

## KISS IS THE BEST AT DANISH PRONUNCIATION – WHY?

We believe that a Danish pronunciation instruction that works is extremely important if you want to use Danish. Therefore, we will give your pronunciation our outmost attention right from the first day.

### Why do we take your pronunciation so seriously?

- ✓ Your pronunciation will by itself improve with time, but it is still very important to get the right habits in place from the beginning. Wrong pronunciation habits can be very difficult to change later.
- ✓ A university project has found that Danish people tend to connect wrong pronunciation with lower social status.
- ✓ A good pronunciation is important socially. Close friends will talk to each other for hours – but what if there is consistent “noise on the line”? – This may make it difficult to have close friends.
- ✓ If you seem to struggle with your Danish pronunciation, Danes are quick to help – by speaking English to you. They do not realize that you may be trying to learn the language.
- ✓ If you feel you struggle with your Danish pronunciation, you will often switch to English to be sure you are understood. Knowing that you have a good pronunciation creates confidence.
- ✓ When your pronunciation requires a lot of your attention while speaking, you will feel that you cannot express yourself properly.
- ✓ The more you feel good and confident about your Danish, the more you will practice it.
- ✓ Danish pronunciation is not difficult with our kind of instruction. Almost all KISS students will be able to say “*rødgrød med fløde*” perfectly after a few weeks.

### How do we go about teaching Danish pronunciation – from the very first day?

- ✓ We use our own models, descriptions and techniques, very different from the official Danish phonetic system as taught at the universities and as used in all other schools.
- ✓ We deal with Danish specials like the soft d (*en gade*), the consonant R (*rask, rigtig, Roskilde*), and others, using the approach that pronunciation is a mental or psychological thing, not a physical thing. When you change your mental picture of an element (such as R), it will immediately come out sounding differently.
- ✓ We teach the Danish “glottal stop” right from the first day. KISS is the only school with this approach. We teach the glottal stop because our unique models make it possible and because we believe it is harmful not to do it: If the teacher does not teach it, most students will hear that the teacher uses it anyway. This leads to uncertainty which will spread to the rest of the word and maybe to other words – resulting in frustration, lack of confidence in the teacher as a professional, loss of motivation, and, eventually, a low attendance rate in class – as the statistics show quite convincingly. This vicious circle can only be avoided by applying a certain degree of perfectionism when teaching Danish pronunciation.
- ✓ We teach the rhythmical patterns as the fundamental element of sentences. Danish is an extremely rhythmical language, and rhythm, meaning, and glottal stops in a sentence are interconnected in a systemic way (changing one element means changing at least one of the others).
- ✓ We do not use the word “stress” to describe the rhythmical patterns. *Stress* is the opposite of *glottal stop*, and as they often occur in the same syllable, it makes a complete contradiction. This is just one example of why the official phonetic system is not suited for our use - so we have made our own.
- ✓ We teach the clear and simple systems of the Danish vowels. In Danish pronunciation there is much more system and consistency than generally realized.

- ✓ We teach the connection between spelling and pronunciation so that the spelling becomes a help and not an extra difficulty.
- ✓ You will learn sentences by heart (memorize them) with the right rhythm and the right glottal stops. One of the several purposes of this is to install the correct language habits right from the beginning.
- ✓ We provide sound files with word lists and sentences for your homework.

### **What kind of Danish will you learn?**

- ✓ We teach the fluently and naturally pronounced Danish (the quickest Danish) right from the beginning, dropping ending and sometimes whole words. When you have learned how to do this yourself, you can also understand when Danes speak quickly.
- ✓ The accent – if we should call it that – is the so-called high Copenhagen pronunciation as for example our Queen Margrethe uses it when she is having a normal conversation. The Queen also says “ik” instead of “ikke”, “os” instead of “også”, “ku” instead of “kunne”, etc.
- ✓ You will learn to use the glottal stop consistently in your sentences during the first level so that it becomes part of your language habits.