

Classify English Consonants According to their Places of Articulation.

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Classify English phonemes/consonants according to their places of articulation.

English consonants can be classified according to their places of articulation. This classification helps to understand where the sounds are produced in the mouth. There are several key places of articulation, each corresponding to specific consonant sounds in English. The main places of articulation include bilabial, labio-dental, dental, alveolar, post-alveolar, palatal, velar, and glottal.

Bilabial Consonants: Bilabial consonants are produced by bringing both lips together to block or restrict airflow. There are three primary bilabial sounds in English:

- /p/ as in "purse" and "rap"
- /b/ as in "back" and "cab"
- /m/ as in "mad" and "clam"

These sounds are most common in English and easy to identify. Try saying "purse" or "mad", and notice how your lips come together.

Labio-Dental Consonants: Labio-dental consonants involve the lower lip and the upper teeth. The airflow is blocked or restricted by curling the lower lip back to touch the upper row of teeth. There are two labio-dental sounds in English:

- /f/ as in "fro" and "calf"
- /v/ as in "vine" and "have"

When you say "fro" or "vine," you can feel the lower lip touching the upper teeth.

Dental Consonants: Dental consonants are produced by placing the tongue against the upper teeth. These sounds are less familiar than others but are still important in English pronunciation. The two primary dental sounds are:

- /θ/ as in "thick" and "bath"

- /ð/ as in "the" and "rather"

Pronouncing "thick" or "the" requires placing the tongue against the upper teeth, a distinct feeling that differentiates these sounds from others.

Alveolar Consonants: The alveolar ridge is the part of the mouth where the teeth meet the gums. Alveolar consonants are produced by raising the tongue to this ridge to block or restrict airflow. English has several alveolar consonants:

- /n/ as in "no" and "man"

- /t/ as in "tab" and "rat"

- /d/ as in "dip" and "bad"

- /s/ as in "suit" and "bus"

- /z/ as in "zit" and "jazz"

- /l/ as in "luck" and "fully"

These sounds are highly prevalent in English. Saying "no" or "tab" involves touching the tongue to the alveolar ridge, which becomes second nature with practice.

Post-Alveolar Consonants: Post-alveolar consonants are produced when the tongue is retracted just a bit from the alveolar ridge. This slight retraction creates a different set of sounds. The post-alveolar sounds in English include:

- /ʃ/ as in "shot" and "brash"

- /ʒ/ as in "vision" and "measure"

- /tʃ/ as in "chick" and "match"

- /dʒ/ as in "jam" and "badge"

These sounds require the tongue to be slightly further back than alveolar sounds. Saying "shot" or "jam" will help you feel this placement.

Palatal Consonants: The hard palate is the roof of the mouth. Palatal consonants are made by raising the tongue to this hard palate. English has one palatal consonant:

- /j/ as in "yes" and "bayou"

Pronouncing "yes" involves raising the tongue to the hard palate, a specific motion distinct from other sounds.

Velar Consonants: Velar consonants are produced at the velum or soft palate, located behind the hard palate. The back of the tongue is raised to the velum to create these sounds. English velar consonants include:

- /ŋ/ as in "going" and "uncle"
- /k/ as in "kite" and "back"
- /g/ as in "good" and "bug"
- /w/ as in "wet" and "howard"

Saying "kite" or "going" involves the back of the tongue touching the soft palate.

Glottal Consonants: The vocal folds form the glottis and produce glottal consonants. These aren't traditional consonants but are essential in English:

- /h/ as in "hi" and "Bahamas"
- /ʔ/ as in the silent pause in "uh-oh"

These sounds involve the glottis acting as a constriction point. Saying "hi" or noticing the silent break in "uh-oh" demonstrates glottal sounds.

In short, understanding the places of articulation helps in mastering English pronunciation. Each place—from bilabial to glottal—produces distinct sounds, making English rich and varied in its phonetic structure. Practice and awareness of these articulatory processes can significantly enhance speech clarity and accuracy.