

PRONUNCIATION

Introductory.

The earliest modern Faroese texts – vocabularies and transcriptions of traditional ballads – date from the seventies of the eighteenth century. They are written phonetically and so vary according to the dialect of the writer. In 1846 V. U. Hammershaimb published some texts in a new orthography he had drawn up on etymological principles. This orthography bore a close resemblance to the parent language Old Norse, for one of Hammershaimb's aims was to make the treasures of Faroese balladry more accessible to all Scandinavians. At the same time he had created a medium equally acceptable to all Faroese speakers, regardless of their dialect. But, on the other hand, modern Faroese is phonetically far removed from Old Norse, so that Hammershaimb's system gave but a very imperfect representation of the spoken word. In the meantime, however, his orthography with minor modifications has become the accepted standard and hence we often find considerable differences between spelling and sound in Faroese to-day.

There is as yet no recognised standard pronunciation of Faroese, though that of the Tórshavn district is the most significant. Dialect speaking is everywhere the general rule. However, the differences in the pronunciation of the dialects in no way hinder mutual comprehension. The following description represents an average pronunciation based broadly on the central area (Vágur, Strøymoy, Eysturoy). Many other pronunciations may be heard inside as well as outside this area, and these are, of course, acceptable. Some idea of the differences may be obtained from the phonetically transcribed extracts in V. U. Hammershaimb, *Færøsk Anthologi*, 1891, reprinted 1947.

§ 1. The Faroese Alphabet.

The Faroese alphabet consists of 28 letters:

Faroese name.	Phonetic symbol, § 2.	Faroese name.	Phonetic symbol, § 2.
A a	<i>fyrra a</i> [fʏrːaː ʌa]	M m	<i>emm</i> [em:]
Á á	<i>á</i> [a]	N n	<i>enn</i> [en:]
B b	<i>be</i> [be:]	O o	<i>o</i> [o:]
D d	<i>de</i> [de:]	Ó ó	<i>ó</i> [u]
Ð ð	<i>edd</i> [eð:]	P p	<i>pe</i> [pe:]
E e	<i>e</i> [e:]	R r	<i>err</i> [er:]
F f	<i>eff</i> [ef:]	S s	<i>ess</i> [es:]
G g	<i>ge</i> [ge:]	T t	<i>te</i> [te:]
H h	<i>há</i> [hʌ]	U u	<i>u</i> [u:]
I i	<i>fyrra i</i> [fʏrːaː iː]	Ú ú	<i>ú</i> [u]
Í í	<i>fyrra í</i> [fʏrːaː iː]	V v	<i>ve</i> [ve:]
J j	<i>jodd</i> [jɔð:]	Y y	<i>seinna i</i> [saiɳna iː]
K k	<i>ká</i> [ka]	Ý ý	<i>seinna í</i> [saiɳna iː]
L l	<i>ell</i> [el:]	Æ æ	<i>seinna a</i> [saiɳna ʌa]

(sometimes written Ö, ö)

§ 2. Description of Faroese sounds.

The following slightly modified signs of the International Phonetic Alphabet are used in the transcription of Faroese words.

Vowels.

[a:]	is pronounced as <i>a</i> in Northern German <i>war</i> .
[a]	the short form of [a:].
[e:]	pronounced as <i>e</i> in German <i>Mehl</i> .
[é:]	a rather open [e:].
[e]	pronounced as <i>e</i> in English <i>set</i> .
[i:]	pronounced as <i>ie</i> in German <i>Biene</i> .
[i]	the short form of [i:].
[ɪ]	pronounced as <i>i</i> in English <i>fish</i> .
[o:]	pronounced as <i>o</i> in German <i>Bote</i> .
[o]	the short form of [o:].
[ɔ:]	a rather open [o:].
[ɔ]	pronounced as <i>o</i> in English <i>hot</i> .
[œ]	pronounced as <i>ö</i> in German <i>Stöcke</i> (i. e. short, open).
[ø:]	pronounced as <i>ø</i> in German <i>Böte</i> (i. e. long, closed).

[u:]	is pronounced as <i>oo</i> in English <i>foot</i> .
[u]	the short form of [u:].
[o]	pronounced as <i>u</i> in English <i>put</i> .
[u]	pronounced as <i>oo</i> (<i>uu</i>) in Scottish <i>good</i> (<i>guid</i>).
[y]	pronounced as <i>ü</i> in Northern German <i>Gluck</i> .

The sign [˘] under a vowel denotes that it is very short, as in the diphthongs [ai, ai, øy].

Consonants.

[f, h, k, m, p, s, v, w] are pronounced as the corresponding ordinary letters in English; [l, n, t] are dentals. [b, g] are pronounced as the corresponding ordinary letters in English, except that they are only very slightly voiced; [d] is a dental and is likewise only very slightly voiced.

[ŋ]	is pronounced as <i>n</i> in English <i>finger</i> .
[n]	French <i>vignette</i> (i. e. palatal n).
[ʌ]	Italian <i>voglio</i> (i. e. palatal l though <i>gl</i> is actually long [ʌɔ:]).
[ʃ]	German <i>schon</i> , though the lips are not protruded.
[c]	English <i>church</i> .
[j]	pronounced as <i>j</i> in English <i>jump</i> , though the sound is only slightly voiced.
[j]	pronounced as <i>y</i> in German <i>young</i> .
[r]	pronounced as <i>r</i> in German <i>ring</i> , but rather more emphatic.
[ʂ]	Swedish <i>först</i> (i. e. retroflex s).
[o]	denotes a breathed consonant, e. g. [p. ɛ]. i. e. completely voiceless counterparts of [b, g].
[:]	denotes a long consonant, e. g. [b:, g:].

Aspiration.

In slow or emphatic speech a slight aspiration [ʰ] may be heard before *kk*, *pp*, *tt* and also before *t* when followed by another consonant: *gakk* [gaʰk:k] go (imper. fam. sg.), *balcki* [baʰt:c:ɪ] cliff, *koppur* [kɔʰp:ɔr] cup, *mítt* [møɣʰt:ɪ] mine, my (neuter sg.), *batna* [baʰt:na] to improve, *litli* [løyʰt:lɪ] little one (masc.). In any case this preaspiration is no more

significant than the aspiration heard after Faroese *k*, *p*, *t* in some positions, i. e. [kʰ, pʰ, tʰ], as also in English. None of these aspirations are marked in the ordinary transcriptions in this book.

Stress.

The stress falls on the first syllable in nearly all native Faroese words; the second element in compounds carries subsidiary stress. Full stress is indicated, where necessary, by [ˈ] before the stressed syllable, [ˌ] denotes a subsidiary stress.

Examples: *tómur* [ˈtʊmʊr] empty, *ógoldið* [ˈʊgʊldɪ] unpaid, *hestarnir* [ˈhestanʊr] the horses, *tilbiðja* [ˈtʰi:lɪbɪjə] to worship, *alíttandi* [ˈalɔɪtandi] reliable, *ongastadni* [ˈɔŋgasteanɪ] nowhere, *seyðafjúgi* [ˈseiʝaˌfjuˌɪ] flock of sheep.

Exceptions are words of three or more syllables containing the prefixes *ó-* or *sam-*, when the stress may also fall on the second syllable: *ótespiðigur* [ˈʊtespɪˌɪjʊr] or [ˌʊtespɪˌɪjʊr] unpleasant, *sambærðigur* [ˈsambarˌɪjʊr] or [ˌsambarˌɪjʊr] agreeable; notice also *margáttligur* [ˈmarˌktliʝʊr] peculiar, *vappískoyti* [ˌʋpʊˌskɔɪtɪ] addition, addendum. The prefix *al-* (lit. all) is unstressed in *alofast* [ˌalɔfast] most frequently.

Words of foreign origin often bear the stress on syllables other than the first, e. g.: *lestrarvina* [ˈleastrɪˌvɪnə] (female) teacher, *studentur* [ˈstʊdɛŋtʊr] student, *forargiðigur* [ˌfʊrˌarjɪˌɪjʊr] annoying, vexing, *forbanna* [ˌfʊrˌbanˌnə] to curse.

§ 3. Short and long vowel quantities.

Faroese vowels and diphthongs may be short or long in syllables having the main or subsidiary stress.

They are long when occurring: a) finally, b) before a single consonant, c) before the consonant groups *kl*, *kr*, *pl*, *pr*, *tr* (N. B. not *tl*). They are short when occurring before a double consonant or group of consonants, except *kl*, etc. Note: Orthographic *kj*, *tj*; *sj* represent the single fricative consonants [ç]; [ʃ]. *ð* is nearly always to be ignored as it is silent except in a very few words where the group *ðr* is pronounced [gr], § 5.

Vowels in fully unstressed syllables are short.

The following summary table illustrates the characteristic main differences in the short and long pronunciation of vowels and diphthongs.

Ortho- graphy.	Pron. when: short - long.	Ortho- graphy.	Pron. when: short - long.	Ortho- graphy.	Pron. when: short - long.
<i>a</i>	[a]	[ea]	[a]	[u]	[ai]
<i>á</i>	[ɔ]	[ɔa]	ú	[y]	[ey]
<i>e</i>	[ɛ]	[e:]	y as i		[ɛ]
<i>i</i>	[ɪ]	[i:]	y as í		[ɪ]
<i>í</i>	[ox̣]	[ox̣]	æ as a		[ɔ]
<i>o</i>	[ɔ]	[o:]	ø	[œ]	[ɔ]
<i>ó</i>	[œ]	[œ]		[ɔ]	[ɔ]

§ 4. The vowels and diphthongs in detail.

a is pronounced:

1. [a] – when short, except as in 2: *land* [land] land, *koma* [koːma] to come, *levari* [leːvarɪ] teacher, *ordabók* [ˈoːraˌbʊk] dictionary, *tad* [ta] it (unstressed), the (n. nom. acc. sg.), *ta* [ta] the (fem. acc. sg.); exceptions: *fram* [fram] forward, *man* [man] may (verb sg.).

2. [ɛ] – before *ng*, *nk*: *langur* [lɛŋgʊr] long, *tangi* [tɛŋɪ] spit of land, *banki* [bɛŋkɪ] (I) knock; exceptions are words from Danish: *banki* [baf̥kɪ] (money) bank, *sangur* [saŋgʊr] song, *mangla* [maŋgla] to lack.

3. [ea] – when long, except as in 4, 5: *maður* [meːavʊr] man, *spakari* [spɛakari] quieter, *beinasmur* [ˈbeinaˌseːsmʊr] kind, *lag* [lea] position. *tad* [tɛa] it (stressed), that (n. nom. acc. sg.), *ta* [tɛa] that (fem. acc. sg.).

4. [ɛ:] – when followed by [a]: *baða* [bɛːa] to bathe, *hagar* [hɛːar] hither.

5. [a:] – in some foreign words: *tomat* [ˈtoːmaːt] tomato, *herra* [hɛːra] hare (also [heːra]), *statur* [staːtʊr] state.

á is pronounced:

1. [ɔ] – when short: *hátt* [hɔːt] highly, *náddi* [nɔːdɪ] approached (sg.).

2. [ɔa] – when long, except as in 3: *bátur* [bɔːatʊr] boat, *fá* [fɔa] few (n. nom. acc. pl.), *ráð* [rɔa] advice.

3. [ɔ:] – when followed by [a]: *fáa* [fɔːa] to obtain, *ráða* [rɔːa] to advise.

When [ɔa] is followed by [ɪ] the glide consonant [j] is heard between them, when followed by [ɔ] the glide [v] is heard: *áin* [ɔajɪn] the stream, river, *bláur* [blɔavʊr] blue.

Unstressed *á* is normally pronounced [a]: *á landi* [a'landi] on land, *sin ámillum* [sɔxnamɪdɔn] between themselves.

e is pronounced:

1. [ɛ] – when short, except as in 2: *vestur* [vɛstɔr] west, *hendur* [hendɔr] hands, *enn* [en:] still; also *men* [mɛn] but.
2. [ʌ] – in unstressed syllables: *neerhendis* [nearundɪs] near at hand (also written *neerindis*), *áðrenn* [ʰarun] before (conj.); also *ella* [ɛldla] or.
3. [e:] – when long, except as in 4: *eta* [e:ta] to eat, *ferð* [fɛ:r] journey.
4. [i:] – before [a], the glide [j] intervening: *medan(i)* [mi:jan(ʌ)] while, *mega* [mi:ja] must (pl.); however, the pronunciation [me:an(ʌ)] etc. is also widespread.

i is pronounced:

1. [ɪ] – when short, except as in 2: *skips* [ʃɪps] ship's, *drukkin* [drɔc:ɪn] drunken, *ikki* [ɛ:ɪ] not, *við* [vɪ] with, *sandi* [sandɪ] sand (dat.). When final *i* may be heard as a very close [e]; it is in any case a very lightly pronounced ending and the pronunciation [ɪ] given in this book is always acceptable.
2. [i] – in the ending *-ligur* when quite unstressed and in some foreign words: *stalligur* [ʃtɔɪlɪjɔr] entertaining, pleasant, *mirakul* [mɪ'vɛa-kɔl] miracle.
3. [i:] – when long: *skip* [ʃi:p] ship, *herðar* [hɪ:rar] herdsman, *við* [vi:] as well, *stásiligra* [ʃtɔ:stɔ:li:ja] stately; *ið* which, who (rel. particle) is pronounced [ɔɪ] unless quite unstressed, see under *i*.

í is pronounced:

1. [ɔɪ] – when short: *mið* [mɔɪt:] my (n. nom. acc. sg.), *tíndi* [tɔɪmɪdɪ] liked (past. sg.); before [j, ʃ, ʃ] the [ɪ] element is not heard: *tíggju* [tɔj:ɔ] ten, *írskur* [ɔʃkɔr] Irish, *frískur* [frɔʃkɔr] healthy; commonly also before *g*, *k*: *líeyga* [lɔg:a] to enliven, *líknanði* [lɔknanɪ] similar.
2. [ɔɪ] – when long: *í* [ɔɪ] in, *grýsur* [grɔysɔr] pig.

Unstressed *í* is normally pronounced [ɪ]: *í dag* [ɪ'dæ] to-day, *tíggjunnun* [ɪ'jɔgnɔn] through, *ímillum* [ɪ'mɪdɔn] between; likewise *ið*: *hvat ið* [h'vɛatɪ] what (rel.).

o is pronounced:

1. [ɔ] – when short, except as in 2: *ong* [ɔŋʂ] meadow, *rokna* [rɔkna] to reckon.
2. [o] – in unstressed syllables in some foreign words: *politia* [pɔlɪ'ti:] police, *kílo* [ki:lɔ] kilo.
3. [o:] – when long, except as in 4: *kona* [ko:na] woman, *ord* [ɔ:r] word, *og* [o:] and.
4. [u:] – before [a]: *loda* [lu:a] to hang down, *bodafles* [ʃbu:a'fle:s] rock covered by water; however, the pronunciation [lo:a] etc. is widespread.

ó is pronounced:

1. [œ] – when short, except as in 2: *ódn* [œdn] tempest, *dattir* [dœt:ɪr] daughter.
2. [ɛ] – before *gv*: *nógv* [nɛgv] much, *sjógvur* [ʃɛgvɔr] sea.
3. [ɔu] – when long: *sól* [sɔu] sun, *lýóð* [lɔu] sound; also in the following: *provstur* [prɔustɔr] “provost”, chief clergyman in the Faroes, *Tórshavn* [tɔuʂhauv] Tórshavn.

u is pronounced:

1. [ɔ] – when short, except as in 2: *munnur* [mɔn:ɔr] mouth, *børnun* [bœdnɔn] children (dat. pl.), *fjørvi* [fjœrɔtɪ] forty, *sápuðlæra* [sɔpɔ-ðlɛ:ra] soap-bubble; also *skula* [skɔl:a] shall (pl.). In unstressed positions, except before final *n* and in the word *um* if, across, *u* tends to modify its quality, becoming more central and approaching [ø]. Some dialects substitute [ʌ], hence one may often see mistakes in print, e. g. *eldru* for *eldri* elder; in several words, however, both spellings are acceptable, e. g. *ógvuliga*, *ógviliga* very; in poetry [ɪ] and [ɔ] can rhyme, cf. the poem *Vesturætt*, verse 3, p. 193.
2. [u] – in unstressed syllables in some foreign words: *studentur* [stundɛntɔr] student.
3. [u:] – when long: *munnur* [mu:nɔr] difference, *dun* [du:n] roaring noise.

ú is pronounced:

1. [y] – when short, except as in 2: *krúss* [krʏs:] mug, *brúmma* [brʏm:a] the bridge (acc.).

2. [v] – before *gv*: *kúgv* [kʉv] cow, *trúgvur* [trʉgvʊr] faithful; also *brúðleggr* [brʉðleip] wedding.
3. [u] – when long: *hús* [haus] house, *klútur* [klʉtur] rag, *nú* [nu] now.

When *ú* is followed by a vowel, the glide consonant [w] may be heard between the vowels: *jómfrúin* [jɔmfrʉwɪn] the maiden.

y is pronounced:

1. [y] – when short: *systir* [sʉstʉr] sister, *ynski* [ynsʉ] wish.
2. [i:] – when long: *lykil* [li:ʉl] key, *synir* [sinʉr] sons.

y is pronounced:

1. [oʏ] – when short: *nýtt* [noʏt:] new (n. sg.), *rymndi* [roʏmndʉ] departed (past sg.); before [j, f, s, ʃ] the [ʏ] element is not heard: *nýggjur* [noʏ:ʉr] new, *dýrt* [doʏt] dear (n. sg.), *fýrs* [foʏs:] eighty, *lysti* [loʏtʉ] shone (past sg.); commonly also before [k]: *lyjka* [lo:k:a] mildness (of climate).
2. [oʏ] – when long: *bý* [boʏ] town (acc.), *tyða* [toʏða] to translate.

When *y* is followed by a vowel, the glide consonant [j] is heard between the vowels: *byur* [boʏjʉr] town, *byin* [boʏjɪn] the town (acc.).

æ is pronounced:

1. [a] – when short: *hædd* [had:] height, *lættur* [lat:ʉr] light (in weight), easy, *mær* [mar] (to) me (unstressed), *fátækur* [fʉatʉkor] poor.
2. [æ] – when long, except as in 3: *æra* [æra] honour, *væl* [væ:l] well, *mær* [mæ:r] (to) me (stressed).
3. [ɛ:] – when followed by [a]: *ræðast* [rɛ:ast] to be afraid, *frægarri* [frɛ:arri] better.

When *æ* is followed by *i* the glide consonant [j] is heard between the vowels, when followed by *u* the glide [v] is heard: *fræið* [frɛ:jʉ] the seed, *mæum* [mæ:vʉn] sheep (dat. pl.) – baby language.

ø is pronounced:

1. [œ] – when short: *kœld* [kœ:lð] evening, *bœrn* [bœ:dn] children.
2. [ø:] – when long: *gøta* [gø:ta] path, street, *øl* [ø:l] beer, *kœða* [kœ:ða] to chant.

When *ø* is followed by *i* the glide [j] is heard between the vowels, when followed by *u* the glide [v] is heard: *bœin* [bœ:jɪn] the homestead (acc.), *bœur* [bœ:vʊr] homestead.

ei is pronounced:

1. [ai] – when short, except as in 2: *eind* [ai:nd] unit, *veitsla* [vai:ʃla] feast; the [i] element is not heard before [j]: *beiggvi* [bæ:j:vʉ] brother, *deiggj* [dæ:j:] dough.
2. [c] – before [j, f, c]: *steingja* [stɛ:ŋja] to shut, *einkj* [ɛ:ŋɛ] nothing, *teinkja* [tɛ:ŋɛ] to think; in some words the pronunciation [a] is heard: *dreingir* [dra:ŋjʉr] boys, *Engilsknaður* [ɛ:ŋjʉs:mæ:vʊr] Englishman, *einkja* [a:ŋɛ] widow, *leingi* [læ:ŋjʉ] long (of time).
3. [ai] – when long: *bein* [bain] leg, *gleiða* [glai:va] to stride, *steikja* [stai:kə] to fry.

ey is pronounced:

1. [ɛ] – when short: *eystur* [ɛstʉr] east, *reytt* [rɛ:t:] red (n. sg.).
2. [ei] – when long: *dreymur* [dreimʉr] dream, *fleyg* [flɛi] bird-catching (with net).

oy is pronounced:

1. [ɔi] – when short: *stoyttu* [stɔ:t:ɔ] poured (past pl.), *roynd* [ro:jnð] examination; before [j, r] the [i] element is not heard: *oyggj* [ɔj:] island, *moyrkna* [mo:jkna] to rot; commonly also before [k, g]: *roykta* [ro:kʉ] smoked (past sg.), *rangoygdur* [re:ŋgɔ:gdʉr] cross-eyed.
2. [ɔi] – when long: *hoyra* [hojra] to hear, *loysa* [loj:sa] to untie.

Note: An old form *oy* “island” is common in place names and words derived from them, when it is pronounced [ɔ] or [i]: *i Nólsoy* [i no:ʃsʉ] in Nólsoy, *Nólsoyarfjörður* [no:ʃsajfjʉ:roʊr] Nólsoy Firth, *Föroyar* [fœ:jar] the Faroes; before the derivative ending *-ingur* it is lost altogether: *Nólsoyingur* [no:ʃsʉŋgʉr] man from Nólsoy, *Föröyingur* [fœ:rʉŋgʉr] Faroese man, cf. also *föröyskur* [fœ:rʉskʉr] Faroese. But in reading aloud, for instance, the written form influences the pronunciation, as a result particularly the ending *-oy* is sometimes pronounced [ɔi] as [no:ʃsɔi], cf. § 23 Note.

§ 5. The consonants in detail.

b is pronounced:

1. [b] – in all positions, except final: *blása* [blasa] to blow, *rabarbur* [ra'barbur] rhubarb.
2. [β] – when final: *lamb* [lamβ] lamb.

bb is pronounced:

1. [b:] – when medial: *abbi* [ab:v] grandfather.
2. [β:] – when final: *subb* [soβ:] sea-fret, slight drizzle.

d is pronounced:

1. [d] – initially and medially, except as in 3: *deyður* [deivɔr] deaf, *sandur* [sandɔr] sand.
2. [ɖ] – when final: *hund* [hunɖ] dog (acc.), *vand* [vand] protected (fem. sg.).
3. [j] – in the combination *dj*: *djör* [jɔur] animal.

dd is pronounced:

1. [d:] – when medial: *vadda* [rod:a] to clear.
2. [ɖ:] – when final: *hædd* [haɖ:] height.

ð is never pronounced except as in 5; examples:

1. – (i) between *a*, *á*, *e*, *o* and *a*, and between *æ*, *ø* and *a* in some words: *stáðar* [sté:ar] place (gen.), *váða* [rɔ:a] to advise, *glæða* [glé:a] to gladden, *boða* [bo:a] to forbode, *ræða* [ré:a] to frighten, *kvæða* [kvæ:a] to chant, *ræða* [ræ:a] to make a speech.

(ii) when final: *bláð* [blsa] leaf, *hurð* [hur] door.

(iii) before, between or after consonants: *biðja* [bi:ja] to request, *stirðna* [sturna] to become stiff and cold, *verða* [ve:ra] to become. In a few words *ð* is assimilated to a following *g*, *k*: *stegða* [steg:a] to stop, *máður* [mak:ɔr] grub.

In many cases the glide consonants [j, v, w] appear, according to the character of the surrounding vowels. Examples:

2. [j] – (i) after *i*, *y*, *í*, *ý*, *ei*, *ey*, *oy*: *síður* [si:ɔr] custom, *biða* [boɔja] to wait, *deyður* [deivɔr] dead.

(ii) between any vowel, except *ó*, *u*, *ú*, and a following *i*: *kastaði* [kastajv] threw (sg.), *sodinn* [so:jun] boiled (past part.), *kvæði* [kvæjv] ballad.

3. [v] – (i) between *a*, *á*, *e*, *æ*, *ø* and *u*: *máður* [masvɔr] man, *áður* [avɔr] before, *leður* [le:vɔr] leather, *klæðum* [klsvon] clothes (dat.), *blæðum* [blsvon] leaves (dat.).

(ii) in a few cases analogical [v] occurs, e.g.: *æða* [sva] eider-duck (cf. regular *æðu* [svɔ] in the oblique sg., etc.), *ræða* [rsva] speech (cf. regular obl. sg. *ræðu* [rsvɔ], etc.); similarly past participles have [v] throughout, thus *elskaður* [ɛlsvavɔr] beloved (nom. acc. fem. pl.) by analogy with regular *elskaður* [ɛlsvavɔr] (nom. masc. sg.), etc.

4. [w] – after *ó*, *u*, *ú*; this glide is not particularly prominent except in slow speech: *Óðinn* [ɔnun] Odin, *góðar* [gɔuvar] good (fem. pl.), *súður* [su:wur] south, *húðir* [huuɔur] skins, *búðu* [buuɔu] lived (past pl.).

5. *ð* before *r* is pronounced [g] in a few words: *leðrið* [legru] the leather, *veðrið* [vegru] the weather, *æðr* [agr] vein, *í neðra* [i'negra] below, downstairs.

f is pronounced:

1. [f] – except as in 2: *fótur* [fvɔur] foot, *loft* [lɔft] ceiling.
2. In a few words it is assimilated to a following *t*: *aftan* [at:an] back (adv.) – but *aftan* [aftan] eve (of a saint's day) – *aftur* [at:ɔr] again, *eftir* [et:ur] after, *lyfta* [lvt:a] to lift.

ff is pronounced:

[f:] in all positions: *gaffil* [gaf:il] fork.

g is pronounced:

1. [g] – (i) initially before vowels, except the single vowels *e*, *i*, *y* and the digraph *ey*: *gáva* [gava] gift, *geit* [gait] goat, *gulur* [gulɔr] yellow, *gýsur* [gɔrsɔr] is draughty.

(ii) initially before consonants, except in the combination *gi*: *glas* [glas] glass, *gráta* [grata] to weep.

(iii) medially before voiced consonants: *hágrva* [hagva] cap, *hagði* [hagdɔ] thought (past sg.); see also 10.

(iv) medially after consonants when not followed by the single vowels *e*, *i*, *y* or the digraph *ey*: *sprungu* [sprungu] to jump, *halga* [halga] to hallow.

(v) in some foreign words: *synagoga* [soyna'go:ga] synagogue.

2. [g:] – when final after a consonant: *ting* [tunɔ] parliament, *tálg* [tɔ]g] tallow.

3. [j] – (i) before the single vowels *e*, *i*, *y* and the digraph *ey*: *genta* [ʒɛnta] girl, *gjúfur* [juʔtor] married, *gylltur* [juʔtor] gilded, *geykur* [ʒeikor] cuckoo; in addition to the regular pronunciation one may often hear *gingu* [ɣɪŋɡo] went (pl.), *gingin* [ɣɪŋɪn] gone (part.).

(ii) in the combination *gj*: *gjörði* [juərði] did (sg.), *ringja* [rɪŋja] to ring.

4. [k] – before voiceless consonants: *hugsa* [huksa] to think, *lúgt* [lukt] low (n. sg.); see also 10.

5. [d] – before *n* in the declension of past participles: *dringun* [drɪnʌn] drawn (masc. acc. sg.), *slagnir* [slɪdnɪr] mown (masc. nom. pl.), *flodnar* [flodnɑr] flown (fem. nom. acc. pl.).

Intervocalic *g* is not pronounced, except as in IV. Examples:

6. – (i) between *a*, *á*, *o*, *u*, *ø* and *a*: *flaga* [flɛ:a] to roof with turf, *lagan* [lɔ:an] low (masc. acc. sg.), *boga* [bu:a] bow (acc.), *dagandi* [du:andɪ] capable, *öga* [ø:a] increase.

(ii) finally after vowels: *eg* [e:] I, *felag* [fe:la] company.

In a few preterite forms *g* is assimilated to a following *d*: *lögðu* [lœd:ɔ] laid (past pl.), *sögðu* [sœd:ɔ] said (past pl.), *dagði*, *dagðu* [dod:ɪ, dɔd:ɔ] was, were able, *plagði*, *plagðu* [plad:ɪ, plad:ɔ] was, were wont.

In many cases the glide consonants [j, v, w] appear, according to the character of the surrounding vowels. Examples:

7. [j] – (i) after *i*, *y*, *í*, *ý*, *ei*, *ey*, *oy*: *stuttigur* [stɔtɪjɔr] pleasant, *flugur* [flɔvɔr] lies, *eyga* [eja] eye.

(ii) between any vowel, except *ó*, *u*, *ú*, and a following *i*: *sligin* [slɪ:jɪn] mown, *logi* [lɔ:jɪ] flame, *degi* [de:jɪ] day (dat.); notice also: *legði* [le:jɪ] laid (past sg.), *segði* [se:jɪ] said (past sg.).

8. [v] – (i) between *a*, *á*, *e*, *æ*, *ø* and *u*: *dagur* [deavɔr] day, *lagur* [lavɔr] low, *legukalvi* [le:vɔ:kalvɪ] (full-grown) halibut, *tegur* [teavɔr] baskets, *hagur* [hævɔr] high.

(ii) in a few cases analogical [v] occurs, e.g.: *lega* [le:va] place where something lies (cf. regular *legu* [le:vɔ] oblique sg., etc.), *tega* [teava] basket (cf. regular obl. sg. *tegu* [teavɔ], etc.). The adjectival ending *-gur* is pronounced [-ovɔr], as *kunnugur* [kon:ovɔr] well-known.

9. [w] – after *ó*, *u*, *ú*, except as in Sii; this glide is not particularly prominent except in slow speech: *drögu* [drɔvɔw] dragged (past pl.), *þýgu* [þavɔw] twenty, *dagur* [du:wɔr] is able, *hagur* [hu:wɔr] mind.

10. – *g* is not heard before a consonant in a few words: *hugnaligur* [hu:na,lɪ:ɪɔr] comfortable, nice; also in the n. nom. sg. endings *-(t)igt*, *-ugt*: *merkligt* [mɛɣult] remarkable, *lögugt* [li:ɔkt] finished.

gg is pronounced:

1. [g:] – except as below: *glæggur* [glœg:ɔr] bright.

2. [g:] – when final: *egg* [ɛg:] egg.

3. [j:] – before *i* and in the combination *ggi*, except finally: *eggid* [ɛj:v] the egg, *síggja* [soj:a] to see.

4. [j:] – when final in the combination *ggi*: *síggj* [soj:] see, look (imper. sg.).

h is pronounced:

1. [h] – initially before a vowel: *hon* [ho:n] she, *hessin* [hes:sɪn] this.

2. [k] – in the combination *hø*: *hvat* [kvæat] what, *hví* [kvɔv] why.

3. [c] – in the combination *hj*, except as in 4: *hjá* [cɔa] beside, *hjól* [cɔul] wheel.

4. silent in the combination *hj* in a few words: *hjálpa* [jɔpɔa] to help, *hjarta* [jarta] heart, *hjörtur* [juərɔr] stag, *Vilhjálmar* [vɪljɔlmɔr] William.

j is pronounced:

[j] – in all positions: *ja* [jɛa] yes, *bjarga* [bjarga] to save, *víja* [vɪja] to wish, *berj* [berj] strike (imper. sg.). Note: *j* combines with a preceding *d*, *g*, *gg*, *h*, *k*, *s*, *t* to form fricatives, see the separate letters.

k is pronounced:

1. [k] – (i) initially and medially before consonants and when final: *knívar* [knɔvɔr] knife, *króna* [krɔna] crown (coin), *öks* [œks] axe, *vakvir* [vɛakrɪr] beautiful (masc. pl.), *eik* [aik] oak.

(ii) before vowels, except *e*, *i*, *y* and the digraph *ey*: *kóka* [kɔuka] to boil, *sukur* [su:kɔr] sugar.

2. [c] – (i) before the single vowels *e*, *i*, *y* and the digraph *ey*: *elski* [ɛlscɪ] (I) love, *keið* [ce:tlɪ] kettle. Exceptions are mostly foreign words: *kílo* [ki:lɔ] kilo, *Kína* [kina] China; native Faroese are: *kis* [kis] faint sound, *kisa* [kisa] pussy.

(ii) in the combination *kj*: *kjótta* [cɔul] dress, *kirkja* [ɔrca] church. On the combinations *sk* (initially) and *skj*, see under *s* 2iii, iv.

kli is pronounced:

1. [k:] – except as in 2: *klökka* [klɔk:a] clock, *politikk* [pɔl'it:k:] policy (acc.).
2. [c:] – before *i*: *politikkinn* [pɔl'it:c:in] the policy (acc.).

l is pronounced:

1. [l] – in all positions, except as below: *ljúsa* [lɔysa] to shine, *halda* [halda] to hold, *mikil* [mi:cɔl] great.
2. [l] – (i) before a voiceless consonant*, except as in 4: *kállk* [kɔlk] lime, *alt* [alt] all (n. sg.).
(ii) finally after a voiceless consonant: *smgrsl* [smɔsl] salve, *tveitl* [tvaitl] nonsense.
3. [ɰ] – between a diphthong with a palatal vowel as the second element and a voiced consonant*, and before [f]: *heilld* [kvoɔɣɔd] rest, *svelgja* [svœɣja] to swallow.
4. [ɰ̥] – between a diphthong with a palatal vowel as the second element and a voiceless consonant*, and before [c]: *heilsa* [haiɣsa] to greet, *kjálki* [cɔɣcɔl] jaw.

ll is pronounced:

1. [dl] – when medial between vowels in most words: *fjallh* [fjaldl] the mountain, *illur* [ɔdor] wicked, *bolli* [bɔdlɔ] basin.
2. [dl] – when final in most words: *fjall* [fjald] mountain, *ill* [ɔdl] wicked (fem. sg.).
3. [l:] – in a few words: *bolli* [bɔl:l] small dumpling, *bull* [bɔl:l] bull (acc.) – baby language.
4. [l] – in a few words before a voiced consonant: *koma til illnar* [ɔnar] to quarrel, fall out.
5. [l] – in a few words before a voiceless consonant: *illska* [ɔlska] anger, pain.

m is pronounced:

1. [m] – except before a voiceless consonant* and as in 4, 5: *modir* [mɔvur] mother, *lamin* [leamin] paralysed, *um* [ɔm] if, about.
2. [m̥] – before voiceless consonants*, except *k*: *kampjagur* [hampɔ:li:ɔr] pleasant, *heimsins* [haiɣsins] of the world.

* Note. [p, t, s] which only occur finally, do not devoice a preceding consonant; in this respect they are to be included in the category of voiced consonants.

3. [ŋ] – before *k*: *eynka* [eɣka] to complain, regret, *vinna* [vɣŋka] to extend.

4. [n] – when final in the dative case ending: *manninum* [man:nɔn] (to) the man, *tveinum óm* [tvainɔn ɔm] (to) two ewes; also in *gjögnum* [jœɣnɔn] through, *millum* [mɔlɔn] between.

5. [n] – before *n*: *gamm* [gann] fun, sport (dat.), *lamma* [launa] paralysed (fem. acc. sg.).

mm is pronounced:

[m:] – in all positions: *mamma* [mam:a] mother, *damm* [dam:] pool (acc.).

n is pronounced:

1. [n] – initially and medially before vowels; medially before voiced consonants, except as in 3, 5 and finally after vowels: *nei* [nai] no, *andi* [andɔ] spirit, *kona* [kɔ:nan] the woman, *barnid* [badn] the child.

2. [n̥] – (i) before voiceless consonants*, except [k], and as in 6: *mentan* [mɛntan] culture, *ansa* [ansa] to look after.

(ii) finally after a voiceless consonant: *mæsn* [mœsn] nonsense, *vatr* [vatn] water.

3. [ŋ] – before *g*: *mangur* [mɛngɔr] many a, *song* [sɔŋɔ] bed.

4. [ŋ] – before [k]: *banka* [bɛŋka] to knock, *onkur* [ɔŋkor] anyone, *langt* [lɛŋkt] long (n. sg.).

5. [n] – between a diphthong with a palatal vowel as the second element and a voiced consonant*, and before [f]: *royndi* [rɔɣndɔ] tried (past sg.), *treingja* [trɛɣja] to need, *mangur* [mɛɣur] many (masc.), *tingið* [tɣɣɔ] the parliament.

6. [ɰ] – between a diphthong with a palatal vowel as the second element and a voiceless consonant*, and before [c]: *roynt* [rɔɣnt] tried (supine), *skemkja* [skɛɣca] pour, *bonki* [bɔɣv] bench (dat.), *bankið* [bɛɣv] knock (imper. pl.).

7. [m, ŋ], see under *v* Note.

mm is pronounced:

1. [n:] – in all positions, except as in 2: *renna* [rɛn:a] to run, *ánna* [ɔn:a] the stream (acc.), *men* [mɛn:] men.

2. [dn] – after diphthongs: *eynna* [ɔidna] the island (acc.), *seinni* [saiɔnɔ] later; also *tinna* [tɔidna] flint.

* See note p. 18.

p is pronounced:

[p] – in all positions: *páppu* [pɑpɑv] father.

pp is pronounced:

[p:] – in all positions: *heppin* [hɛp:ɪn] lucky, *óhapp* [oʰap:] accident.

r is pronounced:

1. [r] – except before a voiceless consonant*, and as in 3, 4: *rósa* [rɔsa] rose, *tarni* [tɛarv] seaweed, *stókur* [stɔkʰɔr] proud; final *r* is only slightly voiced, it often has a weak buzzing sound containing a suggestion of *z* as in English *zero*.

2. [r̥] – before a voiceless consonant*: *lurta* [lɔrtʰa] listen, *verpa* [vɛrpa] lay (eggs).

3. [d] – in the combination *rn* in most words: *björn* [bjœdn] bear, *horn* [hɔdn] horn, *terna* [tɛdna] tern – but *terna* [tɛrna] lady's maid, *torna* [tɔdna] to dry – but *torna* [tɔrna] to thunder.

When *r* and *n* come together in past participles or in adjectives as the result of inflexion, the pronunciation is always [rn], e.g. *farnir* [farnr] travelled (masc. pl.), *ernar* [ɛnar] haughty (fem. pl.); other words with [rn] are *torn* [tɔrn] tower, *ørn* [œrn] eagle.

4. silent – in a few words before *s* followed by another consonant, see also under *s* 3: *fyristi* [fɪstɪ] first, *torskur* [tɔskɔr] cod, *versna* [vɛsna] to worsen; *r* of the plural ending is also silent before *n* of the suffix article: *hundarnir* [hɔndanr] the dogs, *kakurnar* [kɑ:kɔnar] the cakes; for forms like *bakurnar*, cf. also § 26, 2.

rr is pronounced:

[r:] – in all positions: *errin* [ɛr:ɪn] haughty, *fyrr* [fɪr:] before (adv.). The tip of the tongue vibrates when [r:] is pronounced.

s is pronounced:

1. [s] – except as in 2, 3: *so* [so:] so, *hasa* [hɛasa] that (fem. acc. sg.), *les* [lɛ:s] read (imper. sg.), *stólar* [stɔlɑr] chair.

2. [ʃ] – (i) after *i*, *y*, *ei*, *oy* when short; a silent *t* may precede the *s*: *vísit* [vɔʃtɪ] showed (past sg.), *nýtsla* [nɔʃla] use (subst.), *veisla* [vɛʃla] feast, *ogstí* [ɔʃtɪ] poured (past sg.).

*See note p. 18.

(ii) in the combination *sj*: *sjúkur* [ʃuŋkɔr] sick, *gresja* [grɛ:ʃa] to crunch.

(iii) initially in the combination *sk* before the single vowels *e*, *i*, *y* and the digraph *ey*: *skera* [ʃɛra] to cut, *skip* [ʃi:p] ship, *skýldur* [ʃuldɔr] related (part.), *skeyt* [ʃɛit] shot (past sg.); exceptions are *skinn* [skɪ:nɔ] shone (past pl.), *skinnð* [skɪ:nɪ] shone (supine).

(iv) in the combination *skj*: *skjóta* [ʃtɔta] to shoot.

(v) in the combination *stj* in some words: *stjúkþjafi* [ʃtʰkʰpɑpɪ] step-father, *stjerna* [ʃœdna] star, *stjórn* [ʃtʰɔrn] rope – but *stjórn* [stʰɔrn] manager; [ʃ] is long in *Kristján* [krɪ:ʃan] Christian (baptismal name).

3. [ʂ] – when it assimilates a preceding *r*: *norskur* [nɔʂkɔr] Norwegian; it is long when final: *mars* [mɑ:ʂ] March, *tílf borðs* [tɪlf:ʂ] at table.

ss is pronounced:

[s:] – in all positions: *vassa* [vas:a] paddle, *wade*, *foss* [fɔ:s] waterfall (acc.); exception: *trýss* [trɔ:ʃ] sixty.

t is pronounced:

1. [t] – except sometimes in the combination *stj* (see *s* 2v), and as below: *taka* [tɛaka] to take, *etandi* [ɛ:tandɪ] edible, *út* [tʰut] out.

2. [c] – in the combination *tj*: *tjörn* [tœdn] tarn, *hefja* [hɛ:ca] hero. 3. silent – before *st*: *nýtsla* [nɔʃla] use (subst.), *veisla* [vɛʃla] feast; also commonly in *at* to (before an infin.): *at ívast* [a:ɪ:vast] to doubt.

tt is pronounced:

[t:] – in all positions: *fittur* [fɪt:ɔr] nice, *nátt* [nɔt:] night.

v is pronounced:

1. [v] – except as below: *veva* [vɛ:va] to weave, *torv* [tɔrv] peat.

2. [f] – before voiceless consonants*: *kréfst* [krɛfst] is required, *skreit* [skrɛift] wrong (n. sg.).

3. [u] – after *a*, *e*, *ø*, *o* before *n* it combines with the preceding vowel to form a diphthong: *havn* [haun] harbour, *nevnd* [nɛunɔ] committee, *nönn* [nœun] names, *önnur* [œunɔr] oven, stove.

Note: *nv* has the pronunciation [m, ŋ] in: *nevndur* [nɛmɔr] named, *javnt* [jant] even (n. sg.). In a few words *v* is assimilated to the following consonant: *hönd* [hœnd:] head, *hövdu* [hœd:ɔ] had (pl.), *língva*

* See note p. 18.

[log:a] to enliven; likewise *ov* 'too' is often assimilated to the following consonant: *ov mikil* ['om:ri:cu] too big, but also ['o:m:icu]; *v* is not pronounced in: *hevði* [hei:ɹ] had (sg.), *hvasu* [kros:ɔ] how; it is also silent after *ó*, its place being taken by the glide consonant [w]: *góvu* [gʊvuɔ] gave (pl.), *tjóvur* [tʃuvor] thief.

A note on the length of some consonants.

The consonants [l, m, n, ŋ, r] also [ʎ, ɲ, ʝ, ʒ, ʃ] and [f, s] tend to be lengthened somewhat when occurring between a short vowel and another consonant. This lengthening, indicated here by [ː] after the letter, it is not particularly noticeable, except in very slow or emphatic speech: *skald* [skal-ðː] poet, *hálsur* [hɑːsɔr] neck, *kambur* [kamːbɔr] comb, *lampa* [lamːpa] lamp, *sundur* [sanːdɔr] sand, *sent* [senːt] sent (supine), *langur* [lɛŋːgɔr] long, *ungt* [uŋːkt] young (n. sg.), *stýrði* [stɔrːdɹ] steered (past sg.), *larta* [lɔrːta] listen, *loft* [lɔfːt] ceiling, *hœn* [hœːŋ] chickens, poultry. This detail has not been marked elsewhere in this book, as the ordinary pronunciation [l] etc. is always acceptable provided it is made clearly.

Double consonants in unstressed syllables.

When occurring in unstressed syllables double consonants are reduced: *áðrenn* [ˈa:rn] before (conj.), *app á gólu* [ˈapːaːgɔlv] up onto (the) floor, cf. *appískoyti* addendum, addition, i.e. [ˈapː+ˈɔːskɔitɹ] > ɔːpːɔskɔitɹ] tending to become [ˈpɔːskɔitɹ] in ordinary speech.

§ 6. A feature of the pronunciation of many districts is the softening of [k, p, t] to [g, b, d] when occurring between vowels or medially before [l] (except [tɹ]) and [r]: occasionally [ç] occurs between vowels and is likewise softened to [j].

taka [tʃaːgə] to take, *drepa* [dreːha] to kill, *sita* [siːda] to sit, *tykja* [tiːja] to seem.

miklar [miːglɹ] great (m. pl.), *epil* [eːblɹ] potatoe, *vakrir* [veagrɹ] beautiful (m. pl.), *feppi* [feːbrɹ] fever (dat.), *eitrandi* [aidrandɹ] poisonous.

Another widespread feature is the weakening of [k, p, t] and [ç] after voiceless consonants to [g, b, d] and [j].

raskur [rasçɔr] energetic, *spyrja* [spɹja] to ask, *stærstur* [sçæsçɔr] greatest, *norskur* [nɔççɔr] Norwegian.

dalka [dɔlga] to dirty, *hvalpur* [kvoːbɔr] puppy, *vella* [vɛlða] to cultivate, *mjólkinn* [mjɔːlɹin] the milk.
sparka [spaɳga] to kick, *harpa* [haɳpa] harp, *netta* [nɛrða] to touch, *kerkja* [kɛrja] church.

bankur [baŋgar] (money) banks, *entur* [ɛŋdɔr] wild ducks, *lampa* [lamːpa] lamp, *teinkja* [tɔjja] to think.

The learner may well adopt the above systems, which in combination with the values of the vowels and other consonants as already given, correspond to the pronunciation of the Tórshavn area. This pronunciation may well one day become the recognised standard.

Among other common differences in pronunciation may be noted:

a) in Streymoy north of Tórshavn, Eysturoy and the Northern Islands one hears [ci] for [ai]: *eind* [ciŋd] unit, *bein* [bɔin] leg; and similarly [ç] for [a] before [ɲ, ʃç]: *dreingir* [drɔŋɹ] boys, *einkja* [ɔŋca] widow, — this latter feature also occurring in Vágur and Suðuroy.

b) in Streymoy north of Tórshavn, Eysturoy, the Northern Islands and also in Vágur one hears [ɛu] for [ɔu]: *sól* [sɛul] sun.

c) south of Skopun Firth *a* before *ng*, *nk* is pronounced [a]: *langur* [laŋgɔr] long, *banki* [baŋjɹ] (1) knock; short *ó* is pronounced [ç]: *ódn* [çdn] tempest.

d) in Suðuroy, where the dialect has many peculiarities marking it out sharply from the others, *ó* before *gv* is pronounced [ç]: *nógv* [nɔçv] much; short *æ* is pronounced [ɛ]: *hædd* [hɛdː] height.

§ 7. Omission of consonants and assimilation.

Difficult consonant clusters arising as the result of inflexion are simplified in pronunciation by the omission of the first or second consonant.

fjalls [fjaːls], *berns* [baːns], *vatns* [vaːns] gen. sg. of *fjall* mountain, *bern* child, *vann* water.

hjálpi [çjɹtɹ], *grkti* [grtɹ], *sigldi* [sulɹ] past sg. of *hjálpa* to help, *grkja* to write poetry, *sigla* to sail; *fjald* past sg. of *fjald* to catch birds, *fjald* past sg. of *fjald* "to follow" are both pronounced [fɹldɹ]; *grskti* [grstɹ] past sg. of *grskja* to wish (cf. below), *myrkt* [mɹt] n. sg. of *myrkur* dark.

The cluster *skt* gives a) [st] in words of more than one syllable, b) [kst] in monosyllables.

a) *eingiskit* [ajŋjɹst], *føroyiskit* [fø:rust], *russiskit* [ros:rust] — n. sg. of

