

Open Learning

Translation Department

Second Year

Second Term

Phonetics

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GOOD MORNING!

First of all, my name is Deima Balouq. I am going to teach you phonetics & phonology this term.

Welcome to 'phonetic transcription'. Do you think it is going to be easy?

Student: Maybe.

Instructor: Ok. Is it English?

Student: It is how we pronounce in English.

Instructor: Exactly! So, it is about how to pronounce English.

So, first of all, we need to warm-up by doing some articulations in our lips, for example. We need to train some of our muscles to know how to pronounce correctly.

Now, what do we mean by phonology?

Student: The science of sounds.

Instructor: Ok. So, it is the study of patterns of sounds.

Before we discuss phonology & phonetics, we will go into a little journey inside our mouths to see how we pronounce words and what articulators involved while pronouncing sounds. We are going to see who are 'the workers' (articulators) in our mouths who help us to produce sounds effortlessly. We produce sounds effortlessly, but we don't know the hidden 'soldiers' there.

Are you ready to undertake this journey?

Students: Yes!

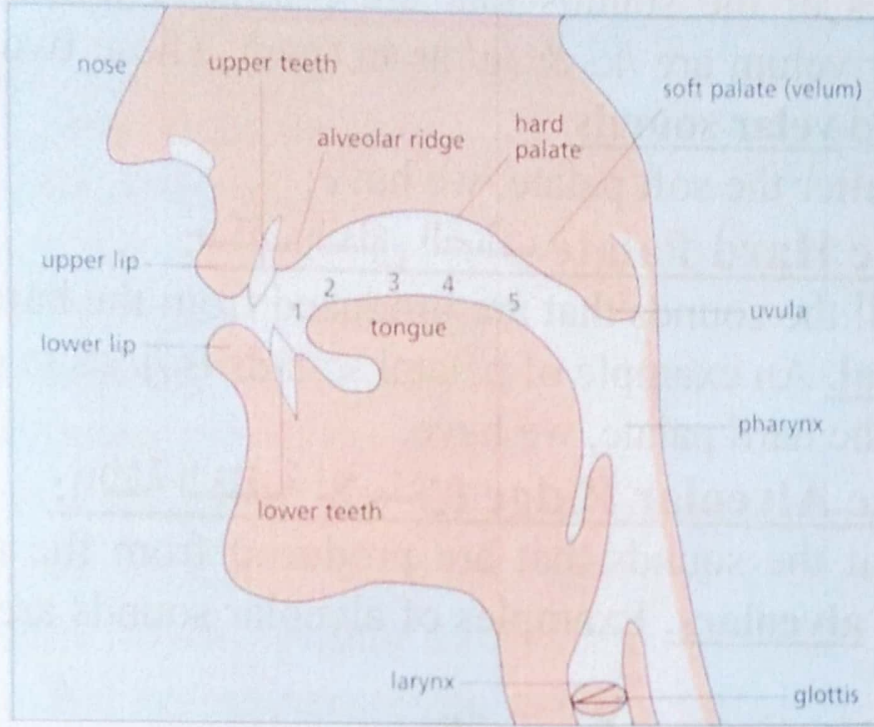
Instructor: Great!

★
★ READY? ★
★ GO! ★
★

Actually, we call these 'workers' as 'articulators' because they articulate sounds.

✦ Organs of Speech (Articulators):

✦ أعضاء النطق:



As you can see, this is your mouth.

The journey starts from here (the larynx الحنجرة). We call this place as the larynx.

1) The Larynx الحنجرة:

This is the place where air moves or flows from your lungs to your mouth (or nose). So, it is like a passage where air flows.

الحنجرة هي المنطقة الوسطى التي يمر بها الهواء منتقلاً من الرئتين إلى الفم أو الأنف - وكأنها بوابة لمرور الهواء.

After the larynx, we have the pharynx.

2) The Pharynx البلعوم:

After the pharynx, we have two ways: either the air goes to your nose, or the air goes to your mouth.

يوجد طريقين للهواء بعد البلعوم، إما أن يمر من خلال الأنف أو الفم.

Now, we move to the mouth. In the mouth, first we have:

3) The Soft Palate (Velum) سقف الحلق اللين:

This is the last thing that you have when you open your mouth. This is the soft part in your palate (سقف الحلق). Examples of the sounds that are produced from the soft palate or velum are /k/ & /g/ as in (gas). These two sounds are called velar sounds.

Now, after the soft palate, we have:

4) The Hard Palate سقف الحلق الصلب:

We call the sounds that are produced from the hard palate as palatal. An example of palatal sounds is /j/ as in (yes).

After the hard palate, we have:

5) The Alveolar Ridge (اللثة الخلفية للأسنان):

We call the sounds that are produced from the alveolar ridge as alveolars. Examples of alveolar sounds are /t/, /d/, /n/, etc.

After the alveolar ridge, we have:

6) The Teeth: Of course, we have:

a. Upper Teeth.

b. Lower Teeth.

We call the sounds that are produced with the help of the teeth as dental. Dental sounds are /θ/ (as in think) & /ð/ (as in that).

After the teeth, we have

7) The Lips: Of course, we have

a. The upper lip.

b. The lower lip.

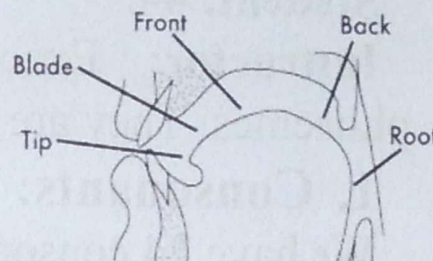
Most of the times, we use both the upper lip and the lower lip to produce certain sounds (/m/, /p/ & /b/). We call these sounds as bilabial sounds.

However, sometimes we use our lower lip and upper teeth in order to produce certain sounds (/f/ & /v/). When we use the lower and the upper teeth, we call the sounds produced as **labiodental sounds**.

Now, the last (and the most important) articulator is:

8) **The Tongue:** We have different parts of the tongue:

- a. The tip of the tongue.
- b. The blade of the tongue.
- c. The front part of the tongue.
- d. The back part of the tongue.
- e. The center part of the tongue.



We need to know the parts of the tongue because sometimes we raise the back, front, or center part of the tongue to the palate in order to produce certain sounds. We sometimes even use the tip of the tongue to produce certain sounds.

As I said previously, all these muscles that we use in order to produce sounds are called **articulators**. So, articulators are the muscles that we use in order to speak. Do you feel them while speaking?

Students: No/Yes.

Instructor: Ok. Actually, we can feel them, but when we speak fluently, we don't think about these muscles that are working in our mouths. Later, I may show you a video about how X-ray can show you how articulators are working in order to produce sounds.

Actually, in this course, we are going to deal with phonemes rather than the alphabet. In English, the way you spell letters is different from the way you pronounce sounds. Spelling is different from pronunciation.

How many phonemes (sounds) do we have in English?

Student: 44.

Instructor: Exactly! So, we have 44 sounds or phonemes. They are divided into consonants & vowels.

1. Consonants:

We have 24 consonants.

The good news is that 16 of them are the same in the alphabet (/b/, /p/, /t/, /d/, /s/, /z/, /k/, /h/, /f/, /v/, /m/, /r/, /l/, /w/, /n/, & /h/).

We have 8 consonants which are somehow scary ☹️, but don't get panicked because I will help you to understand them. They are:

- /ʃ/ as in (sheepp, show, etc.).
- /ʒ/ as in (pleasure, treasure, usually, etc.).
- /tʃ/ as in (chair, teacher, church, etc.).
- /dʒ/ as in (July, June, George, education, etc.).
- /θ/ as in (thought, think, etc.).
- /ð/ as in (this, that, those, the, etc.).
- /ŋ/: We usually use this sound when we have -ing (e.g. shocking, swiming, etc.).
- /j/ as in (yes, yet, young, playy, etc.).

Consonants	p <u>pot</u>	b <u>bat</u>	t <u>tip</u>	d <u>dog</u>	tʃ <u>chin</u>	dʒ <u>jog</u>	k <u>cat</u>	g <u>gap</u>
	f <u>fly</u>	v <u>video</u>	θ <u>think</u>	ð <u>this</u>	s <u>sit</u>	z <u>zoo</u>	ʃ <u>shot</u>	ʒ <u>vision</u>
	m <u>man</u>	n <u>next</u>	ŋ <u>sing</u>	h <u>hat</u>	l <u>let</u>	r <u>run</u>	w <u>wet</u>	j <u>yes</u>

Vowels:

We have 20 vowels. As for vowels, we have:

A. **Monophthongs:** Monophthong means one sound.

B. **Diphthongs:** Diphthong means two sounds.

We will deal with monophthongs first.

/i:/ Vs. /ɪ/ & /e/

/i:/ is a long vowel, while /ɪ/ and /e/ are short vowels.

An example of /i:/ is 'sheep'.

An example of /ɪ/ is 'ship'.

An example of /e/ is 'friend'.

NOTE:

We use a colon (:) next to certain vowels to indicate that they are long vowels (e.g. /i:/).

Long vowels are pronounced longer than short vowels (compare lead /li:d/ & lid /lɪd/)

Let's transcribe the words 'sheep' and 'ship':

- Sheep: /ʃi:p/
- Ship: /ʃɪp/
- Friend: /frend/

NOTE:

Phonetic Transcription:

If you open any dictionary, you will find the transcription next to each word. Transcription helps us pronouncing any word. For example, the transcription of the word 'phonetics' is /fə'net.ɪks/.

/u:/ Vs. /ʊ/

/u:/ is a long vowel, while /ʊ/ is a short vowel.

An example of /u:/ is 'you'.

An example of /ʊ/ is 'foot'.

➤ You: /ju:/

➤ Foot: /fʊt/

/ɔ:/ Vs. /ɒ/

/ɔ:/ is a long vowel, while /ɒ/ is a short vowel.

An example of /ɔ:/ is 'law'.

An example of /ɒ/ is 'hot'.

➤ Law: /lɔ:/

➤ Hot: /hɒt/

/ɑ:/ Vs. /ʌ/ & /æ/

/ɑ:/ is a long vowel, while /ʌ/ and /æ/ are short vowels.

We do this sound /ɑ:/ when we go to the doctor. When you go to the doctor, s/he tells you to open your mouth and say /ɑ:/.

An example of /ɑ:/ is 'car'.

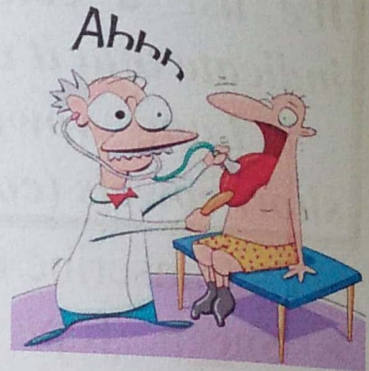
An example of /ʌ/ is 'cut'.

An example of /æ/ is 'cat'.

➤ Car: /kɑ:/

➤ Cut: /kʌt/

➤ Cat: /kæt/



/ɜ:/ Vs. /ə/

/ɜ:/ is a long vowel, while /ə/ is a short vowel.

Short schwa /ə/ is a common vowel in English. The schwa sound can be found in many words in English.

An example of /ɜ:/ is 'earth'.

An example of /ə/ is 'about'.

- **E**arth: /ɜ:θ/
- **A**bout: /ə'baʊt/

monophthongs			
i:	ɪ	ʊ	u:
sheep	ship	good	shoot
e	ə	ɜ:	ɔ:
bed	teacher	bird	door
æ	ʌ	ɑ:	ɒ
cat	up	far	on

These are the vowels in English. When we put them, we can have what we call **diphthongs**. We are not going to do diphthongs because you have to memorize consonants and vowels first. Then, we are going to see how we can put them together. Also, we will learn about the places in which we can produce these sounds.

Accent Vs. Dialect

In the book that we are going to follow, we are going to learn the British pronunciation. So, we will focus on the British pronunciation because you might say that the word (hot), for example, is pronounced as /hɑ:t/ in the American accent, whereas it is pronounced as /hɒt/ in the British accent. So, this has to do with **accents**.

Now, what is the difference between accents and dialects? What do we mean by 'accent', and what do we mean by 'dialect'?

Student: Accent is included in the dialect. Dialect is the difference in grammar and pronunciation, while accents focus only on the difference in the pronunciation.

Instructor: Exactly! Dialects differ in terms of pronunciation, grammar and word order, whereas an accent only has to do with pronunciation.

Dialect	Accent
<p><i>The variety of a language which is different from others not just in pronunciation but also in vocabulary, grammar and spelling.</i></p> <p><i>اللهجة هي تنوع في اللغة من حيث اللفظ والكلمات والقواعد.</i></p>	<p><i>Differences of accent are pronunciation differences only.</i></p> <p><i>الفوارق في اللفظ هي اختلافات في طريقة النطق فقط.</i></p>

Now, let me give you examples to illustrate the distinction between dialects and accents.

An example of the difference in accents is the pronunciation of the word (hot). In the British accent, 'hot' is pronounced as /hɒt/, whereas in the American accent it is pronounced as /hɑ:t/.

So, 'accent' is just about how we pronounce words. We even have different accents in Arabic. For example, Damascene people have a different accent than Homs people or Egyptian people, for example.

As for dialects, we say that they differ in terms of vocabulary, grammar and spelling.

Let's give an example about the difference in vocabulary. In Damascus, for example, they call the

spoon as 'ملعقة', while in the north part of Syria they call it 'خاشوقة'. So, it is totally different word.

Let's now give an example about the difference in grammar. For example, Damascene people don't put 'ن' at the end of certain words, whereas people in Deir Ezzor do so (e.g. يعملون).

Now, the accent that we are going to follow is called Received Pronunciation (RP) النطق البريطاني. It is also called the standard pronunciation or BBC pronunciation.

Now, let's have a quick practice. I am going to give you some words, and you have to write the transcription of the word.

How can I write the transcription of the word 'laugh'?

Student: /la:f/.

Instructor: Ok. How many phonemes or sounds do we have in this word?

Students: Three.

Instructor: Exactly! So, we have three phonemes.

How many phonemes do we have in the word 'half'?

Students: Three.

Instructor: Exactly! The /l/ is silent in this word /hɑ:f/.

How many phonemes do we have in the word 'wrist'?

Students: Four.

Instructor: Exactly! The /w/ is silent in this word /rist/.

How many phonemes do we have in the word 'ought'?

Students: Two.

Instructor: Exactly!

How many phonemes do we have in the word 'shrink'?

Students: Five.

Instructor: Exactly, /ʃrɪŋk/.

How many phonemes do we have in the word 'meeting'?

Students: Five.

Instructor: Exactly, /mi:tiŋ/.

Our course book for this semester is *The Sounds of English*. It is available in the library. I am going to provide you with an extra material for practicing the sounds.

Starting from next lecture, we are going to start at 8:30.

Do you have any questions?

Students: No.

Instructor: Ok. Actually, I advise you to look at the mirror and see how your articulators are moving when you pronounce sounds.

Next lecture, we are going to talk more about the articulators.

That's all for today.



See you next Friday!