Practice Unit 2

1. Ask a native-speaking informant to read the following sentence for you:

   Sooner or later, she is *going to want to talk to you.*

   Transcribe the portion of the statement spelled in italics and comment on the relation between the spelling as 'going to want to talk' and the corresponding pronunciations. Ask your informant to read the sentence carefully first, then rapidly. What do you notice?

2. Consult a reference work of your choice for a list of the vowel phonemes of standard American English and try to map them onto their British R.P. equivalents given above. What major differences do you note?

3. Consult one of the pronouncing dictionaries given in the reference section of Unit 2 to find out which of the following are minimal pairs in R.P. and General American.

   collar - caller, don - dawn, shot - short, can't - cant, winter - winner

4. The pronunciation of the following words is variable in modern English:

   dispute (noun), *controversy, applicable, to address, address, adult, leisure, data*

   Find out what guidance you are given in the pronouncing dictionaries mentioned in the reference section of Unit 2. Does the advice given by the various sources differ, or do they all agree?

5. Transcribe a slow and rapid version each of *ten bottles, what do you want* and *Smith is your boss* and comment on the differences.

6. Consult reference works on the phonetics of British English R.P. or the General American accent to determine the allophones of the /r/ phoneme in these two varieties. Where there is more than one

variant, give the rules for their distribution. How do the various realisations of English /r/ differ from German?

7. Consult one of the bigger dictionaries of the English language for words starting in 'shn' or 'schn'. What do you find? Go to your departmental library and consult the OED entry for *s(c)hnozzle*. Try to account for the exceptional phonetic structure of this particular English word.

8. Give a list of three-consonant clusters which may occur in English.

9. In their book *Kontrastive Linguistik deutsch/ englisch: Theorie und Anwendung* (München: Hueber 1974) Ernst Burgschmidt and Dieter Götz suggest the following diagnostic text for use in assessing German learners' pronunciation skills.

   "Yesterday I went to the grocer's. My mother had told me to buy eggs, some salad and tomato ketchup. Then I realized that I had forgotten my money. I had to run back, but my mother had already left the house when I arrived […]" (Burgschmidt/ Götz 1974: 224)

   Indicate the likely pronunciation problems in the text. Which mispronunciations would you expect?