

CONSONANTS

There are four distinctive features for classifying consonants:

1. Place of articulation
2. Manner articulation
3. Position of the soft palate
4. Position of The vocal cords

1. Place of articulation

1.Bilabial: the consonant is produced by the upper and lower lips: /m/ /p/ /b/ /w/.

2.Labio-dental: the consonant is produced by the lower lip and the upper teeth: /f/ /v/

3.Dental:the consonant is produced by the tip of the tongue against the back of the upper teeth: /θ/ /ð/ /

4.Alveolar: the consonant is produced with tip of the tongue against the teeth ridge: /t/ /d/ /z/ /n/ /r/ /l/ /s/

5.Post-alveolar: the consonant is produced with the centre of the tongue against an area behind the alveolar

Ridge: /ʃ/ /ʒ/ /dʒ/ /tʃ/ /r/

6.Palatal: the consonant is produced with the back of the tongue raised to the hard palate: /j/

7.Velar: The consonant is produced with the back of the tongue against the soft palate: /k/ /G/ /ŋ/

8.Glottal: the consonant is produced by narrowing down the vocal cords. /h/

2.Manner of articulation

1.Plosives:so called because of the 'Explosion' made in their production:/ p b t d k g/

2.Fricatives:here the air stream is not blocked but simply narrowed to produce a hissing sound:/s z h F V θ ð/

3.Affricates:which begin as plosives but the organs of speech separate slowly:/ tʃ dʒ /

4.Nasals:air goes out through the nasal cavity:/m n ŋ/

5.Lateral: air escapes down the sides of the tongue:/l/

6.Approximants (liquids or semi-vowels): the articulators are only in approximant contact, so not sufficiently close to produce a real consonant: /w j r/

3.Position of the soft palate:

In all nasal consonants the soft palate is lowered so that air is pushed out of the nose where as in oral consonants the soft palate is raised so that air goes out through the mouth.

4. Position of the vocal cords

Some consonants are pronounced using the voice (the vocal cords vibrate); they are called voiced or fortis consonants (/b d g.../). Others are pronounced without voice and they are referred to as voiceless or lenis consonants (/p t k.../).

		Place of articulation							
		Front						Back	
		bilabial	Labio-dental	dental	alveolar	Post-alveolar	palatal	velar	glottal
	Plosive	pb			td			kg	
	Fricative		fv	θ ð	sz	ʃ ʒ			h
	Affricate					tʃ dʒ			
	Nasal	m			n			ŋ	
	Lateral				l				
	Approximant	w			ɹ	r	j		

Table of English consonant phonemes

Theme :Diacritics

When we use the 44 symbols of vowels and consonants we are dealing with the phonemic transcription which is also called abstract and broad transcription; but if we add details to such a transcription, we are dealing with the phonetic transcription which is known to be concrete and narrow. The symbols used to indicate details are called diacritics, the new phoneme is called allophone (a variant of the phoneme in the detailed transcription): [p_h] is an allophone to of /p/ in a given situation (when /p/ is in initial stressed syllable). What follows are example of some variants of phonemes occurring in different environments:

1. Shortening of vowels before voiceless consonants:

- Neat [nit] the vowel is fully shortened
- Need [ni.d] the vowel is slightly shortened
- Knee [ni:] the vowel is fully long

This is the way length of vowel is diacritically represented. We use a different diacritic with short vowels and diphthongs:

- Bit [bɪ̯t] Coat [kəʊ̯t]

Note: when the vowel is shortened, the following consonant is long. For example, in 'bit' the 't' is made longer by pronouncing a schwa after it: [bit]

2. Aspiration of /p, t, k/ when they are initial in stressed syllables

After the release of plosives, there is a short breath or a moment of noiselessness before the start of the voicing of the vowel. The voiceless period is called aspiration and it is represented by 'h'. In fact, what really happens is the fact that voiceless consonants cause vowels to lose part of their voicing; the voicing is replaced by a short breath.

- Pool [p^hul]

3. Devoicing of /b, d, g/ in initial and final positions

They become partly voiceless. In these cases, they are confused with /p, t, k/ but the difference is felt in the length of the vowels: vowels are shortened before voiceless /p, t, k/ than before /b, d, g/ which in turn are made longer.

- Bid [bɪ̯d] did [dɪ̯d] big [bɪ̯g]

4. Devoicing of /j, w, r, l/ after /p,t,k/

When there is devoicing, there is a manifestation of aspiration.

- Pure [pj^huə] cure [kj^huə] twice [tw^haɪs] pray [preɪ^h]

5. Nasalization of vowels before nasals

Air goes out through the nasal cavity:

- Uncle [ʌ̃ŋkl] lamp [læ̃m]

6. Neutralisation of /t, d/ between vowels before unstressed syllables:

They can be replaced by a sound called 'tap' or 'flap'. The symbol to it is 'r' or 'D':

- Better [beDə] body [bɒDi]

7. Velarisation of /l/ before plosives and after vowels

In this case /l/ is no longer alveolar, but velar

- Fall [tɔːl] gold [gɔːld]

8. Dentalisation of stops, nasals and laterals before dental fricative sounds

In this case, these sounds are articulated with the tip of the tongue between upper and lower teeth.

- Tenth [tɛnθ] wealth [welθ] width [wɪð]

9. Inaudible plosives before other stops or at the end of words

A full articulation of plosives goes through three stages: closure-hold-release. But when a plosive is followed by another plosive, the third stage can be absent at the end of the first plosive, so, air is not released and the sound is not audible (heard). This can happen, too, when the plosive is at the end:

- Apt [æpt̚] night [naɪt̚]

10. Glottalisation of /p, t, k/

A glottal stop is a sound that occurs when the vocal cords are tightly closed then suddenly open. The symbol to it is [ʔ]. The glottal stop often occurs as an allophone to /t/. Most Americans and many British speakers have a glottal stop followed by a syllabic nasal:

- Beaten [biːʔn] kitten [kɪʔn] fatten [faːʔn]

London Cockney has a glottal stop between vowels:

- Butter [bʌʔə] fatter [faːʔə]

Many speakers of both countries have a glottal stop before final voiceless stops:

- Rap [ræʔp] rat [ræt̚] rack [ræk̚]

Note: The voiceless stop can be glottalised and inaudible in the same time, glottalised and audible, or inaudible without a glottal stop, or neither glottalised nor inaudible.

11. Syllabic consonants

A consonant (mostly 'l' and 'n') can occupy the place of the weak vowel 'ə' mainly at the end of words. In this case we say that schwa is omitted:

- Seven [sevn̩] bottle [bɒtl̩] police [plɪs̩]

Stress: English is a stressed language. In the spoken language, some syllables will be stressed and others will not. A stressed syllable is spoken with some energy. Because of this it sounds louder

1. Stress on simple words: simple words are words that are not composed of more than one grammatical unit. Thus the word care is simple. However, the composed words careless and careful are complex. All the mono-syllable words are stressed. Examples: top /tɒp/, ball /bɔ:l/. It is more difficult to decide where to put the stress, however, on the polysyllabic words (words that contain more than one syllable).

1.1/ Two-syllable words

Verbs	Either the first or the second syllable is stressed: 1) if the second syllable contains long vowels or diphthongs or if it ends with more than one consonant, that second syllable is stressed like in apply /ə'plai/ and assist /ə'sist/ 2) if the final syllable contains a short vowel and one final consonant, the first syllable is stressed like in enter /'entə/ and equal /'i:kwəl/ 3) a final syllable is also unstressed if it contains like in follow /'fɒləʊ/
Adjectives	Follow the same rule. Examples: lovely /'lʌvli/ and divine /dɪ'vaɪn/
Nouns	If the second syllable contains a short vowel, the stress is on the first syllable otherwise it will be on the second syllable. Examples: money /'mʌni/ and estate /'eɪsteɪt/

1.2/ Three-syllable words

Verbs	1) if the final syllable contains a short vowel or ends with no more than one consonant, it is unstressed. The stress is on the second syllable like in encounter /'ɪnkəʊntə/ 2) if the final syllable contains a long vowel or a diphthong with more than one consonant, it is stressed like in entertain /'entə'teɪn/
Adjectives	Follow the same rule.
Nouns	1) if the final syllable contains a short vowel or /ə/, it is unstressed but if also the second syllable contains a long vowel or a diphthong or if it ends with more than one consonant, that middle syllable is stressed like in: mimosa /mɪ'mɒsə/ potato /pə'teɪtə/ and disaster /dɪ'sɑ:stə/ 2) if the middle and final syllables contain short vowels and the second contain no more than one consonant, the first syllable is stressed like in quantity /kwəntə'tɪ/ 3) if the last syllable contains a long vowel or ends with more than one consonant, the first syllable is stressed like in intellect /'ɪntələkt/ and marigold /'mæɪrɪɡɔld/

2/ stress with complex words: complex words are of two major types: 1) words composed of a basic stem (root) with the addition of an affix (e.g. careless), 2) and compound words, which are made of two independent words (e.g. armchair).

2.1 stress with words containing suffixes

The suffixes can have one of the three possible effects on word stress:

- the suffix itself receives the stress, e.g. person /pɜ:sn/ personality /pɜ:sənə'lɪteɪ/
- the suffix shifts the stress to another syllable, e.g. possible /pɒsəbl/ possibility /pɒsə'bɪləteɪ/
- the suffix has no effect, e.g. market /mɑ:kɪt/ marketing /mɑ:kɪ'tɪŋ/

a. suffixes receiving the stress	b. suffixes shifting the stress to the final syllable of the stem	c. suffixes with no effect
ee: refuge refugee ette: cigare cigarette eer: mountain mountaineer esque: picture picturesque ese: Portugal Portuguese	eous: courage courageous graphy: photo photography ial: music musical ic: climate climatic ion: permit permission ious: injure injurious ity: tranquil tranquility	ied: hurried enement: punishment ness: whiteness y: funny wise: otherwise en: widen ful: beautiful ing: amazing ish: devilish
		ly: sufficiently able: acceptable or: contributor er: player ize: apologize ist: archeologist ous: poisonous

2.2/ Stress with compound words: some compound words have a single stress on the first word, others have double stress:

- First word is an adjective, stress is on the second word. (e.g. second-class)
- First word is a noun, stress is on the first word (e.g. typewriter)

3/ stress and word class pairs: there are several pairs of two-syllable words with identical spelling and which differ in stress placement, this according to the word class (noun, verb or adjective). The rule is:

- If the word is a verb, the stress is on the second syllable.
- If the word is a noun or an adjective, the stress is on the first syllable.

Examples:

Desert /dɪˈzɜːt/ (N) desert /dɪˈzɜːt/ (V)

Escort /ɪˈskɔːt/ (N) escort /ɪˈskɔːt/ (V)

Export /ɪkˈspɔːt/ (N) export /ɪkˈspɔːt/ (V)

Perfect /pɜːˈfekt/ (A) perfect /pɜːˈfekt/ (V)

Exercises: transcribe and mark the stress.

Two-syllable words

Verbs

Deceive - Sharpen - Collect - pronounce - copy - depend - record.

Adjectives

Major - alone - bellow - yellow - early - sublime - alive.

Nouns

Aspect - affair - carpet - patrol - office - defeat - dentist.

Three-syllable words

Verbs

Abandon - deliver - interrupt - elicit - imagine - determine

Adjectives

Important - abnormal - negative - accurate - unlikely

Nouns

Furniture - disaster - accident - transistor - tomato

Words with suffixes

Neutral suffixes

Comfortable - wonderful - powerless - glorify - foolish - encouraging.

Suffixes receiving the stress

Japanese - profiteer - statuette

Stress moving suffixes

Ability - courageous - embryology

Compound words

1) loudspeaker - headquarters - threewheelers

2) sunrise - tea-cup - suitcase

word class pairs

Nouns and adjectives: abstract - contract - present - record - object - import

Verbs: rebel - insult - conduct - produce.

Note: Verbs and adjectives of three syllables have generally the second and the third syllables which are often stressed. The stress, however, is on the first syllable when the others contain short vowels.

RP Pure vowels

Exercise 1: What is the last vowel heard?

Student A pronounces	Students B writes the final vowel sound	Student B pronounces	Student A writes the final vowel sound
A busy city.		That's prestige	
A black ship.		They are simple people.	
knee reflex.		It's on the lid	
You're my guest.		In the fridge	
Put it on your head		He is so sad	
Poor wretch		he was dispatched	
Stick the stamp		He's so calm	
It's a rough impact		Why do you laugh	
It's worth the trouble		Come to my flat	
What have you done		An awful rat	
Don't drive so fast		I wish you good luck	
It's only half past		It was as red as blood	
put it in the box		They didn't pass	
When will you wash		he's so calm	
pull the knob		that's enough	
Is there anything wrong		What's the trouble	
That's what I thought		What do you want,	
Hold the horse!		Put it in the slot	
it's a nice wool		He left it in the floor	
I read a book		He left it on the floor	
Don't be rude		It's off the hook	
Give me a spoon		Give him a push	
He said he could		Give me the word	
I think it's very good		It's even worse	
Eat your banana		This meat is burned	
Do you like Canada		That's a red shirt	

Exercise 2: Read aloud then transcribe the following sentences:

1. It isn't easy to live in a little city
2. Will Fred sing in his bed
3. He met a man with a bag crammed with bread
4. I wish you hadn't sat on the carpet
5. You lucky man you must be happy to have another son
6. Mark asked his cousin for a comfortable carpet by the hearth
7. I've forgotten where Margaret's car was
8. I wonder where you got that butter from
9. It'll cost a fortune to launch it
10. The cook pushed the door open and looked into the room
11. June took a good look at the new cook's soup
12. Butter and rum are better than turnips and onions

Stress with suffixes

Exercise 1: write the complex words then transcribe them

1.Nation

+al=...../	/
al+y=...../	/
al+ize=...../	/
al+ist=...../	/
al+ism=...../	/
al+ity=...../	/
al+ist+ic=...../	/

2.Economy

+ize=...../	/
+ize+ation...../	/
+ist=...../	/
+ize+ing=...../	/
+ic=...../	/
+ic+al...../	/
+ic+al+y...../	/

3.Ceremony

+ial=...../	/
+ial+ism...../	/
+ious=...../	/
+ious+ness=...../	/
+ious+ly=...../	/

Exercise 2: Complete the exchanges using the appropriate complex words which have the stems of the underlined words

A- There's a good reality in it

A- He is full of energy

A- Don't lose optimism

A- He is quite a diplomat

A-Is he a catholic?

A- Can you imagine what sceptics like

A- What is the job of critics?

A- Why does he advocate physics?

A-He is always talking about romanticism

A- Does he behave with courtesy?

A- Do you see that error?

A-I swear it's equal

A- This is spiritual

B-Yes it's quite

B- you're right, he is

B- Sorry, I can't be

B- Yes he does behave.....

B- No, he just act.....

B-Well they like

B- It's obvious_.....

B- Well because he is a

B- Well he is

B- Yes, he is

B-Oh, everything is.....

B-I don't believe in its

B- Itsis obvious

Exercise 3: Add two suffixes to each of the following words. Transcribe them then use them in meaningful sentences.

1.Vegetal

.....

.....

2.Myth

.....

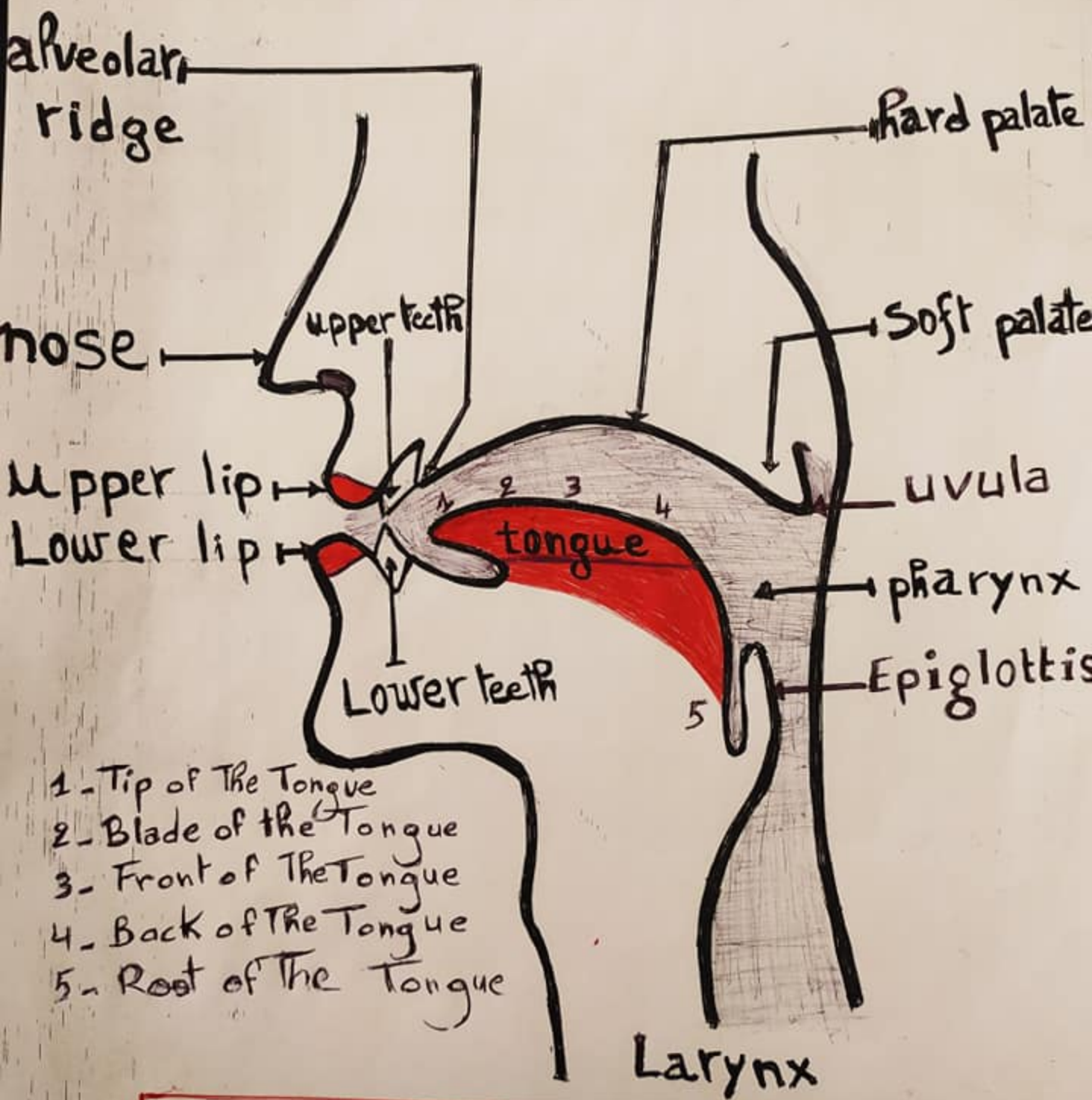
.....

3.Mystic

.....

.....

4.Gastronomy



The articulators

	Bilabial		Labiodental		Dental		Alveolar		Plato-alveolar		Palatal		Velar		Glottal	
	V-	V+	V-	V+	V-	V+	V-	V+	V-	V+	V-	V+	V-	V+	V-	V+
Plosives	p	b					t	d					k	g		
Fricatives			f	v	θ	ð	s	z	ʃ	ʒ					h	
Affricates									tʃ	dʒ						
Nasals		m						n						ŋ		
Laterals								l								
Approximants		w						r				j				

ENGLISH CONSONANTS CHART

V- (Voiceless sounds)

V+ (Voiced sounds)