

كلية التربية

المادة: صوتيات

الفرقة: الأولى لغة إنجليزية

القسم: تربية خاصة

أستاذ المقرر: د/ نسرین عبد الباسط العناني

المحاضرة الثالثة

The Consonants of English

Consonants:

- ❑ Phonetically, **consonants** are sounds made by a closure or narrowing in the vocal tract so that the airflow is either completely blocked, or so restricted that audible friction is produced.
- ❑ **Consonants** are described in terms of place and manner of articulation.

- ❑ Their description involves the mode of vibration of the vocal folds, the duration of the sound, the airstream mechanism, and the direction of airflow [egressive or ingressive].
- ❑ Phonologically, **consonants** are those units which function at the margins of syllables, either singly or in clusters.
- ❑ **Consonants** such as /l/, /r/, /w/ and /j/ are consonants phonologically, but, phonetically, they lack the friction required.

- They are vowel-like in character. Such sounds as a result are often called “semivowels” or “semi-consonants”.

The Consonants of English:

Reasons for beginning with consonants:

- First, consonants contribute more to making English understood than vowels do.
- Second, consonants are generally made by a definite interference of the vocal organs with air stream, and so are easier to describe and understand.

□ Active articulators are:

upper lip – lower lip – tongue blade –
tongue front – tongue back – tongue root
– vocal folds

□ Criteria for describing consonant sounds:

- voicing [voiced and voiceless sounds]
- nasal vs. oral sounds
- place of articulation
- manner of articulation

1 - Voicing [voiced and voiceless sounds]:

- The following sounds /p/, /t/, /k/, and /s/ in the English words pit, tip, kit, sip are voiceless sounds.
- The following sounds /b/, /d/, /g/, and /z/ in the words bad, dog, gold, zebra are voiced sounds.
- The voiced / voiceless distinction is important in English. It is this phonetic feature that distinguishes between word pairs like pig/ big, fine/vine, tin/ din, seal/ zeal. The first word of each pair starts with

a voiceless sound and the second word with a voiced sound.

2 - Nasal vs. oral sounds:

- The /p/, /b/ and /m/ are produced by closing the lips. /P/ is **voiceless** but /b/ is **voiced** and both are **oral** sounds. /m/ is a **voiced** sound and a **nasal** sound. When you produce /m/, air escapes not only through the mouth but also through the nose.
- Sounds produced when air escapes only through the mouth are called **oral sounds**.

❑ When velum is lowered, air escapes through the nose as well as the mouth. Sounds produced this way are called **nasal** sounds /m/, /n/, and /ŋ/ are nasal consonants of English.

3 – Place of articulation:

/m/, /b/, /d/, and /g/ are all voiced oral sounds.

❑ **Labials:**

/p/, /b/, and /m/ are bilabials; they are produced by bringing both lips together.

❑ Labiodental:

/f/ and /v/ are labiodental sounds. We use our lips to form them by touching the bottom lip to the upper teeth.

❑ Interdentals:

/θ/ and /ð/ are interdental sounds. They are produced when you insert the tip of the tongue between the upper and lower teeth.

❑ Alveolar:

/d/, /n/, /t/, /s/, and /z/ are produced by raising the tongue tip to the alveolar ridge and are called alveolar sounds.

❑ Postalveolar:

The sounds / tʃ / , / ʒ /, / dʒ /, and / ʃ / are postalveolar. They are produced with the blade of the tongue, the adjoining parts of the alveolar ridge, and the hard palate.

❑ Palatal:

/j/ in yes is a palatal sound. It is produced by the front of the tongue moving up towards the hard palate.

□ Velar:

/k/ and /g/ are velar sounds that are produced by raising the back of the tongue to the soft palate or velum.

□ Glottal:

/h/ is the famous glottal sound in English. Glottal sounds involve the vocal folds not the tongue.

Assignment:

1. What are the criteria for describing consonant sounds?
2. What is the difference between nasal and oral sounds?

With My Best Wishes