DanPASS - Conventions for segmental transcription

Consonants
Note that Danish /b d g/ prototypically are unvoiced, the only difference between /b d g/ and /p t k/ being one of aspiration. – In the idealised transcription in tier 5 of the words as they would sound pronounced distinctly in isolation, the lack of voicing in /b d g/ and the aspiration/affrication of /p t k/ is explicitly marked, but not the lenis character of /p t k/ which in an even narrower transcription would be rendered [b̥ʰ d̥ˢ g̊ʰ]. In tiers 5 and 6 the transcription of stop consonants as they actually occurred, is broader. Here, aspiration in /p t k/ (affrication in /t/) is implicit in the [p t k] notation. Likewise, the lack of voicing in /b d g/ is implicit in the [b d g] notation. Thus, we have no means to specifically transscribe the voicing in /b d g/ when it occurs, which is quite common in running speech, especially in unstressed syllables.

Words like *højre, havre* etc. would be [ˈhʌjjɐ/ˈhœjjɐ ˈhɑwwɐ] (or: [ˈhʌjːɐ/ˈhœjːɐ ˈhɑwːɐ]) in distinct speech; but we often perceive only one semi-vowel (or: a short semi-vowelæ). The decision, one or two semi-vowel symbols (or: short or long), is quite regularly hard to make and may appear ad-hoc in some instances.

Vowel duration in words like *lige, bue* is often hard to determine. In distinct speech they are [ˈliːi ˈb̥uːu]. But in the corpus there are several forms, e.g. [ˈliːi ˈliː ˈlii]; the choice between them often appears arbitrary, and it is not always easy to decide whether there are one or two syllables in the word.

When two sonorant consonants appear in a vowel-less coda, it may be difficult to decide which one of them is syllabic, as in, e.g., *ulden* [ˈuln]. Syllabicity on the first consonant, [ˈul̩n] is the marked case and appears only when there is no doubt. Syllabicity on the last consonant, [ˈuln̩], means either that that is where it is indeed perceived, or that we were in doubt about which consonant is syllabic, or that both consonants simultaneously appeared to carry the second syllable.

The duration of phonologically long vowels before a syllabic [ð̩], as in, e.g., *gade* [ˈg̊æːð̩] are not always long phonetically, and decision between [ˈg̊æːð̩] and [ˈg̊æð̩] is often difficult and may appear arbitrary in a number of instances.

Vowels
Vowel symbols are conventionalised as depicted in the cardinal vowel diagram below.