _j		k
fricatives							
voiced		v	ð		j	y	
unvoiced		f	b	s	j ^ø	x	h
nasals					n	ŋ	ŋ
voiced	m				n ^ø	ŋ ^ø	ŋ ^ø
unvoiced	m ^ø						
laterals				l			
voiced					l		
unvoiced					l ^ø		
trills					r		
voiced					r		
unvoiced					r ^ø		

NB X

b, d, g are unvoiced

Note that all stops in Icelandic are unvoiced, i.e. b, d and g are never voiced as they are in English, French and many other languages. This feature has subsequently caused some problems for many foreigners, so let us practice this a little:

Exercise 7

[p]	bær	[pai:r]	[k _j]	gestur	[k; _j ɛstyr]
	lambið	[lampið]		lengi	[lεiŋk _j i]
	tapa	[t ^h a:pa]		leki	[lε:k _j i]
[t]	dós	[tou:s]	[k]	gata	[ka:ta]
	aldur	[altyr]		angá	[auŋka]
	hata	[ha:ta]		loka	[lɔ:ka]

NB XI

kí — kú
gí — gú

The palatal stops, [k_j^h] and [k_j], have proved to be difficult for many students. Therefore, it is necessary from the beginning to take good notice of the difference between them on the one hand and the velar stops, [k^h] and [k], on the other.

This difference is comparable to that between i [i] and ú [u].

In [i], [k_j^h] and [k_j] the tongue is in the *front*, in [u], [k^h] and [k] the tongue is in the *back* of the mouth.

Exercise 8

a) [k_j^h] vs. [k^h]

Compare the following:

kí [k_j^hi:] (palatal) and kú [k^hu:] (velar).

Say kí four times, and then kú four times. Then say: kí-kú, kí-kú, kí-kú, kí-kú.

b) [k_j] vs. [k]

Compare the following:

gí [k_ji:] (palatal) and gú [ku:] (velar).

Say gí four times, and then gú four times. Then say: gí-gú, gí-gú, gí-gú, gí-gú.

c)	<i>Gísli</i>	[kjistli]	<i>gær</i>	[kjai:r]
	<i>góður</i>	[kou:ðyr]	<i>gá</i>	[kau:]
	<i>giska</i>	[kjiska]	<i>Gylfi</i>	[kjilvi]
	<i>gaman</i>	[ka:man]	<i>Gunnar</i>	[kyn:ar]
	<i>kinn</i>	[kj ^h in:]	<i>kenna</i>	[kj ^h en:a]
	<i>kaldur</i>	[k ^h altryr]	<i>kunna</i>	[k ^h yn:a]
	<i>kyssa</i>	[kj ^h is:a]	<i>kyrrð</i>	[kj ^h irð]
	<i>kona</i>	[k ^h ɔ:na]	<i>kostur</i>	[k ^h ɔstyr]

See chapter 5.2 for the distribution of palatals and velars.

NB XII

The *g* of *saga* etc. = [γ]

Many foreign students have difficulties in correctly producing the voiced velar fricative [γ] as in words like

<i>lag</i>	[la:γ]	(„tune“)
<i>dagur</i>	[ta:γyr]	(„day“)
<i>saga</i>	[sa:γa]	(„story“)
etc.		

To make things worse, this is not a very „loud“ sound, and consequently it often takes trained ears to distinguish it in fast speech. Furthermore, this [γ] can be dropped word-finally in a few very common words, including *og* [ɔ:γ] or [ɔ:] („and“) and *ég* [jε:γ] or [jε:] („I“).

Pay good attention to [γ] from the start (cf. also chapter 5.9).

Exercise 9

<i>lag</i>	[la:γ]	<i>flögðra</i>	[flöγra]	<i>fluga</i>	[fly:γa]
<i>dagur</i>	[ta:γyr]	<i>lagði</i>	[laγði]	<i>hagur</i>	[ha:γyr]
<i>saga</i>	[sa:γa]	<i>byggði</i>	[piγði]	<i>fallegur</i>	[fatlεγyr]
<i>tog</i>	[t ^h ɔ:γ]	<i>nægði</i>	[naiγði]	<i>digur</i>	[ti:γyr]
<i>sigra</i>	[siγra]	<i>tryggði</i>	[t ^h riγði]	<i>nága</i>	[na:γa]

2.2.3 Consonants as pairs

Twenty-eight consonants (i.e. all consonants except [h] and [s]) can be seen as fourteen „pairs“. Most of you will probably be familiar with at least one sound in most of these „pairs“ from your mother tongues or other languages. Therefore, by looking at the distinction between voiced and unvoiced sounds, and the distinction between aspirated and unaspirated sounds it should be possible to pronounce most Icelandic consonants correctly.

(Thus, for instance, a German who is familiar with the sound [χ], as in *Dach*, can produce the sound [χ̥] by „voicing the sound [χ]“. English speakers could in a similar way learn to say [p] (unvoiced) by producing the sound [p^h] (which they are acquainted with from the English word *pin*, etc.) but „leaving out“ most of the air-stream that follows the release of the closure.)

stops

The stops can be looked at as the following four pairs:

p ^h	-	p
t ^h	-	t
k _j ^h	-	k _j
k ^h	-	k

The only difference is that [p^h], [t^h], [k_j^h] and [k^h] are **aspirated**, i.e. after the release of the closure in the stop, the air thrusts out of the mouth with a good deal of pressure.

In [p], [t], [k_j] and [k], on the other hand, the airstream following the release is so little that you hardly notice it.

Exercise 10

panna	[p ^h an:a]	prestur	[p ^h restyr]
banna	[pan:a]	brotinn	[pro:ttn]
tala	[t ^h a:la]	taska	[t ^h aska]
dala	[ta:la]	dýfa	[ti:va]
keyra	[k _j ^h ei:ra]	kjósa	[k _j ^h ou:sa]
Geiri	[k _j ei:ri]	geta	[k _j e:ta]
kaldur	[k ^h altryr]	kunna	[k ^h yn:a]
galdur	[kaltryr]	gaffall	[kaf:atl]

fricatives,
nasals,
laterals
and trills

In fricatives, nasals, laterals and trills we can see the following ten „pairs“:

v	—	f ;	m	—	m_{\circ}				
$\ddot{\text{o}}$	—	$\text{p} ;$	n	—	n_{\circ}	l	—	l_{\circ}	r
j	—	$\text{j}_{\circ} ;$	n_{\circ}	—	j_{\circ}				
γ	—	x ;	y_{\circ}	—	y_{\circ}				

The only difference is that v, $\ddot{\text{o}}$, j, γ , m, n, n_{\circ} , y_{\circ} , l and r are voiced whereas f, p, j_{\circ} , x, m_{\circ} , y_{\circ} , y_{\circ} , l_{\circ} and r_{\circ} are not.

In voiced sounds the vocal chords vibrate during the articulation. This can be felt by placing a finger on the larynx („the Adam's apple“) and pronouncing, for instance, [v]. Now we feel subtle vibrations in the throat.

Another property of voiced sounds is that you can sing them (or hum, rather!). Everyone has heard a hum like *m-m-m*.

In the unvoiced sounds, there are no vibrations in the throat, nor can you hum unvoiced sounds.

NB XIII

The above mentioned unvoiced sounds have proved difficult for many foreign students because many (or most, even) of them do not exist in the neighbouring languages.

Pay special attention to the unvoiced sounds in *Exercise 11* below (cf. also chapters 5.5 and 5.4).

Exercise 11

vá	[vau:]	afar	[a:var]
fá	[fau:]	ofsi	[ɔfsi]
iða	[i:ða]	eða	[ɛ:ða]
iþrótt	[i:prouht]	þrá	[þrau:]
Jón	[jou:n]	já	[jau:]
hjón	[jou:n]	hérla	[jε(r)tla]
saga	[sa:γa]	magur	[ma:γyr]
sagt	[saxt]	fikt	[fixt]
dimmdi	[timti]	sem	[sε:m]

<i>dimmt</i>	[t̥imt̥]	<i>samt</i>	[sam̥t̥]
<i>syndi</i>	[sint̥i]	<i>hinir</i>	[hí:nir]
<i>synti</i>	[sint̥i]	<i>vanta</i>	[vant̥a]
<i>banginn</i>	[paun̥kj̥in]	<i>lengi</i>	[lεiŋk̥j̥i]
<i>bankinn</i>	[pauŋk̥j̥in]	<i>Sveinki</i>	[svεiŋk̥j̥i]
<i>bunga</i>	[puŋka]	<i>langa</i>	[laun̥ka]
<i>hankar</i>	[hauŋkar]	<i>banka</i>	[pauŋka]
<i>eldur</i>	[eltyr]	<i>alveg</i>	[alveγ]
<i>eltur</i>	[el̥tyr]	<i>allt</i>	[alt̥]
<i>verja</i>	[v̥erja]	<i>ræða</i>	[rai:ða]
<i>jurt</i>	[jv̥rt̥]	<i>hræða</i>	[rai:ða]

NB XIV

When clusters of **three** (or even more) consonants occur, as in *æskti*, *lengd*, etc., you will notice a common tendency to **drop one** of the consonants, usually either the first or the second one. Thus, in the following examples, we only pronounce two consonants instead of the written three consonants. We shall not, however, look at this as a perfect „rule“ (because there are exceptions from it which we will not go into), but as a „tendency“.

Examples:	<i>sigldi</i>	[silt̥i]	<i>fylgdi</i>	[filt̥i]
	<i>æskti</i>	[aist̥i]	<i>fylkti</i>	[fil̥ti]
	<i>barns</i>	[pars]	<i>prests</i>	[pʰr̥es:]
	<i>lengd</i>	[lεiŋt̥]	<i>riгndi</i>	[r̥iŋt̥i]
	<i>nefnd</i>	[nεm̥t̥]	<i>nefndi</i>	[nεmt̥i]
	<i>efldi</i>	[el̥ti]	<i>álf</i>	[au̥lt̥]

2.2.4 Consonant exercises

Exercise 12

<i>penni</i>	[pʰen̥i:]	<i>sósa</i>	[sou:sə]	<i>argur</i>	[arkyr]
<i>blóta</i>	[plou:ta]	<i>nál</i>	[nau:l]	<i>kvarta</i>	[kʰvar̥ta]
<i>maður</i>	[ma:ðyr]	<i>hnýta</i>	[ni:ta]	<i>kjöt</i>	[k̥jö:t̥]
<i>hempa</i>	[hεmpa]	<i>enginn</i>	[εiŋk̥j̥in]	<i>gæta</i>	[k̥jai:ta]
<i>afi</i>	[a:vi]	<i>hanki</i>	[hauŋk̥j̥i]	<i>júlí</i>	[ju:li]
<i>oft</i>	[ɔft̥]	<i>rangur</i>	[raun̥kyr]	<i>hjá</i>	[jau:]
<i>býða</i>	[bi:ða]	<i>sanka</i>	[sauŋka]	<i>Kálli</i>	[kʰal:i]
<i>tún</i>	[tʰu:n̥]	<i>lófi</i>	[lou:vi]	<i>gras</i>	[kra:s]

<i>diskur</i>	[t̥iskyr]	<i>hlæja</i>	[lai:ja]	<i>naga</i>	[na:γa]
				<i>hiksti</i>	[hxsti]

Exercise 13 (long (double) consonants)

<i>lubbi</i>	[lyp:i]	<i>oddur</i>	[ɔt:yr]
<i>Raggi</i>	[rakj:i]	<i>Sigga</i>	[sik:a]
<i>töffari</i>	[thöf:ari]	<i>kyssa</i>	[kjʰis:a]
<i>rúlla</i>	[rul:a]	<i>lumma</i>	[lym:a]
<i>sinna</i>	[sin:a]	<i>pirraður</i>	[pʰir:aðyr]

Exercise 14 (simple sentences)

<i>Óskar kemur bráðum</i>	(„Óskar is coming soon“)
[ouskar kʒʰε:mýr prau:ðym]	
<i>Vegurinn var laðaður</i>	(„The road was improved“)
[ve:γyrinvar la:γaðyr]	
<i>Svar þeirra er rangt</i>	(„Their answer is wrong“)
[svaðeirer rauŋt]	
<i>Stelpan kyssti strákinn</i>	(„The girl kissed the boy“)
[stelpan kʒʰistu strau:kjɪn]	
<i>Ertu með höfuðverk?</i>	(„Do you have a headache?“)
[ɛrtymeð hö:výðværk]	
<i>Hnátan óx hratt</i>	(„The little girl grew rapidly“)
[nau:tan ouxs ɣaht]	
<i>Siggi byggði stórt hús</i>	(„Siggi built a big house“)
[sik:j:i priði stouŋt hu:s]	
<i>Bráðum verður orðið dimmt úti</i>	(„Soon it will be dark outside“)
[prau:ðym verðyr orðið tímpt u:ti]	
<i>Jón er aldrei heiða</i>	(„Jón is never at home“)
[jou:nér altrœi hei:ma]	
<i>Henni líkar vel við þig</i>	(„She likes you“)
[hen:ilíkar velviðiγ]	

3. Stress and length

3.1 Stress

A simplified version of the main rule can go like this:

In Icelandic the first syllable of a word is stressed,
but the other syllables in the word are not

Examples: 'tal	(„speech“)	'borð	(„table“)
'skóli	(„school“)	'stofa	(„living room“)
'dýfingar	(„diving“)	'kennari	(„teacher“)
'kastalarnir	(„the castles“)	'banöñunum	(„the bananas“ d.pl.)

When two or more words form a **compound word**, which is very often the case in Icelandic, the compound word gets main stress on its first syllable, according to the main rule above. Furthermore, it gets **secondary (weaker) stress** on the first syllable of the latter (or third, fourth, etc.) part of the compound.

Examples: 'skóli	+ 'stofa	= 'skóla,stofa	(„classroom“)
'dýfingar	+ 'kennari	= 'dýfinga,kennari	(„diving-teacher“)

This is, however, usually not the case when the first part of such compounds is only one syllable. In those cases, only the main rule is valid.

Examples: 'borð	+ 'stofa	= 'borðstofa	(„dining-room“)
'tal	+ 'kennari	= 'talkennari	(„teacher of speech“)

3.2 Length

3.2.1

NB I

(Cf. 1.2). In phonetic transcription, long sounds are indicated by the symbol : immediately following the sound in question. Short sounds have no such indication. Thus, in *saga* [sa:γa], the first *a* is long, but other sounds in the word are short. In *rabba* [rap:a], the *bb* is long, while other sounds are short, etc.

In **syllables without stress** (i.e. all syllables except the first one, unless the word has secondary stress, see 3.1) **all sounds are short**.

Examples: *'dýfingar* [ti:viŋkar] („diving“)
'stofa [stɔ:va] („living room“)
etc.

In stressed syllables (see 3.1), on the other hand, sounds can be **short** or **long**, according to the rules in 3.2.2 and 3.2.3 below.

3.2.2 Stressed syllables - vowels

In stressed syllables the vowels are

a) **long** before one or no consonant

Examples: *'tal* [tʰa:l] („speech“)
'tala [tʰa:la] („speak“)
'te [tʰε:] („tea“)
'tru:a [tʰru:a] („believe“)

b) **short** before double-written (geminate) consonants and before consonant-clusters (other than those mentioned in c) below)

Examples: *'koss* [kʰos:] („kiss“)
'minni [min:i] („smaller“)
'efstur [ɛfstyr] („uppermost“)
'anda [anta] („breathe“)

c) **long** before two-consonant-clusters where the first consonant is written *p*, *t*, *k* or *s*, and the second consonant is written *v*, *j* or *r*

Examples: *'akrar* [a:krar] („fields“)
'hetja [hɛ:tja] („hero“)
'tvísvvar [tʰvɪ:svar] („twice“)

NB II

From the rules of stress and length it is clear that in most cases long sounds can only occur in the first syllable of a word. But in words like

'skóla, stofa („classroom“)
and *'dýfinga,kennari* („diving-teacher“)

etc. (cf. 3.1) the second (weaker) stress is sufficient for getting long sounds in the third syllable: [skou:lasto:va] and in the fourth syllable: [ti:vɪŋkakj^hen:ari].

3.2.3 Stressed syllables — consonants

In stressed syllables the consonants are usually short.

Long consonants are only the double-written (geminate) *bb*, *dd*, *gg*, ([kj:] or [k:]), *ff*, *ss*, *ll*, *mm*, *nn* and *rr*.

Examples:	'pabbi	[p ^h ap:í]	(„daddy“)	'skúffa	[skuf:a]	(„drawer“)
	'oddur	[ɔt:yr]	(„point“)	'bassi	[pas:i]	(„bass“)
	'Siggi	[sík:j:í]	(prop.n.)	'mamma	[mam:a]	(„mummy“)
	'Magga	[mak:a]	(prop.n.)	'kerra	[kj ^h er:a]	(„cart“)
	'ball	[pal:]	(„dance“)			
(— but	'hilla	[hrla]	(„shelf“)	etc., see 5.6.1)		
	'penni	[p ^h en:i]	(„pen“)			
(— but	'seinna	[seitna]	(„later“)	etc., see 5.6.3).		

NB III

pp, tt, kk = hp, ht, hk

The double-written (geminate) *pp*, *tt*, and *kk* are not long stops. They are pronounced as an *h* + an unaspirated stop (this is the so-called „pre-aspiration“, see 5.8).

Examples:	'happ	[hahp]	(„luck“)
	'gott	[køht]	(„good“ neutr.)
	'ekki	[ehkjí]	(„not“)
	'lókkur	[løhkýr]	(„curl“)
	etc.		

3.2.4 Exercises

Exercise 15

vísa	[vi:sa]	litur	[lɪ:tyr]	hóta	[hou:ta]
lýsti	[listi]	binda	[pinta]	fólk	[foulk]
kútur	[k ^h u:tyr]	fela	[fε:la]	neita	[nεi:ta]
rúlla	[rul:a]	ferð	[fεrð]	reisn	[reistn]

<i>suður</i>	[sy:ðyr]	<i>göt</i>	[kö:t]	<i>gáta</i>	[kau:ta]
<i>lund</i>	[lynt]	<i>örn</i>	[örtn]	<i>hálka</i>	[hau[ka]
<i>góggur</i>	[kók:yr]	<i>gata</i>	[ka:ta]	<i>færa</i>	[fai:ra]
<i>sog</i>	[sɔ:γ]	<i>rabba</i>	[rap:a]	<i>gæsla</i>	[kjaistla]

<i>rauður</i>	[röy:ðyr]	<i>auðn</i>	[öyðn]
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Exercise 16

a)	<i>fikra</i>	[fr:kra]	b)	<i>aðrir</i>	[aðrir]
	<i>nepja</i>	[nε:pja]		<i>velja</i>	[vεlja]
	<i>titra</i>	[tʰI:tra]		<i>blaðra</i>	[plaðra]
	<i>Esja</i>	[ɛ:sja]		<i>selja</i>	[sɛlja]
	<i>sautján</i>	[söy:tjaun]		<i>semja</i>	[sɛmja]
	<i>lepja</i>	[lɛ:pja]		<i>Elvar</i>	[ɛlvar]
	<i>vekja</i>	[vɛ:kja]		<i>hósta</i>	[housta]
	<i>betri</i>	[pɛ:tri]		<i>aftur</i>	[aftyr]
	<i>setjast</i>	[sɛ:tjast]		<i>volgur</i>	[vɔlkyr]

*NB IV***Sentence-stress can interact**

The rules given for stress and length in this chapter are designed as a description for single words. In sentences, however, at least in everyday speech, things can get a bit more complicated as some words may be left unstressed, which also means that all sounds in those words must be short. This depends on the individual's rhythm of speech and on the semantic importance of the words. This means, for instance, that the words *skórinn*, *er*, *gamall*, *og*, *slitinn*, are transcribed as follows when they are all stressed:

[skou:rɪn], [ɛ:r], [ka:matl], [ɔ:γ], [stlɪ:tɪn]

But in the following sentence, where sentence-stress takes effect, the words *er* and *og* are left unstressed, so that we get the following pronunciation:

Skórinn er gamall og slitinn („The shoe is old and worn-out“)
 [skou:rɪnɛr ka:matlɔ(γ) stlɪ:tɪn]

4. A brief look at a few sound alternations in connected everyday speech

4.1

4.1.1

Vowel is dropped

When a word ends in an **unstressed** vowel and is immediately followed by another word beginning with a vowel, the unstressed vowel is often dropped.

The vowel in question is shown in brackets in the exercise below.

Exercise 17

<i>Ferð(u) ekk(i) á morgun?</i>	(„You are leaving tomorrow, aren't you?“)
[fɛrðəhkjau mɔrkyn]	
<i>Látt(u) okkur vita</i>	(„(Please) let us know“)
[lauhtóhkýr vi:ta]	
<i>Hvort er heitar(a) út(i) eð(a) inni?</i>	(„Is it warmer inside or outside (the house)?“)
[kʰvɔrt̥er heitar u:teð in:i]	
<i>Ól(i) og Dodd(i) eru bræður</i>	(„Óli and Doddi are brothers“)
[ou:lɔy tot:ɛry prai:ðyr]	
<i>Sigg(i) er stærr(i) en Einar</i>	(„Siggi is taller than Einar“)
[sik:j:er stair:en ei:nar]	
<i>Ól(a) er sam(a) um allt nem(a) Ellu</i>	(„Óli doesn't care about anything but Ella“)
[ou:ler sa:mym altnem el:y]	

4.1.2

h is dropped

When the pronouns *hún* (*hana*, *henni*, *hennar*) and *hann* (*hann*, *honum*, *hans*) are unstressed in a sentence, they usually drop the initial *h*.

Example: *Kom (h)ann með (h)enni?* („Did he come with her?“)
 [kʰɔ:man mɛ:ðəni]

Furthermore, as the h has been dropped, the preceding unstressed vowel is often dropped as well (according to 4.1.1).

Example: Sýnd(u) (h)enni skón(a) (h)ans
 [sinteni skou:nans] („(Please) show her his
 shoes“)

Exercise 18

Pétur sýnd(i) (h)enni bílinn [pʰjɛ:tvr̥ sinteni pi:lɪn]	(„Pétur showed her the car“)
Hann er góður við (h)ana [han:ɛr kou:ðyr vi:ðana]	(„He is kind to her“)
Hún óskað(i) (h)onum til hamingju [hu:n ouskaðɔnymtʰil ha:mɪŋkju]	(„She congratulated him“)
Óli hélt að (h)ún færi heim [ou:lɪ jɛltaðun fai:rɪ hei:m]	(„Óli thought that she would go home“)
Pú telur að hún sé greindar(i) en hann [pu: tʰɛ:lyrað hunsje kreintareñ han:]	(„You think that she is more clever than he is“)

NB I

Note that the initial *h* in *hann*, *hún* is only vulnerable to deletion when the pronouns are not stressed, i.e. the *h* is always kept in the beginning of a sentence and when for some reason stress is put on the pronoun in a sentence (e.g. to point out a contrast as in the last sentence in exercise 18).

4.1.3

p becomes ð

When the pronouns beginning with a *p*, that is *pú* (*píg*, *pér*, *pín*); *það* (*það*, *því*, *þess*); *þeir* (*þá*, *þeim*, *þeirra*); *þær*; *þau*; *þann*, *þeim* etc.; *þessi* etc.; *þetta* etc.; *þinn*, *þín*, *þitt* etc., are unstressed in a sentence, the initial *p* often changes to an *ð* (i.e., becomes voiced).

Example: Eru þeir gamlir?
 [ɛ:ryðeir kamlr̥] („Are they old?“)

This is also true for some adverbs, at least for *þar*, *þarna*, *þangað*.

Example: Hann fer þangað á morgun
 [han: fərðauŋkaðau mɔrkvn] („He will go there tomorrow“)

The *ð* generated this way can also be dropped, see 4.1.4.

Exercise 19

<i>Sýndu þeim húsið</i> [síntvðeim hu:sið]	(„(Please) show them the house“)
<i>Hann sagð(i) að þú værir þar</i> [han: saɣðaðu vai:rírðar]	(„He said that you were there“)
<i>Langar þig í þetta?</i> [laŋkarðiɣ i:ðehtɑ]	(„Do you want this?“)
<i>Hann kom þangað á þessum fallega bíl</i> [han: kʰomðauŋkað au:ðesym fatlɛɣa pi:l]	(„He came there in this beautiful car“)
<i>Liggur þér á að fá þetta?</i> [lɪk:yrðjær au:að fau:ðehtɑ]	(„Are you in a hurry to get this?“)
<i>Hvort viltu þennan hérn(a) eða þennan þarna?</i> [kvɔrt vɪltv þen:an ʃetnɛða þen:an þatna]	(„Do you want this one or that one?“)

NB II

Note that the initial *p* in the above mentioned pronouns and adverbs can only become *ð* when the words in question are unstressed, i.e. the *p* is kept in the beginning of a sentence, and when for some reason special stress is put on the pronoun or adverb (as in, for instance, the last sentence in exercise 19).

4.1.4

ð is dropped

In everyday speech, *ð* is often pronounced unclearly or simply dropped. This happens mainly in two situations:

- a) *ð* is word final

Example: *Húsi(ð) mitt* („My house“)
[hu:sim̥iht]

- b) *ð* is generated from a *p*, see 4.1.3 above, (sometimes spelled *p*, sometimes *ð*)

Examples:	<i>Lærðir(ð)u heima?</i>	(„Did you do your homework?“)
	[lairðíry hei:ma]	(from <i>Lærðir þú heima?</i>)
	<i>Sást(u) (þ)etta?</i>	(„Did you see this?“)
	[saustehtha]	

Exercise 20

<i>Hann fer a(ð) koma</i>	(„He will come soon“)
[han: fe:ra kʰɔ:ma]	
<i>Óli sendi blaði(ð) til útlanda</i>	(„Óli sent the newspaper abroad“)
[ou:li sɛnti pla:ðitʰil u:tlanta]	
<i>Ég las (þ)etta bar(a) einu sinni</i>	(„I read this only once“)
[jε:γ la:sɛhtapar εi:ny sim:i]	
<i>Mér sýndist (þ)a(ð) ver(a) i lagi</i>	(„It looked all right to me“)
[mje:r sintista ve:ri lai:jɪ]	
<i>Getur(ð)(u) ekki sé(ð) mið i friði?</i>	(„Can't you leave me alone?“)
[kjε:tyrehkjɪ sjε:miði frɪ:ðɪ]	

4.2 Some common phrases*Exercise 21*

<i>Góðan daginn</i>	(„Good morning/afternoon“)
[kou:ðan tai:jn]	
<i>Góðan dag</i>	(„Good morning/afternoon“)
[kou:ðan ta:γ]	
<i>Daginn</i>	(„Good morning/afternoon“)
[tai:jn]	
<i>Gott kvöld</i>	(„Good evening“)
[kɔht kʰvölt]	
<i>Góða nótt</i>	(„Good night“)
[kou:ða nouht]	
<i>Komdu sæll</i>	(„How do you do“ (to a male))
[kʰɔnty saitl]	
<i>Komdu sæl</i>	(„How do you do“ (to a female))
[kʰɔnty sai:l]	
<i>Verði þér að góðu</i>	(„I wish you good appetite“)
[verðjera kou:ðy] (cf. chapter 4.1)	
<i>Takk</i>	(„Thanks“)
[tʰahk]	

<i>Takk fyrir</i>	(„Thanks“)
[tʰahk fi:rɪr]	
<i>Takk fyrir mig</i>	(„Thanks for the meal“)
[tʰahkfírir mi:g]	
<i>Hvað er klukkan?</i>	(„What time is it?“)
[kʰva:ðer kʰlyhkán]	
<i>Klukkan er sjö</i>	(„It's seven o'clock“)
[kʰlyhkánér sjö:]	
<i>Hvenær fer næsti strætó?</i>	(„When does the next bus leave?“)
[kʰvɛ:nairfer naistí strai:tou]	
<i>Hann fer eftir fimm mínútur</i>	(„It will leave in five minutes“)
[han: fe:rehtír fimm:inutyr]	
<i>Hvað kostar þetta?</i>	(„How much does this cost?“)
[kʰva: kʰostarehta]	
<i>Afsakið</i>	(„Excuse me“)
[afsakjí(ð)] (cf. 4.1.4)	
<i>Fyrirgefðu</i>	(„I'm sorry“ (to one person))
[fí:ri:k;evðy]	
<i>Fyrirgefið þið</i>	(„I'm sorry“ (to more than one person))
[fí:ri:k;eviði] (cf. 4.1.3-4)	
<i>Allt í lagi</i>	(„Okay“)
[alти lai:jí]	
<i>Jæja</i>	(„Well“)
[jai:ja]	
<i>Bless</i>	(„Good-bye“)
[plɛs:]	
<i>Vertu blessuð</i>	(„Good-bye“ (to a female))
[vɛrtv plɛs:yð]	
<i>Vertu blesaður</i>	(„Good-bye“ (to a male))
[vɛrtv plɛs:aðvr]	
<i>Sé þig á morgun</i>	(„See you tomorrow“)
[sje:ði:au mɔrkyn]	

5. Various problems

5.1 Vowels before *ng* and *nk*

ing, ink =	íng, ínk
yng, ynk =	ýng, ýnk
ung, unk =	úng, únk
ang, ank =	áng, ánk
öng, önk =	aung, aunk
eng, enk =	eing, eink

The spelling of words like

syngja („sing“)
munkur („monk“)
banki („bank“)
söngur („song“)
drengur („boy“)
etc.

is a bit misleading.

Before *ng* and *nk* the pronunciation of the vowels *i/y*, *u*, *a*, *ö*, *e* is as follows:

<i>ing, ink</i> =	[iŋk], [i᷑ŋk]
<i>yng, ynk</i> =	[iŋk], [i᷑ŋk]
<i>ung, unk</i> =	[uŋk], [u᷑ŋk]
<i>ang, ank</i> =	[auŋk], [au᷑ŋk]
<i>öng, önk</i> =	[öyŋk], [öy᷑ŋk]
<i>eng, enk</i> =	[εiŋk], [εi᷑ŋk]

Exercise 22

<i>fingur</i>	<i>minnka</i>
<i>syngja</i>	<i>dynkur</i>
<i>pungur</i>	<i>munkur</i>
<i>vangi</i>	<i>banki</i>
<i>söngur</i>	<i>blönk</i>
<i>drengur</i>	<i>penkja</i>

Exercise 23

- Mangi sagði mér langa sögu*
 („Mangi told me a long story“)
- Pað á enginn heima hér*
 („Nobody lives here“)
- Útlendingarnir komu hingað*
 („The foreigners came here“)
- Mig langar að fara þangað*
 („I want to go there“)
- Hún söng sönginn á röngum stað*
 („She sang the song in a wrong place“)
- Fanginn var lengi í einangrun*
 („The prisoner was kept in isolation for a long time“)
- Vegurinn var lengdur*
 („The road was made longer“)

5.2 Palatalization: the sounds [kj^h] and [kj]**5.2.1**

$$kj \text{ or } gj = [kj^h] \text{ or } [kj]$$

- A) When words begin with *kj*, as in *kjöt*, *Kjartan* etc., it is pronounced [kj^h].

Example: *kjósa* [kj^hou:sa]

- B) When words begin with *gj*, as in *gjósa*, *gjöf* etc., it is pronounced [kj].

Example: *gjarna* [kjartna]

- C) When *kj* is written inside a word, as in *sækja*, *fylkja* etc., the *kj* is pronounced [kj].

Example: *reykja* [rei:kja]

- D) When *ngj*, *lgj* or *rgj* are written inside a word, as in *lengja*, *fylgja* etc., the *gj* is pronounced [kj].

Example: *þyngja* [þipkjá]

Exercise 24 A-D

A	B	C	D
<i>kjöt</i>	<i>gjósa</i>	<i>reykja</i>	<i>lengja</i>
<i>Kjartan</i>	<i>gjöf</i>	<i>sækja</i>	<i>þyngja</i>
<i>kjósa</i>	<i>gjarna</i>	<i>þenkja</i>	<i>fylgja</i>
<i>kjaftur</i>	<i>gjóla</i>	<i>fylkja</i>	<i>belgja</i>
<i>kjarnorka</i>	<i>gjá</i>	<i>merkja</i>	<i>ergja</i>

NB I

vowel + gj + vowel = vowel + [j] + vowel

- E) When *gj* is written inside a word, between two vowels, as in *teygja*, *leigja* etc., it is pronounced as a [j]. Thus, for instance, there is no difference in pronunciation between

and *heygja* [hεi:ja] („bury“)
 and *heyja* [hεi:ja] (gen.pl of *hey* „hey“)

Exercise 24 E

teygja
leigja
þegja
beygja
smeygja
sveigja

5.2.2

<i>k</i> or <i>g</i>	+	{	<i>y</i>	}	= [k _j ^h] or [k _j]
			<i>e</i>		
			ei		
			ey		
			æ		

- A) When words begin with a *k* which is followed by *i*, *ý*, *i*, *y*, *e*, *ei*, *ey* or *æ*, as in *kíló*, *kæfa* etc., the *k* is pronounced [kj^h].

Example: *kinn* [kj^hin:]

- B) When words begin with a *g* which is followed by *i*, *ý*, *i*, *y*, *e*, *ei*, *ey* or *æ*, as in *gýs*, *gil* etc., the *g* is pronounced [kj].

Example: *geta* [kjε:ta]

- C) When *k* is written inside a word, followed by *i*, *ý*, *i*, *y*, *e*, *ei*, *ey* or *æ*, as in *leki*, *skæri* etc., the *k* is pronounced [kj].

Example: *þykir* [þrɪ:kjɪr]

- D) When *ng*, *mg*, *lg* or *rg* are written inside a word, followed by *i*, *ý*, *i*, *y*, *e*, *ei*, *ey* or *æ*, as in *lengi*, *tímgyist*, *helgi*, *margir* etc., the *g* is pronounced [kj].

Example: *Birgir* [þirkjɪr]

Exercise 25 A-D

A	B	C	D
<i>kíló</i>	<i>gýs</i>	<i>leki</i>	<i>lengi</i>
<i>kýr</i>	<i>gil</i>	<i>skæri</i>	<i>ungír</i>
<i>kinn</i>	<i>geta</i>	<i>þykir</i>	<i>helgi</i>
<i>keila</i>	<i>geyma</i>	<i>skeyti</i>	<i>Belgía</i>
<i>kæfa</i>	<i>gæta</i>	<i>óskir</i>	<i>margir</i>

NB II

$$\text{vowel} + \text{g} + \text{i} = \text{vowel} + [\text{j}] + \text{i}$$

- E) When *g* is written inside a word, between two vowels, and the latter vowel is *i* (the vowels *i*, *ý*, *y*, *e*, *ei*, *ey* and *æ* do not occur in this position in non-compound words), the *g* is pronounced as a [j].

Examples: *stigi* [sti:ji]
spégiill [spei:jítl]
tugir [tʰyí:jír]

Exercise 25 E

<i>daginn</i>	<i>taugin</i>
<i>lygi</i>	<i>lögín</i>
<i>fallegr</i>	<i>bogi</i>
<i>stigi</i>	<i>tugir</i>
<i>spegill</i>	<i>vegir</i>

Note that *i/y*, *e*, *u*, *ö*, *a* and *o* are pronounced [i], [ɛi], [yɪ], [öy], [ai] and [ɔi], respectively, before *gi* [jɪ], see chapter 5.3.

5.2.3

Exercise 26

- Kjartan leyndist í kjarrinu*
 („Kjartan was hiding in the bushes“)
- Kýrnar gefa okkur mjólkina*
 („The cows give us the milk“)
- Ég skemmti mér í gær*
 („I had fun yesterday“)
- Egill tók skjöldinn*
 („Egill took the shield“)
- Margir fóru í laugina*
 („Many people went to the swimming-pool“)
- Siggi kemur með gjöfina*
 („Siggi will bring the present“)
- Hann lék keilu um helgina*
 („He played bowling last weekend“)
- Margir ungir stúdentar leigja sér herbergi*
 („Many young students rent rooms for themselves“)
- Gunnar segir ekkert, bara þegir*
 („Gunnar says nothing, only keeps silent“)
- Hallgerður vildi gjalda honum kinnhestinn*
 („Hallgerður wanted to pay him back for the blow“)
- Hún keypti líkjör í Ríkinu*
 („She bought some liqueur in the wine- and liquor-store“)
- Óskir okkar munu rætast einhvern daginn*
 („Some day our wishes will come true“)

5.2.4

Velars and palatals can alternate

Given the rules detailed in 5.2.1–5.2.2 it is obvious that many words can have two alternating forms, with and without palatal sounds, depending on the different sounds that can occur in the inflectional endings.

Before front unrounded vowels and *æ* and before *j*, *k* and *g* are palatals, otherwise they are velars.

Thus, for instance, we can have weak masculine nom. sing. with palatals, but weak masculine acc., dat., gen. sing. with velars:

nom.	<i>leki</i> (pal)	<i>banki</i> (pal)	<i>hagi</i> (pal)
acc.	<i>leka</i> (vel)	<i>banka</i> (vel)	<i>haga</i> (vel)
dat.	<i>leka</i> (vel)	<i>banka</i> (vel)	<i>haga</i> (vel)
gen.	<i>leka</i> (vel)	<i>banka</i> (vel)	<i>haga</i> (vel)

Likewise, we have	fem.nom.sing.	engin (pal)
but	fem.nom.pl.	engar (vel);
we have	neutr.nom.sing.def.	lakið (pal)
but	neutr.nom.sing.indef.	lak (vel);
we have	masc.nom.pl.	langir (pal)
but	fem.nom.pl.	langar (vel);
we have	3.pers.sing.pres.ind.	getur (pal)
but	3. pers. sing. past ind.	gat (vel);
etc., etc.		

Exercise 27

Ég kom um daginn en kem ekki í dag
 („I came the other day but I won't come today“)

Þarna er vegurinn. Húsið stendur við veginn.
 („There is the road. The house is by the road“)

Mér líkar vel við þig þótt mér líki ekki við hana.
 („I like you though I don't like her“)

Það er lygi. Þú ert lygari.
 („It's a lie. You're a liar“)

Þarna er banki. Sérðu bankann?
 („There is a bank there. Can you see the bank?“)

Ég kaupi lauk. Ég keypti laukinn.
 („I'm buying an onion. I bought the onion“)

Sástu veika drenginn? Veiki drengurinn er farinn.
 („Did you see the sick boy? The sick boy is gone“)

5.3 Vowels before *gi*

igi	=	„ígi“
ygi	=	„ýgi“
egi	=	„eigi“
ugi	=	„uígi“
ögi	=	„augi“
agi	=	„ægi“
ogi	=	„oígi“

Before *gi* (pronounced [jɪ], cf. 5.2.2, NB II), the pronunciation of vowels is as follows:

- a) *i, y, e, u, ö, a, o* (the spelling is misleading):

igi	[i:ji]	e.g. stigi	[sti:ji]
ygi	[i:ji]	e.g. lygi	[li:ji]
egi	[ɛi:ji]	e.g. vegir	[vɛi:jɪr]
ugi	[yɪ:ji]	e.g. tugir	[tʰyɪ:jɪr]
ögi	[öy:ji]	e.g. lögin	[løy:jɪn]
agi	[ai:ji]	e.g. lagið	[lai:jɪð]
ogi	[ɔi:ji]	e.g. bogið	[pɔi:jɪð]

- b) other vowels : according to spelling.

Exercise 28

a)	stiginn	stíginn	b)	tugir	múgi
	tíginn	gógin		göfugir	súginn
	lygi	sígið		bogið	tógið
	flygill	gýgi		logi	nógr
	vegir	leigir		lágir	bágindi
	fallegir	beygir			
	lögin	laugin			
	sögin	taugin			
	lagið	hægir			
	sagirnar	nægir			

NB III

Note that *iði*, *yði*, *eði*, *öði*, *aði* are pronounced exactly like *ígi*, *ýgi*, *eigi*, *augi*, *æði* (resp.). Therefore it often happens that different words are pronounced in exactly the same way.

Example: lögin [løy:jɪn] („the law“), pronounced exactly as laugin [løy:jɪn] („the swimming-pool“).

Exercise 29 — read first vertically, then horizontally —

stiginn	(„the staircase“)	stíginn	(„the path“ (acc.sing.))
segir	(„(he/she) says“)	seigir	(„tough“ (masc.nom.pl.))
lögin	(„the law“)	laugin	(„the swimming-pool“)
nagi	(„(he/she) gnaws“ (subj.))	nægi	(„(it) is sufficient“ (subj.))

5.4 The pronunciation of the letter *h*

As you have noticed, the letter *h* usually occurs only at the beginning of words.

$$\mathbf{h + vowel = [h] + vowel}$$

Before vowels, *h* is simply pronounced [h], like in

hestur	[hɛstyr]	(„horse“),
halda	[halta]	(„think“),
etc.		

(This initial [h] is often dropped in the pronouns *hann* and *hún*, see 4.1.2.).

$$\mathbf{hv = [k^h v]}$$

Before *v*, *h* is (by the majority of speakers, see the Appendix) pronounced as [k^h]:

Examples:	hvað	[k ^h va:ð]	(„what“)
	hvolpur	[k ^h vɔlpur]	(„puppy“)
	hvernig	[k ^h vεtniŋ]	(„how“)

In *hj*, *hé*, *hl*, *hn*, *hr*, *h* has the effect of devoicing the following consonant (remember that é = [jɛ]), i.e.

<i>hj</i>	=	[j̥]
<i>hé</i>	=	[j̥ɛ]
<i>hl</i>	=	[l̥]
<i>hn</i>	=	[n̥]
<i>hr</i>	=	[r̥]

$$\mathbf{hj} = [\mathring{j}]$$

Examples: <i>hjól</i>	[jou:l]	(„bicycle“)
<i>hjálpa</i>	[jaułpa]	(„help“)
<i>hjúkrun</i>	[ju:kryñ]	(„nursing“)

$$\mathbf{hé} = [\mathring{j}\mathring{\epsilon}]$$

Examples: <i>hér</i>	[j̥ɛ:r]	(„here“)
<i>hélt</i>	[j̥ɛłt]	(„thought“ v.)
<i>hérað</i>	[j̥ɛ:rað]	(„district“)

$$\mathbf{hl} = [\mathring{l}]$$

Examples: <i>hlusta</i>	[lysta]	(„listen“)
<i>hlæja</i>	[lai:ja]	(„laugh“)
<i>hlýða</i>	[li:ða]	(„obey“)

$$\mathbf{hn} = [\mathring{n}]$$

Examples: <i>hnerra</i>	[n̥ɛr:a]	(„sneeze“)
<i>hneta</i>	[n̥ɛ:ta]	(„nut“)
<i>hnútur</i>	[nu:tvr]	(„knot“)

$$\mathbf{hr} = [\mathring{r}]$$

Examples: <i>hraði</i>	[ra:ði]	(„speed“)
<i>hræddur</i>	[rait:yr]	(„afraid“)
<i>hringur</i>	[riŋkyr]	(„circle“)

Exercise 30

<i>hvað</i>	<i>hjól</i>	<i>hér</i>	<i>hlusta</i>	<i>hnerra</i>	<i>hraði</i>
<i>hvolpur</i>	<i>hjálpa</i>	<i>hélt</i>	<i>hlæja</i>	<i>hneta</i>	<i>hræddur</i>
<i>hvernið</i>	<i>hjúkrun</i>	<i>hérað</i>	<i>hlýða</i>	<i>hnútur</i>	<i>hringur</i>
<i>hver</i>	<i>hjón</i>	<i>héri</i>	<i>hlaupa</i>	<i>hnýta</i>	<i>hrós</i>
<i>hvísla</i>	<i>hjálmur</i>	<i>hérna</i>	<i>hlýr</i>	<i>hnáta</i>	<i>hrista</i>

Exercise 31

Nonni hnýtir hnútinn nógu vel
 („Nonni ties the knot well enough“)

Rósa og Hreiðar eiga hrósið skilið
 („Rósa and Hreiðar deserve the praise“)

Lára hlýtur að hlakka til afmælisins
 („Lára must be looking forward to her birthday“)

Hérna er hérinn, held ég
 („Here's the hare, I think“)

Hjálmar fékk hjól í jólagjöf
 („Hjálmar got a bicycle for Christmas“)

Hvert ferð þú í kvöld?
 („Where are you going tonight?“)

5.5 DEVOICING: Before written p, t, k all consonants are unvoiced

$\overset{\text{C}}{\underset{[-\text{voice}]}{}}$ + p, t, k

As discussed in 2.2.3 (see also exercises 11, 12 and 14), we can look at nasals, laterals, trills and most fricatives as „pairs“, consisting of one voiced and one unvoiced sound.

In Icelandic, before written *p*, *t*, *k* only the unvoiced part of each pair occurs (this stage has, however, not yet been reached in some areas in Northern Iceland, see the Appendix).

As this is in most cases not shown in the spelling, and as most of these unvoiced sounds do not exist in, e.g., English, German, Danish and French, and have therefore proved difficult for many students, we shall now look at some examples to clarify the results of the general rule mentioned above.

<i>Sound</i>	<i>Written</i>	<i>As in</i>			
[f]	„f“, „p“, „pp“	oft æpti	[ɔft]; [aifti];	ríafka tepptur	[rifka]; [tʰɛftyr];
[þ]	„ð“	iðka	[iþka];	blíðka	[pliþka];
[x]	„g“, „gg“, „k“, „kk“	sagt byggt	[saxt]; [pixt];	rakt krökkt	[raxt]; [kʰröxt];
[n̩]	„n“, „nn“	vanta	[vanta];	fenni	[fənti];
[j̩]	„n“, „nn“	banki	[pauj̩k̩i];	minnki	[miŋ̩k̩i];
[j̩]	„n“, „nn“	flinkur	[flifj̩kyr];	minnka	[miŋ̩ka]
[m̩]	„m“, „mm“	hempa	[hɛmpa];	skammta	[skam̩ta];
[l̩]	„l“, „ll“	stelpa fálki	[stɛlpa]; [faul̩k̩i];	elta gyllti	[ɛlt̩a]; [kj̩ll̩ti];
[r̩]	„r“, „rr“	verpa orka	[vɛr̩pa]; [ɔr̩ka];	varta þurrka	[vart̩a]; [þyr̩ka]

NB IV

Note that the written *p*, *t*, *k* are always unvoiced after unvoiced sounds, i.e. pronounced as [p], [t], [k̩], [k].

NB V

**The value of the distinction
between voiced and unvoiced sounds**

Please note that it is **important to make a clear distinction** between the voiced and the unvoiced sounds. Otherwise, we either get nonsense-words or we take the risk of mixing up two different words, as, for instance,

or *vanta* [vanta] („need“) and *vanda* [vanta] („do sth. well“)
 orka [ɔr̩ka] („energy“) and *orga* [ɔrka] („shout“).

NB VI

pt, ppt	=	[ft]
gt, ggt, kt, kkt	=	[xt]

Note that written *p*, *pp*, *g*, *gg*, *k*, *kk* are pronounced as fricatives, [f] and [x], in front of written *t*.

Examples: *æpti* [aifti], past tense of *æpa* („scream“);
steikti [stœixti], past tense of *steikja* („fry“).

NB VII

bolti	=	„bohlti“
seinkun	=	„seihnkun“
verpa	=	„vehrpa“

If the unvoiced *l*, *n*, *r* before *p*, *t*, *k* are a problem for you, it might be a good idea to imagine them written as *hl*, *hn*, *hr*, respectively, cf. the first sounds in words like *hlusta*, *hneta*, *hraði* etc. in chapter 5.4. You could thus try to think of *bolti*, *stelpa*, *vanta*, *seinkun*, *orka*, *verpa* etc as „bohlti“, „stehlpa“, „vahnta“, „seihnkun“, „ohrka“, „vehrpa“ etc. and see if the pronunciation gets easier that way.

Exercise 32

oft	blíðka	hægt	lampi	kantur	banki	banka	stúlka	merkja
aftur	iðka	rakt	hempa	lenti	Sveinki	Sveinka	piltur	orka
æpti	maðkur	steikti	svampur	svunta	minnki	minnka	silki	þurrka
gapti	Rauðka	byggðt	skammta	vanta	bunki	bunka	hvolpur	sorp
teppti	blaðka	krökkt	pumpa	fenni	hanki	hanka	allt	svartur

Exercise 33

Hér er allt fullt af fólki
 („This place is crowded“)

Sveinka vantar lampa
 („Sveinki needs a lamp“)

Svarta úlpan týndist
 („The black parka was lost“)
Það er oft hægt að senda þetta beint

(„This can often be sent directly“)

Lambið og hvolpurinn drukku volga mjólkina

(„The lamb and the puppy drank the warm milk“)

Pilturinn glápti á stúlkuna

(„The boy gazed at the girl“)

Börkur synti í kaldri lauginni

(„Börkur swam in the cold swimming-pool“)

5.6 [t]-insertion: the pronunciation of ll, rl, sl, nn, rn, sn

5.6.1

Rule: ll = [tl]

Written *ll* is in most cases pronounced as [tl]. This is the pronunciation of „original“ Icelandic words.

Examples: *fullur* [fytlyr] („full“)
hella [hɛtla] („pour“)
bolli [pɔtlɪ] („cup“)

Exception: ll = [l:] in
 a) pet names, *Kalli* etc.
 b) loan-words, *mylla* etc.

Written *ll* is in two cases pronounced as you would expect from the spelling, that is as [l:]:

a) in pet names, as in

Kalli [kʰal:i] (for *Karl*)
Júlli [jul:i] (for *Július*)
 etc., see the appendix to 5.6.1.

b) in loan-words (i.e. words of foreign origin that have been taken into use in Icelandic), as in

mylla [mil:a] („mill“)
ball [pal:] („dance“ n.)
rall [ral:] („rally“)
 etc.

Exercise 34

a)		b) (pet names and loan-words)
<i>hill</i>	<i>fylla</i>	<i>Kalli</i>
<i>fall</i>	<i>halla</i>	<i>Júlli</i>
<i>ill</i>	<i>allir</i>	<i>rúlla</i>
<i>fúll</i>	<i>sulla</i>	<i>pill</i>
<i>Páll</i>	<i>mall</i>	<i>bolla</i>
<i>fullur</i>	<i>bulla</i>	<i>nellika</i>
<i>hella</i>	<i>della</i>	<i>troll</i>
<i>bolli</i>	<i>skalli</i>	

Appendix to 5.6.1: List of pet names with ll = [l:]

<i>Villi</i>	for	<i>Vilhjálmur</i>
<i>Alli</i>		<i>Alfreð</i>
<i>Kalli</i>		<i>Karl</i>
<i>Júlli</i>		<i>Július</i>
<i>Elli</i>		<i>Erlingur, Erlendur, Elías</i>
<i>Palli</i>		<i>Páll</i>
<i>Gulli</i>		<i>Guðlaugur, Gunnlaugur</i>
<i>Halli</i>		<i>Haraldur</i>
<i>Ella</i>		<i>Elín</i>
<i>Gulla</i>		<i>Guðlaug</i>
<i>Silla</i>		<i>Sígurlaug</i>
<i>Alla</i>		<i>Aðalheiður</i>
<i>Solla</i>		<i>Sólveig</i>
<i>Vallý</i>		<i>Valborg</i>
<i>Malla</i>		<i>Málfriður</i>
<i>Kolla</i>		<i>Kolbrún</i>

5.6.2

Rule: *rl* = [rtl]Written *rl* is pronounced with an inserted [t].

Examples: *perla* [pʰertla] („pearl“)
þyrla [þirtla] („helicopter“)
Karl [kʰartl] (prop.n.)

NB VIII

Option: r1 = [t1]

varla
karl
kerling

The [r] of these [rtl]-clusters may be dropped (cf.2.2.3, NB XIV) in three very common words: *varla*, *karl*, *kerling*, leaving only [t1]. (Consequently *karl* („old man“) and *kall* („shout“), for instance, are pronounced exactly alike).

<i>varla</i>	[vatla]	(„hardly“)
<i>karl</i>	[k ^h atl]	(„old man“)
<i>kerling</i>	[k _j ^h etliŋk]	(„old woman“)

Exercise 35

<i>Karl</i>	<i>varla</i>
<i>þyrla</i>	<i>karl</i>
<i>Sturla</i>	<i>kerling</i>
<i>Erla</i>	
<i>árla</i>	
<i>perla</i>	

5.6.3

nn = [tn] or [n:]

Rule 1:	i	i
	ý	ý
	é	é
	á	á
	ú	ú
	ó	ó
	æ	æ
	ei	ei
	ey	ey
	au	au

} + nn = { } + [tn]

Written *nn* is pronounced [tn] when it follows a letter which either

- a) is written with a superscript mark: *í, ý, é, á, ú, ó,*
or
- b) is one of the diphthongs *æ, ei, ey, au.*

Examples: *brúnn* [prutn] („brown“)
seinna [sεitnɑ] („later“)
fínn [fitn] („elegant“)
grænn [kraitn] („green“)

Rule 2:	i	i
	y	y
	e	e
	u }	u }
	+ nn = {	+ [n:]
	ö	ö
	a	a
	o	o

Written *nn* is pronounced the way you would expect from the spelling, i.e. without an inserted [t], if it follows a monophthong with no superscript mark: *i, y, e, u, ö, a, o.*

Examples: *finna* [fin:a] („find“)
penni [pʰen:i] („pen“)
banna [pan:a] („prohibit“)

NB IX

Exception: nn in def.art. = [n:]

In words like *trúnni* („the religion“ dat.sg.) where *nn* is a part of the definite article following a stem ending in a vowel (*trú*), the *nn* is always pronounced as [n:]. Further examples of this sort include

<i>spánni</i>	[spaun:i]	(„the forecast“ dat.sg.)
<i>eynni</i>	[εin:i]	(„the island“ dat.sg.)
<i>klónni</i>	[kʰloun:i]	(„the claw“ dat.sg.)
<i>frúnni</i>	[frun:i]	(„the housewife“ dat.sg.)
<i>tánni</i>	[tʰaun:i]	(„the toe“ dat.sg.)

Exercise 36

<i>brúnn</i>	<i>spánni</i>	<i>finna</i>
<i>einn</i>	<i>eynni</i>	<i>brenna</i>
<i>grænn</i>	<i>klónni</i>	<i>banna</i>
<i>fínn</i>	<i>tánni</i>	<i>penni</i>
<i>Spánn</i>	<i>frúnni</i>	<i>kanna</i>
<i>spónn</i>	<i>meynni</i>	<i>Nonni</i>
<i>fleinn</i>	<i>ánni</i>	<i>tennur</i>
<i>fínn</i>	<i>kúnni</i>	<i>sanna</i>

5.6.4

Rule: *rn* = [rtn]Written *rn* is pronounced with an inserted [t].

Examples: <i>fornöld</i>	[fɔrtnölt]	(„ancient times“)
<i>súrna</i>	[surtna]	(„get sour“)
<i>þerna</i>	[þertna]	(„maid-servant“)

NB X

Option: *rn* = [tn]

- a) very common words, *þarna* etc.;
- b) *n* belongs to def.art., *afarnir* etc.

The [r] of the [rtn]-clusters mentioned is very often dropped (cf. 2.2.3, NB XIV) leaving thus only [tn], in

- a) some very common words, including

Examples: <i>þarna</i>	[þatna]	(„there“)
<i>héra</i>	[jætna]	(„here“)
<i>barn</i>	[patn]	(„child“)
<i>ríkisstjórn</i>	[ri:kjistjoutn]	(„government“)

b) those cases where the *n* of *rn* belongs to the definite article

Examples:	<i>afarnir</i>	[a:vatnir]	(„the grandfathers“)
	<i>ömmurnar</i>	[öm:ytnar]	(„the grandmothers“)
	<i>skórnir</i>	[skoutnır]	(„the shoes“)
	<i>hæðirnar</i>	[hai:ðitnar]	(„the hills“)

Exercise 37

<i>rýrna</i>	<i>þarna</i>
<i>ferna</i>	<i>hérla</i>
<i>korn</i>	<i>barn</i>
<i>fornöld</i>	<i>ríkisstjórn</i>
<i>kjarni</i>	<i>afarnir</i>
<i>þerna</i>	<i>ömmurnar</i>
<i>sárna</i>	<i>skórnir</i>
<i>hýrna</i>	<i>hæðirnar</i>

5.6.5

$$\begin{array}{lll} \mathbf{s1} & = & [\mathbf{stl}] \\ \mathbf{sn} & = & [\mathbf{stn}] \end{array}$$

Written *s1* and *sn* is usually pronounced [stl] and [stn], respectively.

Exercise 38

<i>snúa</i>	<i>slá</i>
<i>snyrta</i>	<i>slíta</i>
<i>snöggr</i>	<i>slátur</i>
<i>asni</i>	<i>gæsla</i>
<i>gisnir</i>	<i>Gísli</i>

5.6.6

Exercise 39

- Páll vill elta Erlu*
 („Páll wants to chase Erla“)
- Alli (Alfreð) vinnur eins og allir aðrir*
 („Alli (Alfreð) works like everybody else“)
- Billinn þinn er fínni en minn*
 („Your car is smarter than mine“)
- Steinninn er varla þyngri en barnið*
 („The stone is hardly heavier than the child“)
- Annan manninn finnst mér ég kannast við*
 („I think I recognize one of the two men“)
- Nonni er þarna hjá ánni*
 („Nonni is there, by the river“)
- Kerlingin ágirnist perluna*
 („The old woman desires the pearl“)
- Sveinn ræddi við systurnar um fornöldina*
 („Sveinn discussed ancient times with the sisters“)
- Bátarnir fengu full troll*
 („The (fishing)boats filled their trawls (with fish)“)
- Allir mennirnir komu seinna til vinnu en venjulega*
 („All the men came to work later than usual“)
- Mjólkini súrnaði í könnunni*
 („The milk got sour in the jug“)
- Asninn sleit snúruna*
 („The donkey broke the rope“)
- Gísli er snjall stjórnandi*
 („Gísli is a clever director“)

NB XI

When *ll*, *rl*, *nn* and *rn* are followed by *t* or *d*, there is no [t]-insertion.

Examples:	<i>fylla</i>	[fítla]	but	<i>fyllti</i>	[fil ^t ti]
	(„fill“)			(„filled“)	
	<i>villast</i>	[vitlast]	but	<i>villtist</i>	[víltist]
	(„get lost“)			(„got lost“)	
	<i>tolla</i>	[tʰótlia]	but	<i>toldi</i>	[tʰólti]
	(„stick“)			(„stuck“)	
	<i>gírnast</i>	[kjírt næst]	but	<i>gírntist</i>	[kjí(r)ntist]
	(„desire“)			(„desired“)	

and *girnd* [kjɪ(r)nt]
 („desire“ n.)

When *ll,rl,nn* and *rn* are followed by s, the [t]-insertion is optional.

Examples: *fall* („fall“ n.) — *falls* [fals] or [fatls] (gen.)
tröll („giant“) — *trölls* [tʰröls] or [tʰrötls] (gen.)
barn („child“) — *barns* [pars] or [part(ŋ)s] (gen.)

(In *alls* [als] (of *allur*), however, there is never [t]-insertion).

Exercise 40

Húsið var alltaf fullt af alls konar fólk
 („The house was always crowded with all kinds of people“)
 Hún vildi ekki villast en villtist samt
 („She didn't want to get lost but got lost nevertheless“)
 Árni er bróðir Karls og Björns
 („Árni is the brother of Karl and Björn“)
 Sumt tolldi en annað vildi ekki tolla
 („Some of it stuck but the rest wouldn't“)

5.7 The pronunciation of *f1* and *fn*

Rule: *f1* = [pl]
fn = [pn]

When *f1* and *fn* follow a vowel they are pronounced [pl] and [pn], respectively.

Examples: *afla* [aplɑ] („gain“)
jafn [japn] („even“ adj.)
heflar [hɛplar] (pl. of *hefill* „plane“)
dofnir [tɔpnɪr] (pl. of *dofinn* „numb“)
taf1s [tʰaplɪs] (gen. of *taf1* „chess“)
ofns [ɔp(ŋ)s] (gen. of *ofn* „oven“)

Exception: *f1d, f1t* = [lt], [l̥t]
fnd, fnt = [mt], [n̥t]

When *f1*, *fn* are followed by a *d* or a *t*, the *f* is dropped (cf. 2.2.3, NB XIV). Moreover, the *n* of *fnd*, *fn̄t* changes to an *m*.

Examples:	<i>efldi</i>	[ɛltɪ]	(„reinforced“)
	<i>eflt</i>	[ɛlt]	(„(has) reinforced“)
	<i>nefnd</i>	[nɛmt]	(„committee“)
	<i>nefnt</i>	[nɛm̄t]	(„(has) mentioned“)

NB XII

$$\begin{array}{lll} \text{rf1} & = & \text{rl} \quad [\text{rtl}] \\ \text{rfn} & = & \text{rn} \quad [\text{ rtn}] \end{array}$$

When an *r* precedes *f1* or *fn* the *f* is dropped (cf. 2.2.3, NB XIV), leaving behind the clusters *rl*, *rn*, pronounced [rtl] and [rtn], respectively (see 5.6.2 and 5.6.4).

Examples:	<i>hvarfla</i>	[kʰvartla]	(„flutter“)
	<i>þarfnaſt</i>	[þartnast]	(„need“)

Exercise 41

<i>afla</i>	<i>efldi</i>	<i>bókasafn</i>
<i>jafn</i>	<i>eflt</i>	<i>sofna</i>
<i>heflar</i>	<i>tefldi</i>	<i>rifna</i>
<i>dofnir</i>	<i>nefnd</i>	<i>hvarfla</i>
<i>tafls</i>	<i>hefnd</i>	<i>þarfnaſt</i>
<i>ofns</i>	<i>nefnt</i>	<i>hvírflar</i>

Exercise 42

Ég boldi ekki hvað hann tefldi illa
 („I couldn't bear how badly he played chess“)

Nefndin aflaði gagna um bókasafnið
 („The committee collected some information about the library“)

Hrafn þarfnaſt hvíldar
 („Hrafn needs some rest“)

Allir eru jafnir en sumir eru jafnari en aðrir
 („Everyone is equal but some are more equal than others“)

5.8 Preaspiration: the pronunciation of *pp, tt, kk; pl, tl, kl; pn, tn, kn.*

Between vowels and double-written *pp, tt, kk* or vowels and *p, t, k + l, n* there is inserted an *h*. This [h] is called preaspiration.

Examples: (Vowel+)

<i>pp</i>	=	[hp]	<i>uppi</i>	[yhpɪ]	(„upstairs“)
<i>tt</i>	=	[ht]	<i>rotta</i>	[rɔhta]	(„rat“)
<i>kk</i>	=	[hk _j]	<i>ekki</i>	[ɛhk _j I]	(„not“)
		[hk]	<i>lokkur</i>	[lɔhkkyr]	(„curl“)
<i>pl</i>	=	[hpl]	<i>epli</i>	[ɛhplɪ]	(„apple“)
<i>tl</i>	=	[htl]	<i>fatlaður</i>	[fahtlaðyr]	(„handicapped“)
<i>kl</i>	=	[hkl]	<i>míklir</i>	[mihklɪr]	(„great“masc.nom.pl.)
<i>pn</i>	=	[hpn]	<i>opna</i>	[ɔhpna]	(„open“)
<i>tn</i>	=	[htn]	<i>vatn</i>	[vahtn]	(„water“)
<i>kn</i>	=	[hkn]	<i>sakna</i>	[sahkna]	(„miss“)

This [h] inside a word has proved difficult for many foreign students to pronounce correctly. Therefore, three notes on preaspiration are necessary.

Note 1: The [h]-sound of preaspiration is (normally) a clear, ordinary *h*-sound, like the *h* of *hestur*, etc.

Note 2: Many people tend to mix the preaspiration [h] up with the sound [x] (the German ach-sound). This is incorrect.

Sometimes after the vowels *i, ý [i], ei, ey [ɛi]* and *æ [ai]*, preaspiration can become similar to the sound [j] (like in *hjá* etc.).

Examples:	<i>víkka</i>	[vihka]	or	[vi ^ɔ ka]	(„broaden“)
	<i>breikka</i>	[preihka]	or	[prei ^ɔ ka]	(„broaden“)
	<i>ætla</i>	[aihtla]	or	[ai ^ɔ tla]	(„intend“)

Note 3: A good start (if preaspiration is a problem) is to imagine false boundaries between the [h]-sound on the one hand and the stop on the other. This division gives us an [h] at the end of the first „part“, and it is easier to produce an [h] at the end than in the middle of a word.

Examples:	<i>tappi</i>	=	„tah-bi“
	<i>hitta</i>	=	„hih-da“
	<i>hnakki</i>	=	„hnah-gi“
	<i>sökkva</i>	=	„söh-gva“
	<i>tipla</i>	=	„tih-bla“
	<i>vitlaus</i>	=	„vih-dlaus“
	<i>Hekla</i>	=	„heh-gla“
	<i>heppni</i>	=	„heh-bni“
	<i>hitna</i>	=	„hih-dna“
	<i>vökna</i>	=	„vöh-gna“
	etc.		

NB XIII

Recall that *kkt* and *ppt* are pronounced [xt] and [ft], respectively (cf. 5.5, NB VI).

Exercise 43

<i>koppur</i>	=	„koh-bur“
<i>sippa</i>	=	„sih-ba“
<i>settist</i>	=	„seh-dist“
<i>pottur</i>	=	„poh-dur“
<i>lakkið</i>	=	„lah-gið“
<i>þakkir</i>	=	„bah-gir“
<i>sokkar</i>	=	„soh-gar“
<i>flakkari</i>	=	„flah-gari“
<i>litlir</i>	=	„lih-dlir“
<i>dökkna</i>	=	„döh-gna“
<i>hitna</i>	=	„hih-dna“

Exercise 44

<i>tappi</i>	<i>hattur</i>	<i>bakki</i>	<i>takk</i>
<i>heppni</i>	<i>rotta</i>	<i>stykki</i>	<i>sökkva</i>
<i>uppi</i>	<i>batt</i>	<i>Frikki</i>	<i>dökkna</i>
<i>seppi</i>	<i>hitta</i>	<i>bekkir</i>	<i>þykkur</i>
<i>kappi</i>	<i>fatta</i>	<i>ekki</i>	<i>víkka</i>

<i>kaplar</i>	<i>fitla</i>	<i>Hekla</i>
<i>epli</i>	<i>fatlaður</i>	<i>miklir</i>
<i>tipla</i>	<i>ætla</i>	<i>lyklar</i>
<i>opna</i>	<i>vatn</i>	<i>vakna</i>
<i>skepna</i>	<i>blotna</i>	<i>læknir</i>

*Exercise 45**Nokkrir pottar brotnuðu*

(„A few pots were broken“)

Læknirinn vill ekki fitna

(„The doctor doesn't want to grow fat“)

Frikki settist á bekkinn

(„Frikki took a seat on the bench“)

Ég svitna við of mikla áreynslu

(„I sweat from too much strain“)

Hann fattar ekki tæknina

(„He doesn't grasp the technique“)

Það hefur stækkað, þyknað, víkkað og breikkað

(„It has grown bigger, thicker, wider and broader“)

Hún er í þykri skikkju

(„She's wearing a thick cloak“)

Mig vantar sokka og fingravettlinga

(„I need socks and gloves“)

*Exercise 46**Etna og Hekla eru eldfjöll*

(„Etna and Hekla are volcanoes“)

Siggi litli ætlar að verða læknir

(„Little Siggi is going to be a doctor“)

Gotterí er slæmt fyrir meltinguna

(„Sweets are bad for the digestion“)

Liklega er betra að fara fljótlega (cf. 5.11)

(„It's probably better to leave soon“)

Petta er tómt bull

(„This is just nonsense“)

Hlýr fatnaður er nauðsynlegur hér

(„Warm clothing is necessary here“)

Það er ekkert nýtt í fréttum

(„There is nothing new“)

5.9 On the letter *g* inside words

Medially and word-finally the pronunciation of *g* is rather varying. Therefore, we shall now look at the main rules that govern the distribution of the variants.

After consonants, *g* is pronounced [k] or [kj], according to the rules given in 5.2.

After vowels, we can have [k], [γ], [x], [j] or, finally, a *g* can be dropped.

The situation is as follows:

$$\text{A) } \text{g} + \text{l, n} = [\text{k}] + \text{l, n}$$

Examples: <i>logn</i>	[lɔkn]	(„calm“ n.)
<i>sigla</i>	[sikla]	(„sail“ v.)

$$\text{B) } \begin{array}{ll} \text{g} + \text{a, u, ð, r} & = [\gamma] + \text{a, u, ð, r} \\ \text{and} & \\ -\text{g (word-final)} & = [\gamma] \end{array}$$

Examples: <i>saga</i>	[sa:γa]	(„story“)
<i>dagur</i>	[ta:γyr]	(„day“)
<i>sagði</i>	[saγði]	(„said“)
<i>sigra</i>	[siγra]	(„defeat“)
<i>lag</i>	[la:γ]	(„song“)

$$\text{C) } \text{g} + \text{t, s} = [\text{x}] + \text{t, s}$$

Examples: <i>sagt</i>	[saxt]	(„said“ p.part.)
<i>dags</i>	[taxs]	(„day“ gen.)

$$\text{D) } \text{g} + \text{j, i} = [\text{j}] + (\text{j}), \text{i}$$

Examples: <i>beygja</i>	[pεi:ja]	(„bend“)
<i>logi</i>	[lo:i:ji]	(„flame“)

$$\text{E) } \text{o, á, ú} + \text{g} + \text{a, u} = \text{o, á, ú} + \text{a, u}$$

Examples: <i>lóga</i>	[lou:a]	(„kill (an animal“)
<i>mágur</i>	[mau:yr]	(„brother-in-law“)
<i>múgur</i>	[mu:yr]	(„crowd“)

Exercise 47

<i>logn</i>	<i>fagur</i>	<i>hægt</i>	<i>bogi</i>	<i>lóga</i>
<i>sigla</i>	<i>fagrir</i>	<i>sígti</i>	<i>hagi</i>	<i>mágur</i>
<i>beygla</i>	<i>saga</i>	<i>dags</i>	<i>logi</i>	<i>múgur</i>
<i>rigníng</i>	<i>lag</i>	<i>lagsi</i>	<i>leigja</i>	<i>tágar</i>
<i>tálga</i>	<i>sig</i>	<i>slugsa</i>	<i>segir</i>	<i>bjúga</i>
<i>tíglar</i>	<i>sagði</i>	<i>sagt</i>	<i>segja</i>	<i>fljúga</i>
<i>syngja</i>	<i>beygði</i>	<i>beygt</i>	<i>beygja</i>	<i>nógor</i>
<i>eðna</i>	<i>fægði</i>	<i>fægt</i>	<i>fægja</i>	<i>lágur</i>

NB XIV

It follows from the rules mentioned above that we can have alternating forms of the same stem.

Examples: *segja* [sɛi:ja] („say“ inf.)
sagði [saγði] („said“ past t.)
sagt [saxt] („said“ p.part.)

saga [sa:γa] („story“)
sagna [sakna] („stories“ (gen.pl.))

Exercise 48

<i>drag</i>	—	<i>dregið</i>	—	<i>dregnir</i>
<i>lag</i>	—	<i>lagið</i>	—	<i>lagsins</i>
<i>dagur</i>	—	<i>deginum</i>	—	<i>dagsins</i>
<i>sögurnar</i>	—	<i>sagnanna</i>		
<i>segja</i>	—	<i>segir</i>	—	<i>sagði</i> — <i>sagt</i>
<i>stíga</i>	—	<i>stigið</i>		
<i>stígurinn</i>	—	<i>stíginn</i>	—	<i>stígnum</i> — <i>stígsins</i>

Exercise 49

Laugi hugsaði um Rögnu það sem eftir var dagsins
 („Laugi thought about Ragna for the rest of the day“)
Englendingar fögnuðu sigrinum
 („The English rejoiced in the victory“)
Það er skemmtilegt að sigla í logni og fallegu veðri
 („It's fun to sail in calm and beautiful weather“)

Billinn beygði hægt

(„The car turned slowly“)

Bogi er mágur Sigurðar

(„Bogi is Sigurður’s brother-in-law“)

5.10 r-exercises

For those who have a problem with the trill-r, here is an exercise.

Exercise 50

<i>renna</i>	<i>hraður</i>	<i>fara</i>	<i>farðu</i>	<i>hart</i>	<i>verri</i>
<i>rífa</i>	<i>hraustur</i>	<i>vera</i>	<i>Varði</i>	<i>mark</i>	<i>færri</i>
<i>róta</i>	<i>hrós</i>	<i>Póra</i>	<i>borga</i>	<i>syrpa</i>	<i>marra</i>
<i>ræða</i>	<i>hrista</i>	<i>Ari</i>	<i>byrja</i>	<i>þorp</i>	<i>hærra</i>
<i>rakur</i>	<i>hrinda</i>	<i>búr</i>	<i>Margrét</i>	<i>varta</i>	<i>Sirra</i>

Exercise 51

Rúnar ræddi við Rósu

(„Rúnar talked to Rósa“)

Hún rembdist eins og rjúpan við staurinn (phrase)

(„She strove hard“)

Vertu óhræddur

(„Don’t be afraid“)

Hrólfur fékk ekki rönd við reist (phrase)

(„Hrólfur couldn’t resist it“)

Birkir sparkaði tuðrunni hærra

(„Birkir kicked the ball up higher“)

5.11 On compound words

In compound words, the rules of pronunciation are sometimes interrupted by the boundaries between the various parts that a word can be made up of. This means that for those who are not fully acquainted with the lexicon, spelling may sometimes be misleading.

It is impossible to discuss this problem in detail here, but we shall now mention some fairly typical examples.

Rule interrupted Examples

<i>Length</i>	<i>háskóli</i> <i>Ísland</i>	(há+skóli) (ísl+and)	[hau:skouli] [i:stlant]
<i>Vowel changes before ng, nk</i>	<i>vangá</i> <i>vankunnáttá</i>	(van+gá) (van+kunnáttá)	[vajkau] [vajkʰynauhta]
<i>Devoicing</i>	<i>máltaka</i> <i>samkennari</i>	(mál+taka) (sam+kennari)	[maulthaka] [samkʰenari]
<i>t-insertion</i>	<i>vínneysla</i> <i>bíllýklar</i>	(vín+neysla) (bíl+lyklar)	[vin:εistla] [pil:ihklar]
<i>f1, fn = [pl], [pn]</i>	<i>hóflega</i> <i>hafnet</i>	(hóf+lega) (haf+net)	[houvlεγa] [havnæt]
<i>Preaspiration</i>	<i>útlendingur</i> <i>reykkafari</i>	(út+lendingur) (reyk+kafari)	[u:tlentɪŋkyr] [rei:kʰavari]
<i>Palatalization</i>	<i>leikendur</i> <i>fiskiðnaður</i>	(leik+endur) (fisk+iðnaður)	[lei:kəntyr] [fiskiðnaðyr]
<i>Pronunciation of g</i>	<i>hagnýta</i> <i>ógaman</i>	(hag+nýta) (ó+gaman)	[haγnita] [ou:kaman]

6. Exercises and survey of problems

6.1 A few separate words

Exercise 52

<i>banna</i>	[pan:a]	(„prohibit“)
<i>miði</i>	[mri:ði]	(„ticket“)
<i>sofa</i>	[sø:va]	(„sleep“ v.)
<i>hestur</i>	[hɛstyr]	(„horse“)
<i>fiskur</i>	[fiskyr]	(„fish“)
<i>vinna</i>	[vin:a]	(„work“)
<i>læra</i>	[lai:ra]	(„learn“)
<i>borða</i>	[þorða]	(„eat“)
<i>dansa</i>	[tansa]	(„dance“ v.)
<i>taka</i>	[tʰa:ka]	(„take“)
<i>gata</i>	[ka:ta]	(„street“)
<i>ljós</i>	[ljou:s]	(„light“ n.)
<i>bílar</i>	[pi:lar]	(„cars“)
<i>bíó</i>	[pi:ou]	(„cinema“)
<i>kaffi</i>	[kʰaf:i]	(„coffee“)
<i>háskóli</i>	[hau:skouli]	(„university“)
<i>stúdentar</i>	[stu:təntar]	(„students“)
<i>bók</i>	[pou:k]	(„book“)
<i>íslenska</i>	[i:stlenska]	(„Icelandic“)
<i>málver</i>	[maulver]	(„language laboratory“)
<i>Margrét</i>	[markrjɛt]	
<i>Ásta</i>	[austa]	
<i>Ari</i>	[a:ri]	
<i>Póra</i>	[þou:ra]	
<i>Örn</i>	[örtn]	

6.2 Survey of problems

Exercise 53

<i>list</i>	[list]	(cf. 2.1.2)
<i>list</i>	[lɪst]	
<i>lest</i>	[lest]	
<i>fundur</i>	[fyntyr]	
<i>lönd</i>	[lönt]	
<i>haust</i>	[höyst]	
<i>keyrsla</i>	[kj ^h ei(r)stla]	
<i>lægst</i>	[laixst]	
<i>lambið</i>	[lampið]	(cf. 2.2.2)
<i>aldur</i>	[altyr]	
<i>ólga</i>	[oulka]	
<i>kinn</i>	[kj ^h in:]	(cf. 2.2.2 and 5.2)
<i>kenna</i>	[kj ^h en:a]	
<i>geit</i>	[kjεi:t]	
<i>gær</i>	[kjai:r]	
<i>dagur</i>	[ta:γyr]	(cf. 2.2.2 and 5.9)
<i>laði</i>	[laði]	
<i>flöggra</i>	[flöγra]	
<i>eða</i>	[ɛ:ða]	(cf. 2.2.2)
<i>tuðra</i>	[t ^h yðra]	
<i>iþrótt</i>	[i:þrouht]	(cf. 2.2.3 and 5.5)
<i>hjón</i>	[jou:n]	
<i>sagt</i>	[saxt]	
<i>samt</i>	[samt]	
<i>benti</i>	[pεn̥ti]	
<i>banki</i>	[pauŋkji]	
<i>tankur</i>	[t ^h auŋkvr]	
<i>belti</i>	[pεl̥ti]	
<i>verpa</i>	[vεrpa]	
<i>betri</i>	[pε:tri]	(cf. 3.2.2)
<i>tvisvar</i>	[t ^h vri:svar]	

<i>happ</i>	[hahp]	(cf. 3.2.3 and 5.8)
<i>gott</i>	[kɔht]	
<i>ekki</i>	[ɛhkjɪ]	
<i>lokkur</i>	[lɔhkyr]	
<i>vatn</i>	[vahtn]	
<i>epli</i>	[ɛhplɪ]	
<i>Pétur sýnd(i) (h)enni bílinn</i>		(cf. 4.1.1 and 4.1.2)
	[pʰjɛ:tvr̥ sintenr̥ pi:lɪn]	
<i>Sást(u) (p)etta ?</i>		(cf. 4.1.3 and 4.1.4)
	[saustehtha]	
<i>vangi</i>	[vauŋkjɪ]	(cf. 2.1.1 and 5.1)
<i>drengur</i>	[treiŋkyr]	
<i>bogi</i>	[poi:ji]	(cf. 2.1.1, 5.3 and 5.9)
<i>lagið</i>	[lai:jið]	
<i>hvað</i>	[kʰva:ð]	(cf. 2.2.1 and 5.4)
<i>hjón</i>	[jou:n]	
<i>hérl</i>	[jɛ:r]	
<i>hnútur</i>	[nu:tvr̥]	
<i>hlusta</i>	[lysta]	
<i>hratt</i>	[raht]	
<i>sulla</i>	[sytlə]	(cf. 5.6)
<i>kollur</i>	[kʰɔtlɪr]	
<i>Villi</i>	[vil:i]	
<i>mylla</i>	[mɪl:a]	
<i>árla</i>	[aurtla]	
<i>varla</i>	[vatla]	
<i>beinn</i>	[peitn]	
<i>penni</i>	[pʰen:i]	
<i>perna</i>	[þertna]	
<i>parna</i>	[þatna]	
<i>efla</i>	[ɛpla]	(cf. 5.7)
<i>jafn</i>	[japn]	
<i>segja</i>	[sɛi:ja]	(cf. 5.9)
<i>segir</i>	[sɛi:jir]	
<i>ságði</i>	[sayði]	
<i>ságð</i>	[saxt]	
<i>sága</i>	[sa:γa]	

<i>ságna</i>	[sakna]
<i>bjúga</i>	[pju:a]
<i>verra</i>	[vær:a]
<i>marra</i>	[mar:a]
<i>háskóli</i>	[hau:skouli] (cf. 5.11)
<i>vankunnátta</i>	[vaŋkʰynauhta]
<i>fokillur</i>	[fɔ:kitlyr]
<i>samtök</i>	[samtʰök]
<i>varlega</i>	[varleγa]
<i>hóflega</i>	[houfleγa]
<i>útlendingar</i>	[u:tlenτiŋkar]
<i>haðnýta</i>	[haðnita]
<i>óguðlegur</i>	[ou:kvyðlεγyr]

6.3 Short texts

Exercise 54

Bannið hundahald

Ég er að furða mig á því að hundar hlaupa lausir um borgina og valda oft miklum hávaða. Ég stunda næturvaktir og nágrannahundurinn geltir allan daginn og varnar mér svefni. Ég er þegar búinn að kæra þetta á skrifstofu borgarinnar en ekkert heyrt um það síðan. Það er ekki að sjá að reglur borgarstjóra um hundahald séu nokkuð til bóta fyrir þá sem ekki er um hunda gefið. Mér er meinilla við hunda og maður veit aldrei hvenær þeir kunna að bíta. Sjálfur hef ég lent tvísvar sinnum í því. Það ætti að mínumati að banna hundahald að nýju skilyrðislaust og því fyrr því betra.

Lesandi

(*Pjóðviljinn*, 4. september 1985)

*Exercise 55**Ár frá síðasta Kröflugosi*

„Ástandið er eins og verið hefur í langan tíma, mjög rólegt“, sagði Páll Einarsson jarðeðlisfræðingur hjá Raunvísindastofnun Háskólans er Morgunblaðið spurði hann tíðinda frá Kröflu í tilefni þess að nú er ár liðið frá síðasta gosi þar.

„Það er afskaplega erfitt að spá um framhaldið. Þarna er engin vakt lengur en síritandi mælitæki skrá alla hreyfingu. Um er að ræða jarðskjálfta-, halla- og sprungumæla. Þessi tæki sýna nokkurn veginn hvað er um að vera í jarðskorpunni hverju sinni, en þau segja lítið um það sem koma skal. Til að það sé hægt þarf að túlka það sem mælitækin skrá. Við vitum að þrýstingurinn í kvíkuholunni er hár, hærri en hann hefur verið fyrir sum af þeim gosum sem komið hafa. Þessi þrýstingur nægir til þess að koma kvíku upp á yfirborðið og væri því ekki undarlegt þó að þarna yrði gos. Hinsvegar fer þessi þrýstingur ekki vaxandi. Hann hefur haldist stöðugur síðan um síðustu áramót. Mjög erfitt er að spá út frá þessu um framhaldið ef lítið er til lengri tíma. En ef þarna yrði gos er líklegt að við gætum spáð fyrir um það með stuttum fyrirvara“, sagði Páll Einarsson að lokum.

(*Morgunblaðið*, 4. september 1985)

Exercise 56

„Konan er dýrmæt. Karlar eru lítils virði af því að konan fæðir af sér fólkvið í landinu. Hvað getur karlmaður gert? Kona elur barn, síðan tekur hún haka, fer út á akurinn og vinnur þar. Hún fæðir barnið með afrakstri vinnu sinnar. Karlmaður kaupir bara pálmaolíu. Karlmann byggja aðeins hús“. Þetta var haft eftir konu af Tíkar-ættbálki í Kamerún á 5. áratugnum þegar hún var spurð um það hvers vegna konur væru syrgðar í 4 daga en karlar væru syrgðir aðeins í þrjá daga.

(*Vera*, málgagn kvenfrelsíbaráttu, 2 / 1985, bls. 13)

Appendix

Dialectal differences

In this booklet we focus on the pronunciation of the language of Reykjavík and neighbouring areas. This is the language used by the majority of speakers, and can **under no circumstances** cause misunderstanding when talking to people from other parts of the country. In fact, differences in „dialect“ are so small in Icelandic that some people even hesitate to use the word „dialect“ at all.

The differences that, however, do occur, are mostly restricted to the phonetic or phonological level. I shall now mention the **three main features** where you notice deviation from the language we use in this course.

1) Harðmæli („hard language“)

This means that instead of **common** [p], [t], [kj], [k] in

<i>api</i>	[a:pi]
<i>gata</i>	[ka:ta]
<i>lykill</i>	[lɪ:kjɪtl]
<i>aka</i>	[a:ka]
<i>betri</i>	[pɛ:tri]
etc.	

(i.e. when *p*, *t*, *k* are non-initial), **harðmæli** has [p^h], [t^h], [kj^h], [k^h]:

<i>api</i>	[a:p ^h ɪ]
<i>gata</i>	[ka:t ^h a]
<i>lykill</i>	[lɪ:kj ^h ɪtl]
<i>aka</i>	[a:k ^h a]
<i>betri</i>	[pɛ:t ^h ri]
etc.	

(except when these sounds appear after unvoiced sounds, as in *orka* [ɔrkɑ] etc.).

Harðmæli is assumed to be common in Northern Iceland, in the areas between Skagafjörður and Vopnafjörður (both included).

2) Raddaður framburður („voiced pronunciation“)

This means that instead of **common** unvoiced *l*, *m*, *n*, *ð* ([l], [m], [n], [b]) before *p*, *t*, *k* (that consequently are pronounced as unaspirated, as always after unvoiced sounds) in

<i>hjálp</i>	[jaułpa]
<i>heimta</i>	[heimta]
<i>vanta</i>	[vanta]
<i>banki</i>	[paułkji]
<i>maðkur</i>	[maþkyr] etc.,

raddaður framburður has voiced *l*, *m*, *n*, *ð* before *p*, *t*, *k* (and *p*, *t*, *k* are aspirated, [p^h], [t^h], [k^h], [k^h]):

<i>hjálp</i>	[jaulph'a]
<i>heimta</i>	[heimth'a]
<i>vanta</i>	[vant'h'a]
<i>banki</i>	[paułkjh'I]
<i>maðkur</i>	[maðkh'yr] etc.

Raddaður framburður is used by many people in Northern Iceland, but is somewhat less widespread than the previously mentioned harðmæli. The central areas of raddaður framburður are Eyjafjörður and Þingeyjarsýsla.

3) Hv-framburður („hv-pronunciation“)

This means that instead of common [k^hv] for written *hv* in

<i>hvað</i>	[k ^h va:ð]
<i>hver</i>	[k ^h ve:r]
<i>hvolpur</i>	[k ^h vɔlpvr] etc.,

hv-framburður has [x^w] or [xv] or [x]:

<i>hvað</i>	[x ^w a:ð]	or	[xva:ð]	or	[xa:ð]
<i>hver</i>	[x ^w e:r]	or	[xe:r]	or	[xe:r]
<i>hvolpur</i>	[x ^w ɔlpvr]	or	[xvɔlpvr]	or	[xɔlpvr] etc.

Hv-framburður is restricted to Southern and South-Eastern Iceland, i.e. the areas between Árnessýsla and Suður-Múlasýsla (both included).

It may be added here that these three dialect features are by many Icelanders considered to be „better“ or „clearer“ variants of pronunciation than their correlatives in the Reykjavík language. Therefore, these features sometimes occur even in the speech of individuals that come from areas other than those mentioned above, especially in rather formal speech or when reading aloud. This is especially the case for harðmæli.

