

5: The Consonants of English

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(1)

The Consonants

- There are two reasons for beginning with consonants rather than vowels.
 1. *Consonants contribute more to making English understood than vowels do.*
 2. *Consonants are generally made by a definite interference of the vocal organs with the air stream*, and so are easier to describe and understand.
- The consonants are pronounced in very much the same way wherever English is spoken.

1. Friction Consonants

- There are **nine consonant phonemes** whose main sounds all have **friction** as their most important feature.
- *The lungs push air through a narrow opening where it causes friction of various kinds.*
- They are **/f, v, θ, ð, ʒ, ʃ, s, z, h/**.

1. Friction Consonants

1. **/f/** is strong and **/v/** is weak.
2. **/θ/** is strong and **/ð/** is weak.
3. **/s/** is strong and **/z/** is weak.
4. **/ʃ/** is strong and **/ʒ/** is weak.
5. **/h/**

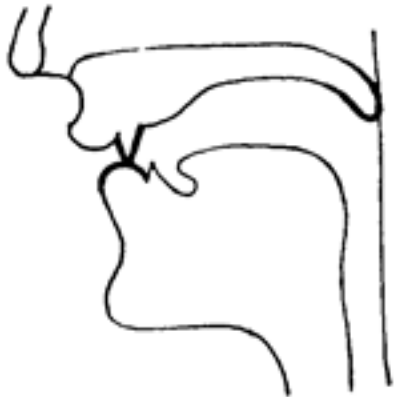


Fig. 12 |f| and |v|

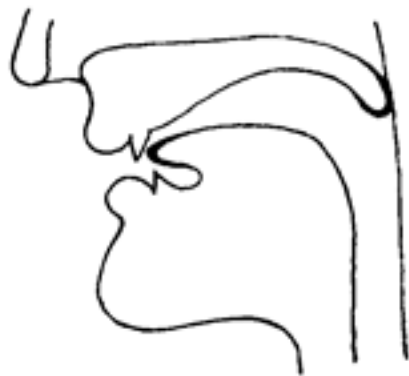


Fig. 13 |θ| and |ð|



Fig. 14 |s| and |z|



Fig. 15 |ʃ| and |ʒ|

2. Stop Consonants

- *The breath is completely stopped at some point in the mouth and then released with a slight explosion.*
- **by the lips or tongue-tip or tongue-back.**
- There are four pairs of phonemes containing stops **/p, b/**, **/t, d/**, **/k, g/** and **/tʃ, dʒ/**.

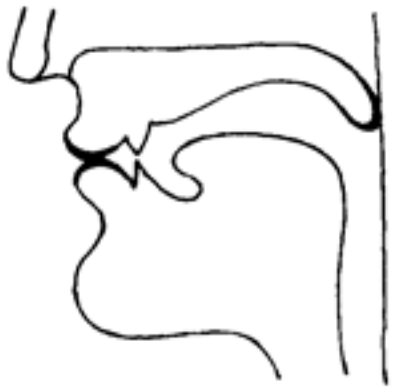


Fig. 16 /p/ and /b/

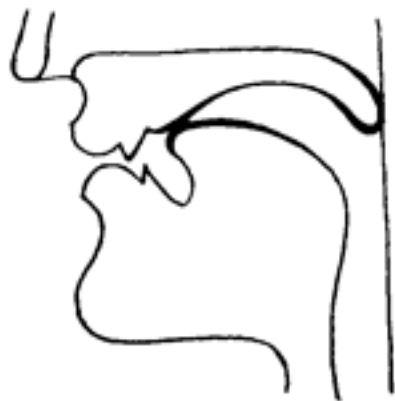


Fig. 17 /t/ and /d/

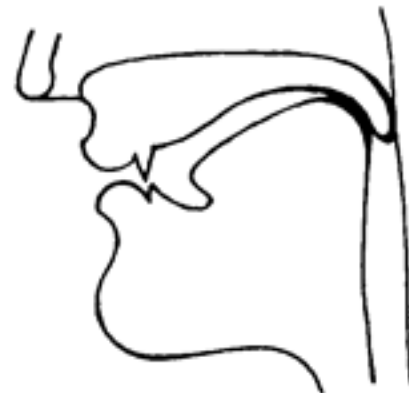


Fig. 18 /k/ and /g/



Fig. 19 /tʃ/ and /dʒ/

ACTIVITY - TRANSCRIBE THE FOLLOWING:

- 1. Fast**
- 2. Thin**
- 3. Then**
- 4. Said**
- 5. Zoo**
- 6. Finish**
- 7. Garage**
- 8. Heart**
- 9. Behind**
- 10. Two**
- 11. Pick**
- 12. Chin**
- 13. Joke**

THANKS FOR LISTENING