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## **Unit 2 □ Phonetics and Phonology, English Consonants and Vowels**

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## **2.1. Introduction**

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Millions of foreigners want to learn English. For some it is only a matter of reading and writing, but there are others who want to be able to speak English well, with a pronunciation which can be easily understood both by his fellow beings and fairly educated foreigners.

Written English and spoken English are different things. Writing consists of marks which make no noise and are taken in by the eye; speaking is organized sound taken in by the ear. Fortunately there is a lot of English spoken about the world. On films, on the television, on the radio, on gramophone records. Most people have the opportunity of listening to English in some way. And this is what one must do. One must *listen* to it not for the meaning but for the sounds. One must try to understand how the English sounds differ from the nearest sounds in one's language. When this is understood, one should say the sounds *aloud*. It is no use practising silently. Gramophone records or recorded tapes of speech sounds are useful and are available. It is better to listen to the same passage six times than listening to six different passages. Careful listening is the most important thing; and careful watching of performance with listening will bring one nearer to the ideal of a perfect English pronunciation.

In India English is spoken variously. Our country has eighteen officially recognized languages and 1652 dialects according to the 1991 Census of India. It is impossible to demand a uniform standard of pronunciation for a foreign language in such a vast country, where even the mother tongue is spoken differently by different groups of people belonging to the same language community.

Prof. V. K. Gokak says that many speak English as if it were Hindi, Bengali, Marathi or Tamil. The majority of Indians, despite long years of studying English, remain unintelligible to each other.

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## **2.2. Standard Pronunciation**

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It is thought by many that there ought to be a standard. It would be useful to every Indian and it would help others who may not be Indians. Attempts have been made to recommend standards, but it cannot be said that any standard actually exists. There are numerous varieties of the spoken form of the English language and regional variation seems to be reflected in phonology. Regional separation of English-speaking communities both within the United Kingdom and throughout the world has obviously resulted in the varieties of spoken English as we find today. And there are distinct characteristics of the English language as it is spoken in Australia, New Zealand, Africa and North America.

Also relevant in this connection is the question of education and social standing. Within each dialect areas, there is considerable variation in speech according to education and social standing. Uneducated speech is generally the regional dialect, whereas the educated speech is one which cuts across dialectal boundaries. Educated speech naturally tends to be given more prestige and more importance. The government agencies, the learned professions, the press, the law court and the media want to address themselves to a public beyond their dialectal community; so they prefer the educated speech.

For this reason BBC English came to be accepted as the vehicle of verbal communication for educated Englishment in general. In the U.S.A. it was the 'network English, a designation for general educated idiom in America, which was generally used in speech by the American elites. Educated English is thus accorded implicit social and political sanction, it comes to be referred to as standard English. It is standard English by common acceptance and a kind of acceptance and a kind of consensus, arrived at voluntarily and only implicitly by the people at large.

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## **2.3. Received Pronunciation (RP)**

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In British English one type of pronunciation comes close to enjoying the status of 'standard'. And that is called 'Received Pronunciation' or R. P. This pronunciation, according to Daniel Jones, is usually heard in the everyday speech in the families of Southern English people who have been educated in public schools.

Other educated people of Southern England, specially most of the Londoners who had a university education, use RP in their speech. It is observed consciously or unconsciously by many others in most parts of the English-speaking world.

Language observers have reported that people who frequently visit London or come in touch with public school products hear RP and also try to pick up this mode of speech. The BBC radio broadcasting also helped its wide propagation. As a result of this factor this form of speech

is more widely and more easily understood by Englishmen than any other form. As it is free from regional dialectal influences and as it is used by the best speakers of the language, others found it convenient and even respectable in learning and using it in their own speech.

However, RP is to some extent associated with the limited coteries of the elite classes of Great Britain. So RP cannot be recommended as the standard which everyone should adopt within Great Britain or outside, however advantageous in many respects it may be. There are objections, for people are extremely touchy about their language, specially their speech.

Today RP is easily understood in South Africa, Australia and New Zealand and by the English-speaking Canadians. In the United States, where so many varieties of English pronunciation are to be heard, RP is fairly universally understood without difficulty. However, the fact that it is understood throughout the English-speaking world does not mean that it is used by a majority of the English-speaking people. Its actual uses are small in number even though its admirers and potential users are numerous. Those countries which have English as a foreign or second language on their curriculums generally prefer RP as a model to other varieties of English pronunciation.

While we recognize the necessity for the introduction of a spoken English course in the syllabus, the question arises what standard of spoken English shall we select and follow ? The obvious answer would appear to be received standard i.e. the R.P. whose great resources and teaching materials are readily available.

But many experts say that the teaching of the RP in our country is not possible. The grassroots realities do not permit such a luxury ; nor is it desirable. One suggestion is that we should teach what has been loosely called the Educated Indian Pronunciation, which is a mixture of British and Indian English pronunciations. The best speakers of English in each of our states use it. Peter Strevens, E. V. Gatenby and V. K. Gokak seem to support this view. But Gokak says that Educated Indian Pronunciation should be free from provincialisms or the gravitational pull of the mother tongue. Besides, it should have a larger number of vowels, diphthongs and consonants and also a stress system and a system of intonation. And the most important prerequisite of the Educated Indian Pronunciation is that it should be “completely intelligible to speakers of other educated dialects of English as well as to speakers of local dialects of English in India”.

The views of Strevens, Gatenby and Gokak are practical and unambitious. But however pragmatic their suggestions might seem to be, there is a risk in adopting this particular standard of English. The purity and authenticity of the English speech is likely to be affected. If the standard is diluted, which is most likely to happen, then it won't be intelligible to the native speakers of English, not will they be intelligible to us.

Learning certain important and rather difficult features of the RP is likely to be unattainable. But if our students of English can undergo a training even for a limited result, then is it not advisable for them to aim at learning a better and more useful variety of English pronunciation ? As a model of good spoken English RP has not lost its utility despite criticism by many that RP is a class dialect or that RP is artificial or that RP is spoken by a small minority of Englishmen. Moreover, we will gain little if we refuse to submit ourselves to the discipline needed to learn RP or a close approximation to this variety of English pronunciation.

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## 2.4. Letters and Sounds

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Letters are written ; sounds are spoken. In ordinary English spelling it is not always easy to know what sounds the letters stand for ; for example the vowel sounds in the words *city, busy, women, pretty, village* all sound alike. In *man, many, gate, father, fall* the vowel *a* pronounced in five different ways. The common notion that these are five English vowels (*a, e, i, o, u*) is wrong. We shall see that there are at least twenty vowels to consider.

Read the following list and notice carefully the vowels given in italics.

<i>feel</i>	<i>foal</i>	<i>cat</i>	<i>pier</i>
<i>fill</i>	<i>file</i>	<i>cot</i>	<i>pear</i>
<i>fell</i>	<i>foul</i>	<i>cut</i>	<i>poor</i>
<i>fall</i>	<i>foil</i>	<i>curt</i>	<i>butter</i>
<i>fiil</i>		<i>cart</i>	
<i>fool</i>			
<i>faıl</i>			

Most of these sounds represented again by letters in italics occur surrounded by consonants, although most of them can also occur initially and finally. Now consider carefully the following list. All the initial sounds except three (*long, measure, maze*) are different. The letters which stand for those sounds are printed in italics :

<i>pier</i>	<i>fear</i>	<i>rear</i>	<i>cheer</i>	<i>calm</i>
<i>beer</i>	<i>veer</i>	<i>mere</i>	<i>jeer</i>	<i>long</i>
<i>tier</i>	<i>sheer</i>	<i>near</i>	<i>sere</i>	<i>measure</i>
<i>deer</i>	<i>hear</i>	<i>weird</i>	<i>this</i>	<i>maze</i>
<i>gear</i>	<i>leer</i>	<i>year</i>	<i>theatre</i>	

In the list given above all the sounds indicated by italics are different. If you count the sounds which are distinctive in initial, medial and final position, you will find that there are twenty-four altogether. These are called *consonants*.

A *consonant* is a sound accompanied or unaccompanied by voice, in which there is either a complete or partial obstruction which prevents the air from issuing freely from the mouth.

A *vowel* is a voiced sound in the pronunciation of which the air passes through the mouth in a continuous stream, there being no obstruction and no narrowing such as would produce audible friction.

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## 2.5. The Phonetic Script

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In teaching English pronunciation we often find that there is very little help that we can get from the spelling of the words. The following words

*through,*      *cough,*      *rough*  
*though,*      *bough*

reveal five different pronunciations for the group of letters – *ough*. Again the following words

*need*      *read*      *believe*      *key*  
*machine*      *receive*      *people*      *quay*

have eight different spelling for the same vowel sound.

Thus it can be said that there is no one-to-one correspondence between the sounds as they are uttered and the letter or symbol which appears in the written word. Therefore, it is necessary to have some consistent representation of the language so that we can have a cleaner understanding of the distinctive sounds which exist in the language. Discrepancies between pronunciation and ordinary spelling confuse the learner and the result is mispronunciation. Such mispronunciations may, however, be avoided by the use of Phonetic Transcription.

The phonetic alphabet given below is that of the *International Phonetic Association* (IPA)

### CONSONANTS

<i>Symbol</i>	<i>KeyWord</i>	<i>Symbol</i>	<i>Key Word</i>
p	<i>pear</i>		<i>shall</i>
b	<i>bear</i>	h	<i>hear</i>
t	<i>tree</i>	l	<i>leer</i>
d	<i>deer</i>	r	<i>rear</i>
g	<i>gear</i>	m	<i>mere</i>
f	<i>feel</i>	n	<i>near</i>
v	<i>very</i>	w	<i>wall</i>
j	<i>year</i>	s	<i>base</i>
z	<i>maze</i>	ð	<i>bathe</i>
ʒ	<i>rouge</i>	k	<i>make</i>
θ	<i>bath</i>		<i>long</i>
tʃ	<i>cheer</i>	d <sub>3</sub>	<i>jeer</i>

## VOWELS

* <i>Symbol</i>		<i>Symbol</i>		<i>Symbol</i>	
æ	cat	ʌ	run	əʊ	no
a:	arm	u	put	ɛə	pear
e	bed	u:	fool	iə	hear
ə:	her	ə	ago	ɔi	boy
i	sit	ai	my	uə	poor
i:	see	au	how	aiə	fire
ɔ	hot	ei	day		
ɔ:	saw				

[\* You may observe slight variations in the symbols in many texts and dictionaries, but they would present no difficulty. You will be able to read the symbols with ease, once you are familiar with these.]

The use of the colon (:) with vowels / i: ɔ: a: u: / is to show that they are in general *longer* than / i ɔ ə u /. But remember they are also different in their actual sounds.

Consider the following words in phonetic script :

city /siti/

many /meni/

busy /bizi/

banana /bəna:nə/

women /wimin/

bother /beiðə/

man /mæn/

house /haus/

thought /θɔ:t/

cough /kɔf/

rough /rʌf/

rain, rein, reign /rein/

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## 2.6. Sounds and Sound Groups : Phonemes

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A sound is formed by definite movements of the organs of speech ; if those movements are exactly repeated the result will always be the same sound. However, there are possibilities of difference in producing the same sound. For instance, the initial consonant sounds of *tea* and *two* are different from each other.

Sometimes each of the letters used to show pronunciation may stand for more than one sound ; but each of the sounds represented by one letter has a great deal of similarity to the other sounds represented by the same letter ; they have more similarities than differences. These groups of sounds, each represented by one letter of the phonetic alphabet are called *phonemes*. Phonemes, therefore, are the minimum significant sound units. Change of phonemes can bring about a change of meaning. Phonemes can be identified by finding pairs of words (e.g. *pin* and *bin*) with different meanings.

The method of representing each phoneme by one symbol is called *phonemic transcription*. Phonemic transcription is generally represented as enclosed in diagonal lines / ...../. The phonemes of English are the basic contrasts which make it possible to keep each word separate from every other e.g. / fi:l / from / fil / ; / sin / from / si /.

The distinction between two phonemes is significant i.e. capable of distinguishing one word from another. Different sounds which belong to the phoneme do not distinguish one word of a language from another.

A transcription of the type 'one letter one phoneme' is called a *Broad Transcription*. A transcription which provides special signs for subsidiary members of phonemes is called a *Narrow Transcription*.

It is necessary at first to be sure that the basic sounds of the language are being properly pronounced. The best way of doing that is to practise single words or very short phrases. But we do not talk in single words, and not in single sounds. The sounds and words are connected together with others to make of longer utterances, and these longer utterances have special difficulties of their own.

First, they must be pronounced smoothly, without hesitations and without stumbling over the combinations of sounds. It may be quite easy to pronounce separately the words *both*, *them*, *early*, *left*, *of*, but it is much more difficult pronounce *both of them left early* without hesitating and without making mistakes.

Secondly, in a longer English sentence some of the words are treated as being more important than others; it is necessary which these words are and how they are treated in speech. Words which are not regarded as being particularly important often have a different pronunciation. For example the word *can* which is pronounced / kæn / if it is said by itself, is often pronounced / kən / in phrases like *you can have it* / ju: kən hæv it /.

Thirdly, the rhythm of English must be mastered, that is, the different lengths which the syllables of English are given and the reasons why these different lengths occur.

Fourthly, the tune of the voice, the melody of speech is different in different languages. It is necessary to learn something of the English way of using tune. For example, when we say *thank you* the voice may go from a higher note to a lower one ; it means sincere gratitude. When it goes



from lower note to a higher one it means that the matter is purely routine. To confuse the two would clearly be dangerous.

All these matters will be dealt with later ; but the most important thing is to be sure that the basic sounds are right, and this requires knowledge of the working of the speech organs ; this is the subject of the next section.

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## The Organs of Speech

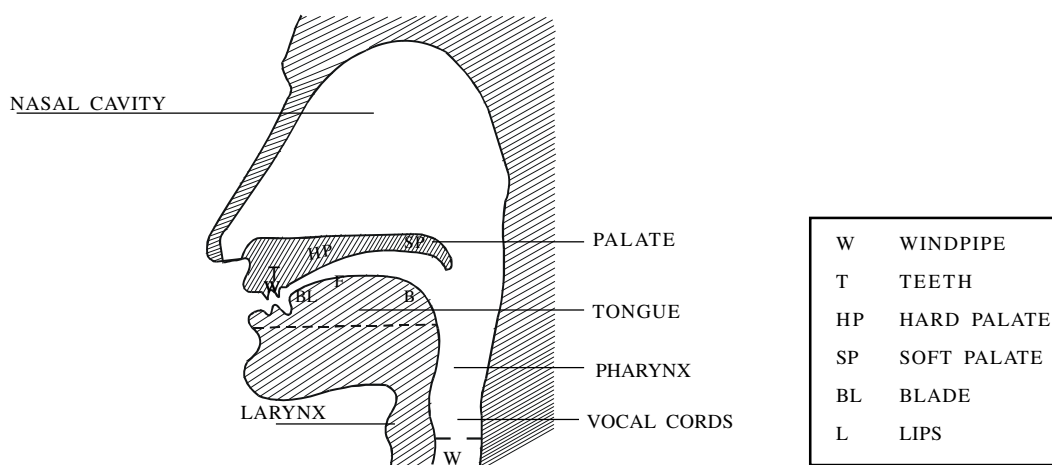
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When we speak a stream of air is breathed out from the lungs and this stream of air, when passing through the narrow spaces in the human throat and mouth, makes a *sound*. By modifying the shape of the passage through which the air passes when we speak, we can make a number of different sounds. There are a number of points at which the course of the air stream may be varied. The organs situated at these points constitute the *speech organs*.

### 2.7.1. The Larynx

The first point where it is possible to modify the air stream is at the top of the windpipe, which ends in a bony structure called the *larynx*.

The front part of the larynx protrudes and is popularly known as the ‘Adam’s apple’. Inside the larynx are the *vocal cords* which are like small lips projecting from the sides of the larynx and connected with muscles so that they can be brought together and placed edge to edge in the



middle of the air passage, or be drawn apart leaving a wide opening between them. This opening is called the *glottis*.

When the vocal cords are drawn apart, the air from the lungs can pass freely through the open glottis. This is the position we use when we breathe normally without speaking. The passing

of the air through the open glottis produces a faint sound, which becomes audible to other people if we breathe through the mouth instead of through the nose. We utilize the sound for the purpose of speaking ; it is the sound / h/.

The wide open position of the glottis is used for speech sounds (which are at the same time further modified in the mouth) called *voiceless* consonants. These sounds are called voiceless because they lack the special element known as voice.

*Voice* is the kind of sound produced when the vocal cords are brought together edge to edge while air is being pressed up from the lungs. The pressure of air causes the cords to vibrate. The closed position of the glottis is used for speech sounds (which are at the same time modified in the mouth) called *voiced consonants*.

All vowels are examples of voiced sounds.

### **2.7.2. Pharynx**

Immediately above the larynx is a space behind the tongue and reaching up towards the nasal cavity : this space is called the *pharynx*. When the air stream has passed through the glottis, it enters the cavity formed between the root of the tongue and the back wall of the throat. This is the pharyngeal cavity. At the base of the tongue and projecting into the pharynx is the *Epiglottis*, a small flap which serves when swallowing to prevent food from falling into the larynx.

### **2.7.3. Nasal Cavity**

At the top of the throat (or pharyngeal cavity) there is a forking of the air passage. The breath may pass out through the mouth, or through the nose by way of the nasal cavity. If we make the sound *ng* in *song* the air stream passes through the nasal cavity.

### **2.7.4. The Palate**

The palate forms the roof of the mouth and separates the mouth cavity from the nose or nasal cavity. Make the tip of your tongue touch as much of your own palate as you can : most of it is hard and fixed in position ; but when your tongue-tip is as far back as it will go, away from your teeth, you will notice that the palate becomes soft.

You can easily see the soft part of the palate if you use a mirror : turn your back to the light, open your mouth wide and say the vowel /a:/ and move the mirror so that the light shines into your mouth. You will be able to see the soft palate curving down towards the tongue and becoming narrower as it does so until it ends in a point called the uvula. The soft palate can move : it can be raised so that it makes a firm contact with the back wall of the pharynx, and this stops the breath from going up into the nasal cavity and forces it to go into the mouth only. And when you relax after this the soft palate will come down again into its lowered position.

In this lowered position, the soft palate allows the breath to pass behind itself and up to the nasal cavity and out through the nose. This is the normal position of the soft palate when we are not speaking but breathing quietly through the nose, with our mouth closed.

The hard, fixed part of the palate is divided into two sections, the *alveolar ridge* and the *hard palate*. The alveolar ridge is that part of the gums immediately behind the upper front teeth, and the hard palate is the highest part of the palate, between the alveolar ridge and the beginning of the soft palate. The alveolar ridge is specially important in English because many of the consonant sounds like / t d n l r s z ʒ ʒ t d ʒ / are made with the tongue touching or close to the alveolar ridge.

#### **2.7.5. The Teeth**

The lower front teeth are important while making the S and Z sounds. The two upper front teeth are more important ; put the tip of your tongue very close to the edge of these teeth and blow ; this will produce a sound like the English θ in *thin* ; if you turn on the voice during this θ sound you will get a sound like the English ð in *this*.

#### **2.7.6. The Tongue**

The tongue is the most important of the organs of speech. In phonetics it is convenient to divide the surface of the tongue into two parts, the *front* and the *back*, which lie opposite the hard and soft palates respectively when the tongue is in the position of rest. The front of the tongue also includes the *blade* which normally lies opposite the teeth ridge. By giving the tongue different shapes, by bunching it up or flattening it out, and by raising or lowering different parts of it, we can modify the space through which the air has to pass and thereby produce many different sounds.

#### **2.7.7. The Lips**

It is obvious that the lips can take up various different positions. They can be brought firmly together as in *p* or *b* or *m* so that they completely block the mouth ; the lower lip can be drawn inward and slightly upwards to touch the upper front teeth as in the sounds *f* and *v*. In normal speech the lips are never very far apart, they do not take up very sounded shapes, they are rarely spread very much and almost never pushed forward or protruded.

Any effective speech is an exceedingly complex process. The production and transmission of the sound involves a complicated chain of event. The psychological stimulus conveyed to the organs of speech by the nervous system activates the lungs, the larynx and the cavities above in such a way that they perform a series of movements leading to the production of a particular pattern of sound.

Phonetics is the study and science of sounds, their production by the various organs of speech. *Articulatory Phonetics* is its branch concerned with the study of speech sounds in terms of the mechanisms of their production by the human vocal apparatus.

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## 2.8. The Consonants of English

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Let us now look at how the movements of the organs of speech combine together forming the consonants in English. The difference between an English sound and one in your language may seem quite small when it is described, but this small difference in the movement of the speech organs may make all the difference between an English sound and one which is not. When you study the movements of the speech organs for a certain English sound, try to compare them with the movements for a similar sound in your language.

Consonants are perhaps more important than vowels because even if we pronounce the consonants only, most English words would be easy to understand. Consonants form the bones, the skeleton of English words and give them their basic shape. Moreover, differences of accent are mainly the result of differences in the sound of the vowels ; if the consonants are imperfect there will be a great risk of misunderstanding.

The twenty-four consonants of English can be arranged in a number of groups, each group having in common certain characteristics of articulation. Unlike vowels and diphthongs, the consonants produce audible friction by the obstruction of breath stream at one or more points along their passage through the articulatory organs.

Consonants are classified according to the organs articulating them, that is according to the *place* or point at which they are made, and also according to the *manner* of their articulation, that is, according to the way in which they are made.

Daniel Jones says : “Description of the manner of forming the consonants takes into account the following particulars :

- (i) the place (or places) of articulation,
- (ii) the state of air-passage at the place (or places) of articulation,
- (iii) the position of the soft palate, and
- (iv) the state of the larynx.”

When English consonants are classified according to the organs articulating them, that is, according to the *place* where they are made, they may be divided into the following main clauses :

- (a) bi-labial : p, b, m w
- (b) labio-dental : f, v
- (c) dental : t, d, n, s, z, l
- (d) post-alveolar : r

- (e) Palato-alveolar : t, d<sub>3</sub>, ʒ
- (f) palatal : j
- (g) velar : k, ɣ,
- (h) glottal : h

When the consonants are classified according to the *manner* in which the organs articulate them, we get the following main classes :

- (i) plosive : p, b, t, d, k, ɣ
- (ii) affricate : tʃ, dʒ
- (iii) nasal : m, n,
- (iv) lateral : l
- (v) fricative : f, v, θ, ð, s, z, ʃ, ʒ, h
- (vi) semi-vowel/  
gliding consonants : w, j, r

The following table shows the place and manner of articulation of the English consonants. The top boxes show the organs by which they are articulated; those down the side show the manner in which they are articulated.

	Bilabial	Labio Dental	Dental	Alveolar	Post- alveolar	Palato- alveolar	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
Plosive	p b			t d				k ɣ	ʔ
Fricative		f v	θ ð	s z		ʒ			h
Affricate						t d <sub>3</sub>			
Nasal	m			n				ŋ	
Lateral				l					
Semi- vowel	w				r		j		

English Consonants

You will see that in the articulation of the plosive, affricate and fricative consonants there is a total closure or stricture causing friction. In the articulation of the nasal, lateral and semi-vowel (frictionless continuant) consonants, on the other hand, there is only a partial closure or an impeded oral or nasal escape of air.

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## 2.91 Description of English Consonants

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### 2.9.1. Plosive or Stop Consonants

English has seven plosive consonant phonemes : p, b, t, d, k, ɡ, ʔ

In these consonants the breath is completely stopped at some point in the mouth, by the lips or tongue-tip or tongue-back, and then released with a slight explosion. Thus there are three stages in the production of these consonants : closure, compression and release.

#### **p**

p is a strong stop consonant. In pronouncing p the air passage is completely blocked by closing the lips and raising the soft palate. The air is compressed by pressure from the lungs, and when the lips are opened the air suddenly escapes from the mouth and in doing so makes an explosive sound. The vocal cords are not made to vibrate. Thus it can be defined as a *voiceless bilabial plosive consonant*.

When p commences a strongly stressed syllable, it is somewhat *aspirated*. Aspiration is the voiceless interval consisting of a strongly expelled breath between the release of the plosive and the onset of the following vowel. There is a little puff of breath i.e. a slight h-sound immediately following the plosion and preceding the vowel.

**Examples :** /pei / / praid /

When p occurs between vowels the aspiration may be less noticeable or even absent, but it will never do any harm to keep the aspiration in this position too.

**Examples :** /hæpi / /peipə / /əplai /

In final position p is aspirated and shortens the vowel before it. Try these : /rip / /roup / /tæp / /kæp /

Some of the commonest words containing /p/ are : *pigs, page, pair, paper, pardon, pass, pay, people, perhaps, piece, place, April, possible, complain, complete, happen, important, open, sleep, group, heap, hope, shape, up, wrap*. [Consult Daniel Jones's *Pronouncing Dictionary* and give the phonemic transcription of these words ]

#### **b**

The English consonant **b** is pronounced like b, except that the force of exhalation is weaker and the vocal cords are made to vibrate so that the voice is produced during the articulation of the phonemes. It is a voiced bilabial plosive consonant.

As in **p** the lips are closed firmly, and the soft palate is raised so that the breath cannot get

out of the nose or the mouth but is trapped for a short time. When the lips are opened suddenly the breath rushes out with a slight explosion or popping noise.

However, **b** is a weak plosive and it *never* has aspiration ; the sound must be distinguished from **v** ; *marble* and *marvel* should be differentiated. Take great care to close the lips *very firmly* for **b** so that the sound makes an *explosion* and *not a friction*.

Try to say the following pairs :

rip	rope	cap	wrap	tribe	club
rib	robe	cab	grab	drive	glove

Now give the phonemic transcription of the following words. (You may consult a dictionary with phonetic symbols) :

*back, bag, bath, beautiful, because, become, before,*  
*begin, believe, besides, between, black, both, bread,*  
*break, bring, bought, buy, busy, February, harbour,*  
*neighbour, visible, probable, remember, rub, slab.*

### t

**t** is a strong plosive consonant. The tip of the tongue is firmly against the middle of the alveolar ridge, not too near the teeth and not too near the hard palate.

The soft palate is raised, so that the breath cannot escape through either the nose or the mouth, but is trapped for a short time. The sides of the tongue are firmly against the sides of the palate, and when the tip of the tongue is lowered suddenly from the teeth ridge the breath rushes out with a slight explosion. It is a voiceless alveolar plosive consonant.

The plosive **t** is aspirated. Try to say the following words :

two / tu: /	torn / tɔ:n /
ten / ten /	tie / tai /
ton / tʌn /	town / taun /
tune / tju:n /	twin / twin /

When **t** occurs between vowels, the aspiration may be weaker or even absent, but it will not do any harm to keep the aspiration in this position too. Observe the following carefully :

writer / raitə /	wetting / weti /
rider / raidə /	putting / putiŋ /
water / wɔ:tə /	whitish / waitiʃ /

In final position **t** is aspirated and shortens the vowel before it.

Now give the phonemic transcription of the following words. (You may consult Daniel Jones's pronouncing dictionary.)

*Table, take, tall, today, together, towards, too,*  
*Tuesday, turn, two, talk, after, better, towards,*  
*matter, particular, quarter, Saturday, eat, eight, it,*  
*ought, might, put, what, lot, not.*

### **d**

**d** is short and weak and never aspirated.

**d** is a weak plosive. The tip of the tongue is firmly against the middle of the alveolar ridge. The soft palate is raised, so the breath cannot escape through either the nose or the mouth, but is trapped for a short time. The sides of the tongue are firmly against the sides of the palate, so that the breath cannot pass over the sides of the tongue. When the tongue-tip is lowered suddenly from the teeth ridge the breath rushes out with a slight explosion or popping noise. It is a *voiced alveolar plosive consonant*.

Try to say the following :

do / du : /	down / daun /
done / d ^ n /	dwindle / dwind! /
dawn / dɔ : n /	die / dai /

Now transcribe some of the common words containing / d / :

*day, dear, December, decide, depend, different,*  
*difficult, door, during, Monday, holiday, medicine,*  
*afraid, bird, oil, road, failed, started.*

### **k**

**k** is a strong plosive consonant. The back of the tongue is in firm contact with soft palate ; and the soft palate is raised, so that the breath is trapped for a short time. When the tongue is lowered suddenly from the soft palate, the breath rushes out of the mouth with a slight explosion. It is a *voiceless velar plosive consonant*.

**k** is aspirated in the same way as **p** and **t**. When **k** occurs between vowels the aspiration may be weaker. In final position **k** shortens the vowel before it.



Try the phonemic transcription of the following :

*cave, curl, class, card, coal, broke, car,*  
*cause, kitchen, cold, corner, because, excuse, dark,*  
*lack, music, take.*

### **g**

**g** is a weak plosive consonant. The back of the tongue is in firm contact with the soft palate; the soft palate is raised so that the breath is trapped for a short time. When the tongue is lowered suddenly from the soft palate, the breath rushes out of the mouth with a slight explosion. It is a *voiced velar plosive*.

**g** is short and never aspirated.

In final position **g** is very gentle and lengthens the vowel before it.

Some of the commonest words containing **g** are :

*garden, girl, glass, great, green, grey*  
*guess, again, ago, agree, angry, August,*  
*language, together, longer, bigger, stronger.*

(Transcribe the above words with the help of a pronouncing dictionary).

### **ʔ**

**ʔ** is a sound which is commonly known as glottal stop. It may also be called the *glottal plosive* consonant. Though it is not an essential sound of the English language it may be helpful to know its existence.

In forming the **ʔ** sound the glottis is closed completely by bringing the vocal cords into contact. The air is compressed by pressure from the lungs. Then the glottis is opened so that the air escapes suddenly.

It is neither voiced nor voiceless.

An exaggerated form of this consonant constitutes the explosive sound heard in coughing.

#### **2.9.2. The English Affricate Consonants**

An 'affricate' consonant is a kind of plosive in which the articulating organs are separated more slowly than usual. In ordinary plosives the separation is made with great rapidity. In English there are two significant affricate consonants, **tʃ** and **dʒ**.

## t

The tongue-tip touches the back of the alveolar ridge and the soft palate is raised so that the breath is trapped for a short time. The rest of the tongue is in the neutral position. The tongue-tip moves away from the alveolar ridge a little way and the whole tongue is then in the neutral position, so that a short period of this friction is heard.

Children often imitate a steam engine by a series of *t* sounds. The sound is defined as a *voiceless palato-alveolar affricate* consonant.

Some of the words containing /t/ are :

*chair, church, fortune, future, kitchen, nature,*  
*picture, question, March, speech, watch, which,*  
*reach, rich, each, catch, much, such,*  
*teach.*

## d<sub>3</sub>

The English /d<sub>3</sub>/ phoneme is formed like /t/ except that the vocal cords are made to vibrate so that voice is produced during the articulation of the sound.

It may be defined as a *voiced palato – alveolar affricate* consonant.

Some of the commonest words containing /d<sub>3</sub>/ sound are :

*general, major, ledger, gentleman, January, join,*  
*joke, joy, judge, July, June, danger,*  
*imagine, soldier, subject, age, arrange, edge,*  
*language, manage, message, village, page, strange*

### 2.9.3. Fricative Consonants

Fricative consonants are formed by the narrowing of the air passage at some point so that when air is expelled it escapes with a kind of hissing sound. They are /f, v, θ, ð, s, z, ʃ, ʒ, h/.

## f

The soft palate is raised so that no air goes through the nose and it is all released through the mouth. The bottom lip is very close to the upper front teeth; this forms the narrowing and when air is pushed through this narrowing it causes slight friction. The tongue takes up the position necessary for the following sound. The vocal cords are not made to vibrate.

*f* is a strong consonant. It is never voiced. It is a strong, voiceless long consonant. It may be defined as a *voiceless labiodental fricative*.

When **f** occurs at the end of words, after a vowel, it has an effect on the *length* of the vowel. It makes the vowel shorter.

Some of the most common words which contain /f / are :

*family, far, father, first, four, from,*  
*front, after, different, perfect, half, off,*  
*laugh, cough, rough, philosophy, enough*

(Transcribe the above mentioned words in italics you may consult D. Jones's dictionary.)

### **v**

In pronouncing **v** the soft palate is raised so that no air goes through the nose and it is released through the mouth. The bottom lip is very close to the upper front teeth. This forms the narrowing and when the air is pushed through this narrowing it causes slight friction. The vocal cords are made to vibrate.

The consonant is therefore called *voiced labio-dental fricative*. **v** is weak. When **v** occurs at the end of a word, after a vowel, it makes the vowel longer.

Transcribe the following : (You may consult any pronouncing dictionary with phonetic symbols)

*very, visit, value, violet, view, ever, never,*  
*seven, heaven, travel, even, live, five, prove,*  
*believe, twelve, have*

### **θ**

In producing this sound the soft palate is raised so that all the breath is released through the mouth.

The tip of the tongue is close to the upper front teeth.

The main part of the tongue is fairly flat.

The vocal cords are not made to vibrate. It may be defined as *voiceless dental fricative*.

**θ** is strong. It occurs in words like *thin, think, thought, theatre, Thursday, thank* etc.

Look up Daniel Jones's Pronouncing Dictionary and transcribe the following words :

*thick, thing, thirsty, thousand, three, through,*  
*thirty, healthy, wealthy, bath, earth, fourth,*  
*worth, south, path*

## ð

In producing the sound the soft palate is raised so that all the breath is forced to go through the mouth.

The tip of the tongue is close to the upper front teeth.

The vocal cords are vibrated. It is therefore a *voiced dental fricative* ð is weak.

Between vowels ð is voiced, but the important thing is to make it very short and weak.

It occurs in words like *other, rather, worthy, further, brother, mother.*

Look up Daniel Jones's Dictionary and transcribe the following words :

*the, this, that, these, those, smooth, with,*  
*weather, breathe, clothes, father, neither, them, though,*  
*than, mother, brother, they.*

## S

The position of the speech organs for **S** sound are :

- a. The soft palate is raised so that all the breath is released through the mouth.
- b. The tip and blade of the tongue are very close to the alveolar ridge.
- c. The teeth are very close together.
- d. **S** is strong and voiceless. It may be defined as *voiceless blade alveolar fricative*.

**S** is the normal sound of the letter **S** in English as in *sets*. In the beginning of a word **s** is always pronounced **S**, but in other positions it is frequently pronounced **z**.

Some of the common words containing **S** are :

*some, same, Saturday, Sunday, second, self, seven,*  
*since, small, school, sister, against, almost, beside,*  
*message, Mrs, use (n) miss, cats, perhaps.*

## Z

**Z** is weak and voiced.

It is produced by raising the soft palate and releasing the breath through the mouth.

The tip and blade of the tongue are very close to the alveolar ridge.

The teeth are very close together.

It is defined as *voiced blade alveolar fricative*.

It occurs in words like *lose, cause, plays, knees, his, as*.

Observe carefully :

/ju:s / use (n)                      /haus / house (n)                      cats / kæts /  
/ju:z / use (v)                      /hauz / house (v)                      dogz / dɔgz /  
/ju:st / used (to)

Transcribe the following words :

*noisy, busy, reason, easy, lazy, because,*  
*has, lose, was, days, does, moves, please*

is a strong friction sound and is unvoiced.

The soft palate is raised so that all the breath is forced to go through the mouth.

There is a narrowing between the tip of the tongue and the back of the alveolar ridge.

The front of the tongue is higher than for **s** and **z**.

The lips are very slightly rounded.

It is defined as a *voiceless palato-alveolar fricative* consonant.

*Transcribe the following words.* Look up Daniel Jones's Pronouncing Dictionary.

*shape, ship, shop, shall, should, short,*  
*shut, show, shoulder, shine, sure, anxious,*  
*ashamed, machine, patient, station, nation, ocean,*  
*mention, precious, crash, fish, greenish, wish, dish.*

### 3

**3** is weak and voiced.

The soft palate is raised and the breath is released through the mouth.

There is a narrowing between the tip of the tongue and the back of the alveolar ridge.

The lips are slightly rounded.

It is defined as a *voiced palato-alveolar fricative* consonant.

Transcribe the following words with help from Daniel Jones's Dictionary :

*vision, invasion, rouge, closure, measure, pleasure,  
usual, division, inclusion, illusion, provision, explosion,  
leisure, garage, barrage, revision.*

## **h**

It is the sound heard when air passes out through the wide open glottis and the mouth is held in the position of a vowel.

There are as many varieties of **h** as there are vowels, because **h** always occurs before a vowel and consists of the sound of breath passing between the open vocal cord and out of the mouth.

“Leaving out /h/ is the biggest danger, but a lesser error is to make h-sounds too noisy.”  
O'Connor.

Compare the sounds in the following pairs :

/hɑ:m/	harm	/ɑ:m/	arm	/hi:t/	heat	/i:t/	eat
/hedʒ/	hedge	/edʒ/	edge	/hɔ:l/	hall	/ɔ:l/	all
hɛə/	hair	/ɛə/	air	/hil/	hill	/il/	ill

Some of the words containing /h/ are given below :

*half, hat, health, hear, here, heart,  
high, hide, history, hold, home, hope,  
horse, house (n), hundred, behind, inhale, rehearse,  
coherent.*

### **2.9.4. Nasal Consonants**

There are three phonemes in English which are represented by nasal consonants /m, n, /.  
In all nasal consonants the soft palate is lowered and at the same time the mouth passage is blocked at some point, so that all the air is pushed out of the nose.

## **m**

The soft palate is lowered ; the mouth is closed ; and the air passes through the nose. The tongue is held in a neutral position. The vocal cords vibrate, and voice is produced.

It may be defined as a *voiced bi-labial nasal* consonant.

Look of the Pronouncing Dictionary and transcribe the following :

*lamb, lamp, room, lump, games, mine,*  
*lambs, lump, complained.*

*/m/* is sometimes syllabic ; that is, it occupies the place at the centre of the syllable which is usually occupied by a vowel.

It occurs in words like *blossom, rhythm* (blɒsəm) (riðm), but more often they are pronounced / blɒsəm / and / riðəm /. You may choose either of the two.

## n

The phoneme is formed as follows. The mouth passage is completely blocked by raising the tip of the tongue to touch the teeth-ridge. The soft palate is lowered so that the air passes through the nose. The vocal cords vibrate so that voice is produced. The sound may be defined as a *voiced alveolar nasal* consonant.

*/n/* is *often* syllabic. In words such as *written, garden* / ŋ / is almost always used immediately after the / t / or / d / that is / ritŋ / or ga:dŋ.

Transcribe the following : (You may look up Daniel Jones)

*need, never, new, nine, no, noise, north,*  
*now, know, knee, any, enough, funny, general,*  
*journey, again, alone, begin, between, can, done,*  
*down, green, learn, one, son, than, kitten.*

This is the third English nasal consonant. In producing it the soft palate is lowered and all the air is released through the nose.

The mouth is blocked by the back of the tongue pressed against the soft palate. The sound is voiced. It is therefore defined as a *voiced velar nasal* consonant

*/ŋ/* does not occur at the beginning of words in English, but it does occur between vowels.

Observe carefully : /siŋə/ singer      /bæŋiŋ/ banging  
    /siŋiŋ/ singing      /tʰɪŋz/ tongues  
    /lɔŋiŋ/ longing      /lɔŋəgəʊ/ long ago

A useful general rule is that if the word is formed for a *verb*, no / ɟ / is pronounced. But if not / ɟ / is pronounced as in / strɔŋgə / and / æŋgə /. Notice the difference between / lɔŋgə / and

/lɔŋiŋ/ (formed from the verb *long*). The sound ŋ is never pronounced before a following consonant, for example /siŋz/ *sings*, /bæŋd/ *banged*.

**Transcribe the following :**

*anger, anxious, drink, finger, hungry, language,*  
*sink, thank, think, bring, during, evening,*  
*mourning, song, spring, wrong, young.*

---

## 2.10. Lateral Consonants

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The English consonant **l** is formed laterally, that is, instead of the breath passing down the centre of the mouth, it passes round the sides of an obstruction set up in the centre.

In producing it the soft palate is raised.

The tongue-tip and the sides of the tongue-blade are in firm contact with the alveolar ridge.

The air is released between the sides of the tongue and the palate.

The sound is voiced and there is no friction (except when it is immediately after /p/ or /k/).

There are two chief varieties of **l** in English. These are clear **l** and dark **l**; clear **l** occurs before consonants and in final positions, for example, /leit/ *late*, /laud/ *loud*. The dark **l** occurs before consonants and in final positions as in /fil/ *fill*, /fild/ *filled*.

Many English speakers use only a clear **l** in all positions, and many others use only a dark **l**, and many others use both.

/l/ is very often syllabic ; it occurs in a position usually occupied by a vowel. Most English people would pronounce such words as *parcel, level, puzzle, novel*, as /pa:s|//lev|//p^z|/ / ^ɔv|/.

**Transcribe the following :**

*language, laugh, learn, listen, little, allow, already,*  
*cold, colour, difficult, early, self, yellow, able,*  
*beautiful, fall, fulfil, girl, people, possible,*  
*table, well*

### Gliding Consonants or Frictionless Continuants

There are three consonants /j, w, r/ which consist of a quick, smooth, non-friction glide towards a following vowel.



## W

In producing this sound the lips are firmly rounded. There is considerable raising of the back of the tongue in the direction of the soft palate. The soft palate is raised and the vocal cords are vibrated. It is described as *labio-velar* semi-vowel, or gliding consonant.

Start with /u:/ or /ʊ/ and follow this immediately by the vowel ɔ: ; this is the word /wɔ: / *war*.

Observe the following carefully :

/wɒtʃ / watch	/waɪt / white	/swɛə / swear	/kwaɪət / quiet
/wɛə / where	/wʊd / wood	/dweli / dwelling	/wəɪ / why
/wɪtʃ / which	/wen / when	/wɛə / where	

**W** does not occur in final position.

Some of the commonest words containing /w/ are :

<i>one,</i>	<i>wait,</i>	<i>walk,</i>	<i>warm,</i>	<i>water,</i>	<i>well,</i>	<i>what</i>
<i>woman,</i>	<i>word,</i>	<i>work,</i>	<i>away,</i>	<i>quarter,</i>	<i>question,</i>	
<i>quite,</i>	<i>twenty,</i>	<i>twice.</i>				

## J

In pronouncing **j** the speech organs start at or near the position for the English short vowel *i* and immediately leave this for some other sound of equal or greater prominence.

The front of the tongue is raised rather high in the direction of the hard palate. The lips are spread ; the soft palate is in a raised position and the vocal cords are made to vibrate.

The consonant may be described as unrounded palatal glide.

Observe the following carefully :

/jɑ:d / yard	/jɔ: / your	/jet / yet	/ju: / you
/dju: / due	/fju: / few	/vju: / view	/nju: / new
/vælju: / value	/mju:zɪk / music		

Most American speakers do not use /j/. R. P. speakers always use /j/ after /t, d, n/. /j/ does not occur in final position.

*Transcribe the following.* If necessary, take help from Daniel Jones's Dictionary :

<i>year,</i>	<i>yes,</i>	<i>yet,</i>	<i>young,</i>	<i>use,</i>	<i>usual,</i>	<i>useful,</i>
<i>Europe,</i>	<i>amuse,</i>	<i>cure,</i>	<i>during,</i>	<i>educate,</i>	<i>huge,</i>	<i>January,</i>
<i>knew,</i>	<i>Tuesday,</i>	<i>value.</i>				

## r

Many scholars describe it as a fricative sound. But A.C. Gimson and J. D. O'Connor regard it as a gliding frictionless consonant.

In producing it the tongue has a curved shape with the tip pointing towards the hard palate at the back of the alveolar ridge ; the front is low and the back is rather high.

The tongue-tip is not close enough to the palate to cause friction. The lips are sometimes rounded, specially when **r** is at the beginning of words. The soft palate is raised ; and voiced air flows between the tongue-tip and palate with no friction.

Foreign learners often replace this sound by the sound by the **r** in their own language. Sometimes they use a *rolled* sound in which the tip of the tongue taps very quickly against the alveolar ridge. Sometimes they use a friction sound with the back of the tongue close to the soft palate. They are understood, but they sound foreign.

In R. P. /r/ only occurs before vowels, never before consonants, so words like *learn, sort, farm* do not contain /r/ (/ə : n / sɔ : t / / fa : m /)

If your model is American you will pronounce /r/ before consonants ; if it is R.R. you should not.

At the end of words R. P. has /r/ only if the immediately following word begins with a vowel. For example *never better* will be /nevə betə / ; but *never again* will be /nevə əgen /. This is known as the *linking r* ; some speakers do not use it ; but most people do use it.

Observe the following carefully :

/betə ɔf/ better off                      /hiə it iz/ here it is

/fɔ : r ɔ : faiv / four or five              /puə əuld mæn / poor old man

It is quite usual to hear this linking /r/ following the vowel /ə/ even when there is no letter *r* in the spelling as in /æfrikə ən ei ə / *Africa and Asia*. Some speakers dislike this so-called 'intrusive r', so it is perhaps best for you not to use it.

Transcribe the following. Consult Daniel Jones's Dictionary.

*rain,          rather,          ready,          real,          remember,          road,          roof,*  
*rule,          write,          wrong,          agree,          arrange,          dress,          every,*  
*foreign,          interest,          pretty,          serious,          terrible,          worry*

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## 2.11. Vowels

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You have already seen that a vowel is a voiced sound in the pronunciation of which the air passes through the mouth in a continuous stream, these being no obstruction and no narrowing

such as would produce audible friction. It means that the characteristic qualities of vowels depend on the shape of the open space above the larynx. The passage forms a resonance chamber which modifies the quality of the sound produced by the vibration of the vocal cords. Different shapes of the passage modify the quality in different ways and consequently give rise to distinct vowel sounds.

The number of possible vowels is very large, but the number actually used in any particular language is small. In English it is not necessary to distinguish more than *twelve* pure vowels and *eight* diphthongs. The term ‘pure’ vowel indicates a vowel, during the production of which the organs of speech remain approximately stationary. A diphthong in which the organs of speech perform a clearly perceptible movement.

The chief organs concerned in modifying the shape of the passage are the tongue and the lips. The vowels of well-defined quality are chiefly those in which the tongue is markedly raised in the front or at the back or is quite low down in the mouth. It is from among these vowels which are as remote as possible from ‘neutral’ position that it has been found convenient to select eight ‘Cardinal Vowels’ which are described below.

### 2.11.1. Cardinal Vowels

Since it is quite difficult to describe a vowel sound in writing, Daniel Jones devised a system in which there is a set of eight *Cardinal Vowels* which can be used as points of reference from which other vowels can be measured. The cardinal vowels do not possess any intrinsic merits as sounds.

The tongue positions of the eight primary cardinal vowels may be represented diagrammatically as in the figure given below where the relative position of the highest points of the tongue are shown by dots.

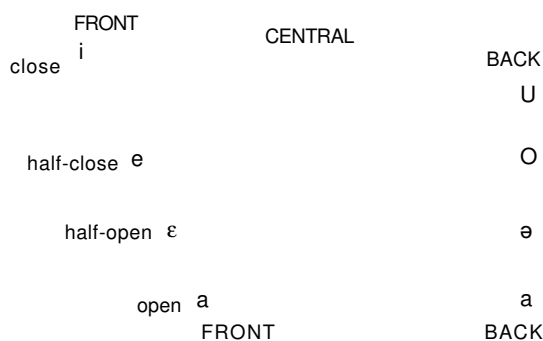


Diagram illustrating the tongue-positions of eight primary Cardinal Vowels

The shape of the diagram is a compromise between scientific accuracy and the requirements of the practical language teacher.

When we classify according to the *height of the tongue* we distinguish four classes. Vowels which have their tongue-positions on the line *i – u* are called *close vowels* ; those which have

their tongue-positions on the lines *e – o* , *ɛ – ɔ* , *a – ʌ* are called *half-close* vowels, *half-open* vowels and *open* vowels respectively. Vowels in which the highest point of the tongue is in the centre part of the vowel figure are called *central* vowels.

Close vowels are those in which the tongue is raised as high as possible consistently with the sounds remaining vowels.

Open vowels are those in which the tongue is as low as possible.

Halfclose vowels are those in which the tongue occupies a position about one-third of the distance from ‘close’ to ‘open’.

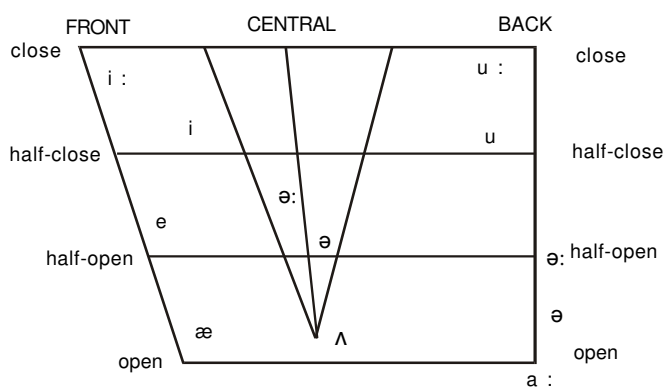
Half-open vowels are those in which the tongue occupies a position about two-thirds of the distance from ‘close’ to ‘open’.

When we classify according to the *part of the tongue* raised we distinguish three classes. Vowels which have their tongue-positions on or near the line *i – a* are called ‘front vowels’, in other words the front of the tongue is raised in the direction of the hard palate. Vowels which have their tongue-positions on or near the line *u – a* are called back vowels i.e. the back of the tongue is raised in the direction of the soft palate. Vowels in which the highest part of the tongue is in the centre part of the vowel figure are called central vowels.

Vowels are also classified according to the *lip-position*. The lips may be spread as in *i*, rounded as in *ɔ*, *u*, and neutral *ə*.

Vowels may also be differentiated by degrees of *muscular tension*. For instance *i:* is often described as a tense vowel, and *i* as the corresponding lax one.

Observe carefully the following diagram where the position of the English vowels are shown.



### 2.11.2. English Vowels : Description

**i :**

This is a long vowel and its tongue position is shown in the above diagram. (All vowels are voiced and the soft palate is in a raised position).

Height of the tongue : nearly close  
 Part of the tongue : front raised towards the hard palate  
 Position of the lips : spread or neutral

English words with various spellings in which this vowel is present

*police, machine, complete, even, free, cheese, sea,*  
*reason, field, piece, seize, receive, key, people,*  
*quay*

### i

In pronouncing this vowel the general position of the tongue and the lips resemble that of **i:**; but the tongue is lower and slightly retracted.

The height of the tongue is nearly half-close. The hinder part of the front of the tongue is the highest. The lip position of the lips is spread or neutral. Muscles are lax.

Examples of some English words in which this vowel sound occurs :

i in *rich, king*  
 y in *city, symbol*  
 e in *become, pretty, horses*  
 ie in *ladies, cities*  
 a in *village, private*  
 u in *lettuce*  
 ui in *build*

### e

In producing this vowel

the height of the tongue is nearly half-close  
 the part of the tongue, the hinder part of the front, in the highest  
 the position of the lips is spread or neutral.

The sound occurs in the following English words

*set, bed, went, many, any,*  
*dead, head, breath, said,*  
*Leicester, friend, Geoffrey*

**æ**

In producing this vowel

the height of the tongue is between half-open and open  
the front part of the tongue is the highest  
the position of the lips is spread or neutral.

The sound occurs in

*hat, cat, rat, fat, mat,*  
*rash, crash, exact, lamb,*  
*plait, plaid*

**a:**

In producing this vowel

the tongue is very low down in the mouth and the height of the tongue is fully open ;  
the position of the lips is neutral ;  
the tip of the tongue is slightly retracted from the lower teeth ;

English words in which contain this sound :

*car, part, March, heart,*  
*clerk, sergent, command, laugh,*  
*har, father, memoir, reservoir, barrage.*

**ɔ**

The tongue is held in the lowest and most backward position possible.

The height of the tongue is fully open. The back of the tongue is the highest. The position of the lips is open lip- rounding.

The tip of the tongue is retracted from the lower teeth.

English words in which the sound occurs :

*not, dog, pond, solid, foreign,*  
*what, want, watch, quality, long,*  
*cough, knowledge, yacht, box.*

**ɔ :**

The height of tongue is between half-open and open.

The back of the tongue is highest. The position of the lips is between open and close lip-rounding.

English words in which the sound occurs :

*all, talk, war, born, cord, horse,*  
*saw, law, yawn, daughter, fault,*  
*cause, bought, ought, before, door,*  
*board, court, four, broad.*

**u**

Its tongue position is considerably higher than that of the long ə:

The tongue, however, is not so high as for the long vowel u :

The lips are rounded fairly close. The height of the tongue is just above half-close.

English words in which the sound occurs :

*put, full, butcher, wolf, woman,*  
*bosom, good, book, wool, could, should*  
*would, look, push, butcher.*

**u :**

The back of the tongue is raised towards the soft palate

The tongue is raised almost to close position

Lips are rounded in fairly close position.

English words in which the sound occurs :

*tomb, whom, move, do, food, spoon,*  
*shoe, too, rude, June, soup, routine,*  
*canoe, new, crew, chew, blue, juice,*  
*fruit, beauty.*

^

Height of the tongue is half-open.

The fore part of the back is the highest.

The lips are spread.

The opening between the jaws is wide.

Words in which the sound occurs :

*cut, hurry, mutton, among, comfort, company,*  
*compass, front, honey, money, rough, London,*  
*love, courage, double, cousin, blood, does.*

ə :

This is a central vowel, which means that the central part of the tongue is raised in order to make it. The tongue is raised to about midway between half-close and half-open positions. The lips are spread and the opening between the jaws is narrow. It is not possible to make the sound properly with a wide open mouth.

English words in which the sound occurs :

*her, fern, serve, fir, girl, bird, mirth,*  
*fur, turn, church, myrtle, ear, heard, earth,*  
*courteous, journal, amateur, chauffeur, word, work, world.*

ə

ə without the length mark is a relatively short English vowel, and it is often called 'the neutral vowel' or 'schwa' by phoneticians. The central part of the tongue is raised, and the tongue is raised about one third of the way from open to close. The lips are in a neutral position.

Examples of English words with different spellings :

ə occurs in syllables with weak stress.

*mother, doctor, clour, figure, better,*  
*better, alone, about, above, suppose.*

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## 2.12. The English Diphthongs

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R.P. has eight essential diphthong phonemes :

ei, əu, ai, au, ɔi, iə, eə, uə



A diphthong consists of a deliberate or intentional glide. Speech organs start in the position of one vowel and move towards another.

There are two elements in a diphthong. The first element is the starting point, while the second element is the point in the direction of which the glide is made.

Most of the length and stress associated with the glide is concentrated on the first element. The second element is only lightly sounded. It is, however, important to recount that the diphthongs result from a quick transition in producing one vowel to producing another vowel while the sound of the first vowel is still in progress. That is, in a diphthong we pronounce two sounds within the time it normally takes to pronounce only one.

### ei

The diphthong **ei** starts at about the English vowel **e** and moves in the direction of **i**. In other words, it begins at about half-way between the half-close and half-open positions and move upwards in the direction of **i**. The starting point is a little higher than that of **e**. The lips are spread.

Examples of English words in which this diphthong occurs :

*came, make, plain, daisy, day, play, weigh,*  
*veil, they, great, break, late, haste, same,*  
*face, bathe, table, pay, change.*

### əu

In producing the diphthong **əu** the height of the tongue is a little nearer to half-close than to half-open. The fore part of the back of the tongue is raised. Lips are slightly rounded.

Some English words in which the diphthong occurs :

*home, post, only, noble, road, toast, soap,*  
*oak, toe, foe, go, no, dough, sole,*  
*soul, poultry, know, blow, growth, shoulder, sew,*  
*bureau, old, won't*

### ai

The diphthong starts with the mouth well open. The glide begins at a point slightly behind the front open position and the second element moves in the direction of **i**. The height of the tongue is low ; the front part of the tongue is raised, and the position of the lips is spread to neutral.

Some English words in which the diphthong occurs :

*time, idle, night, fly, cry, by, pie,*  
*die, lie, dye, high, height, fly, light,*  
*either, neither.*

### **au**

The glide **au** diphthong begins at a point between the back and front open position, and moves in the directions of **u**. The height of the tongue is low ; the hinder part of the back of the tongue is raised and the lips are neutral.

Some English words in which the diphthong occurs :

*land, house, out, bough, cow, town,*  
*flower, bow (bend the body), doubt, gown,*  
*mouth, now, fowl, foul, vow,*  
*thousand, shout, how.*

### **ɔi**

The diphthong begins about half-way between  $\text{ɔ}$  and  $\text{ɔ}$  : and moves in the direction of **i**. The diphthong begins at a position which may be described as back, rounded and slightly half-open. The lips are spread.

Some English words in which the sound occurs :

*noise, voice, point, boy, employ, royal,*  
*toy, Doyle, coin, choice, joint, loyal,*  
*foil, soil, hoist.*

### **iə**

The diphthong starts at about the position of the English vowel **i** and moves in the direction of **ə**. It begins by being fairly close, front and unrounded and ends at a central, nearly half-open, unrounded position.

Some English words which contain this diphthong :

*deer, peer, tear, here, weird, fierce,*  
*idea, Ian, museum, steer, beard, pierce,*  
*beer, tier, gear, cheer, sheer, seer,*  
*jeer, year.*

### ɛə

This is a diphthong which starts about half-way between the English vowels *e* and *æ* and moves in the direction of *ə*. The height of the tongue is half-open ; the front part of the tongue is raised and the lip position is spread or neutral.

Some English words which contain the diphthong :

*care, rare, share, air, fair, pair,*  
*bear, fear, tear (Nb), dare, chair, vary,*  
*there, hare, wear.*

### uə

It begins at a vowel which may be described as between close and half-close, back and moderately rounded, and move to a nearly half-open, central, unrounded sound.

English words in which this sound occurs :

*sure, cure, endure, poor, moor, curious,*  
*during, tour, gourd, sewer, truant, fluently,*  
*jewel, influence, tourist, steward, Muir.*

#### 2.12.1 Classification of Diphthongs

*Closing Diphthongs* : These diphthongs (ei, əu, ai, au, ɔi) move from an opener to a closer position.

*Narrow Diphthongs* : In these diphthongs (ei, əu) the movement of the tongue is relatively small; in all others it is wide.

*Centring Diphthongs* : In these diphthongs (iə, eə, uə/ɔə) the tongue moves in the direction of ə which is a central vowel.

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## 2.13. Interference between L<sub>1</sub> and L<sub>2</sub>

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Extensive experience in the teaching of foreign languages has shown that one of the surest ways of learning to pronounce a foreign language is by a systematic comparison of the sounds of the mother-tongue with those of the target language. Although the sound systems of the two languages are never the same, the problem can be predicted at least in part by comparing the sound system of the two languages. One who begins to learn a second language begins with a fairly articulate verbal repertory. This verbal repertory is usually considered as expediting the process of learning a second language. But in many cases it actually tends to filter the sound

system of his native language into the system of the foreign language. The postulate that phonemic similarities facilitate the process of learning is false. The position is that partial similarities create greater problems than totally different sounds. This habit of transferring native sounds into the sounds of the second language is often called *interference*. The learner of a foreign language is often tempted to substitute the native phonemes which apparently resemble the foreign phonemes. Hence a contrastive study may be useful, for it locates the areas of difficulty.

These areas of difficulty may be classified in the following manner :

### **I. Vowels :**

- A. The difference in length not normally recognized in the reproductions of Bengali vowels and confusions resulting from it :
  - i. The distinction between / i / and / i : / is not easily recognized or reproduced. e.g. *bit* and *beat* ; *ship* and *sheep*.
  - ii. Similar confusion exists in recognizing and reproducing the difference in length between / u / and / u : / sounds, e.g. *full* and *fool*.
  - iii. The difference between / e / and / ei / is also overlooked. The result is loss of intelligibility ; e.g. *let* and *late* ; *wet* and *wait*.
- B. Absence of certain L<sub>2</sub> sounds in the sound-system of the first language.
  - i. The English sound / ɔ : / does not occur in the Indian languages, e.g. *caught* and *sawed*.
  - ii. The tendency to substitute / ɔ / for / ʌ / in Bengali.
  - iii. The absence of the central vowels in the Bengali language creates confusion. Unless the situational context and the linguistic context are clear the hearer is likely to be confused. e.g. *bird* and *bard*, *heart* and *hurt*.
- C. Certain English diphthong sounds are approximated to their nearest pure vowel sounds in Bengali :
  - i. Most of the English diphthongs are reproduced fairly accurately in Bengali and there is no loss of intelligibility.
  - ii. The English diphthong sounds / uə / and / ɔə / present the greatest difficulty to the Bengali learners.

### **II. Consonants :**

- A. In Bengali all labials are bilabials. They are substituted for English labio-dentals.
  - i. The voiceless aspirated bilabial plosive / ph / in Bengali often replaces the English labio-dental fricative / f /.

- ii. The voiced labio-dental fricative /v/ is replaced by voiced aspirated bilabial Bengali plosive /bh/.
- B. Confusion resulting from inadequate recognition of the English fricatives.
- i. English /θ/ and /ð/ sounds are replaced by dental plosives in Bengali.
  - ii. Voiceless alveolar fricatives /s/ and /ʃ/ are often confused, though the sounds exist in the Bengali language.
  - iii. The voiced alveolar fricative /z/ tends to be replaced by the voiced alveolar affricate in Bengali.
  - iv. The English sound /ʒ/, voiced palato-alveolar fricative, tends to be replaced by the aspirated palato-alveolar affricate in Bengali.
- C. Confusion resulting from insufficient aspiration :
- i. The English /p/ sound is often weakly aspirated for the corresponding Bengali sound is normally unaspirated.

The foregoing study is by no means comprehensive. Attempt has been made to locate some of the areas of difficulty.

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## 2.14. Stress

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Stress is an essential feature of English, though not of certain other languages. In the sentence *I could hardly believe my eyes* the words *hardly*, *believe* and *eyes* are stressed. This means that one of the syllables of the word is said with greater force with greater effort, than the others. In *hardly* it is the first syllable /ha:d/ and in *believe* it is the second syllable /-li:v/. *Eyes* is a monosyllabic word. Thus stress may be defined as force or emphasis with which a syllable is uttered, to give it some degree of prominence.

Stress occurs in two forms in English :

- (a) word stress on any word of two or more syllables;
- (b) phrase stress on any utterance of two or more words, which forms a unit of sense.

### 2.14.1. Word Stress

For word stress, it is clearly essential to know how many syllables each word contains, and what degree of stress to put on each. Every English word has a definite place for the stress and we are not allowed to change it. The first syllable is the most common place for the stress, as in *father*, *any*, *steadily*, *gathering*, *excellently*, *obstinacy* *reasonableness*. Many words are

stressed on the second syllable like *about, before, attractive, beginning, intelligent, magnificent*. Some words have two stressed syllables, for example, *fourteen* <sup>1</sup>fɔː'ti:n, *half-hearted* <sup>1</sup>hɑːf <sup>1</sup>hɑːtɪd, *disbelieve* <sup>1</sup>disbiːli:v, *examination* ɪg'zæmi'nei ən. Some are stressed on the third syllable.

It is generally sufficient to distinguish two kinds only : *primary stress* and *secondary stress*. Primary stress is marked usually by placing a vertical mark ( <sup>1</sup> ) immediately before the stressed syllable ; secondary stress is usually marked by the sign ( <sub>1</sub> ) a low vertical mark e.g. exami<sub>1</sub>nation.

*How do we know where the stress is to be given ?* There is no simple way of knowing which syllable or syllables in an English word must be stressed. But every time you learn another word you must be sure to learn how it is stressed. Any good dictionary of English will give you this information.

You may, however, remember the following rules. There are exceptions to these rules, but you will find these rules very helpful.

- a. Words of one syllable, if they are purely grammatical words, are usually not stressed, e.g. pronouns (*I, me, you, he, she* etc.), prepositions (*to, for, at, from, by* etc.), articles (*a, an, the*). Other monosyllabic words may be stressed, for example, verbs (*eat, love, take, try*, etc), nouns (*head, chair, book, pen*, etc), adjectives (*good, blue, long, cold* etc.) adverbs (*well, just, quite* etc.) and the like. In general, words which provide most of the information are stressed. Numbers, Yes/no, exclamations, and question words are also stressed.

- b. Word stress may be used to distinguish word -function :

Noun / Adjective	Verb
<sup>1</sup> abstract	abs <sup>1</sup> tract
<sup>1</sup> accent	ac <sup>1</sup> cent
<sup>1</sup> digest	di <sup>1</sup> gest
<sup>1</sup> torment	tor <sup>1</sup> ment
<sup>1</sup> transfer	trans <sup>1</sup> fer
<sup>1</sup> absent	ab <sup>1</sup> sent
<sup>1</sup> conduct	con <sup>1</sup> duct
<sup>1</sup> contract	con <sup>1</sup> tract
<sup>1</sup> permit	per <sup>1</sup> mit
<sup>1</sup> desert	de <sup>1</sup> sert
<sup>1</sup> object	ob <sup>1</sup> ject
<sup>1</sup> perfect	per <sup>1</sup> fect
<sup>1</sup> produce	pro <sup>1</sup> duce

Noun / Adjective	Verb
<i>ˈprogress</i>	<i>proˈgress</i>
<i>ˈprotest</i>	<i>proˈtest</i>
<i>ˈrecord</i>	<i>reˈcord</i>
<i>ˈsubject</i>	<i>subˈject</i>

- c. Native words and early French adoptions tend to have the main stress on the root syllable and to keep it there, regardless of the affixes that word-formation may add :

*ˈkingly*, *ˈkingliness*, *ˈkingship*, *ˈkingdom*, *unˈkingliness*  
*ˈlove*, *ˈlover*, *ˈloving*, *ˈlovingly*, *ˈloveliness*, *ˈlovely*  
*ˈstand*, *underˈstand*, *misunderˈstand* *ˈmisunderˈstanding*  
*ˈpassion*, *ˈpassionate*, *ˈpassionately*, *ˈdisˈpassionately*

- d. By contrast, with the more recent adoptions and coinages, specially those based on words from the classical languages, the place of the stress varies according to affixation :

*ˈtelegraph*, *teˈlegraphy*, *teleˈgraphic*  
*ˈphoto*, *phoˈtography*, *photoˈgraphic*  
*ˈtransport*, *transˈportable*, *transporˈtation*  
*ˈargument*, *arguˈmentative*, *argumenˈtation*

- e. Words ending in the following suffixes have stress on the syllable before the suffix :

– *ic* : *eˈlectric*, *draˈmatic*  
– *ical* : *poˈlitical*, *geoˈmetrical*, *philoˈsophical*  
– *ically* : *scienˈtifically*, *ˈpractically*  
– *ity* : *ˈprobity*, *moˈrality*, *probaˈbility*  
– *ial* : *reˈmedial*, *inˈdustrial*  
– *ially* : *inˈdustrially*, *matheˈmatically*  
– *ian* : *liˈbrarian*, *ˈAsian*, *repiˈtition*  
– *ion* : *ˈaction*, *diˈvision*, *introˈduction*  
– *tion* : *examinˈation*, *consideˈration*

f. Words ending in the following suffixes take a stress within the suffix :

– *bility* : ability, possi'bility

– *ality* : re'ality, univer'sality

g. When it is necessary to emphasize words which have both a primary and secondary stress and in which the secondary stress precedes the primary, the secondary stress is often reinforced and becomes as strong as the primary stress :

*'funda'mental,* *'distri'bution,* *res'ponsi'bility*

*'disappe'arance,* *'recom'mend,* *'arti'ficial*

h. In longer words the greater the distance between the secondary stress and the primary stress, the more readily does this reinforcement of the secondary stress take place.

*'represen'tation,* *'character'istic,* *'carica'ture*

*'perpendicu'larity,* *'characteri'zation*

i. The last syllable of words ending in *–ute*, *–ude*, *–ise*, *–ize* are not stressed

*'prosecute,* *'substitute,* *'gratitude,* *'multitude*

*'criticise,* *'exercise,* *'recognize*

### 2.14.2. Compound Words

By a compound word we mean a word made up of two words written in conventional spelling as one, with or without a hyphen. Stress on compound words is very complicated. A few common rules are given below :

a. Single-stressed compounds are by far the most common e.g.,

*'appletree,* *'bookbinding,* *'bystander,* *'daybreak,* *'diningroom,*

*'grasshopper,* *'pickpocket,* *'schoolmaster,* *'sittingroom,* *'waterproof*

b. The stress is on the first word when it means a new idea e.g.

*'greengrocer*

c. The stress is on the first word when the second is restricted by the first e.g.

*'birthday,* *'cattleshow,* *'sheepdog,* *'fluteplayer*

d. A few isolated compounds have single stress on the second element e.g.

*when'ever,* *him'self,* *here'after,* *through'out,* *al'ready,*

*look'out,* *short'coming.*



- e. In a noun phrase like a *blackbird* the subsidiary stress is on *black* and the primary stress is on *bird*. But in the same compound *'blackbird* the primary stress is on *black*. Similarly we have

*'earthquake, 'waiting room, 'fire-extinguisher*

- f. Double stress is used in compound adjectives when the first word is an adjective e.g.

*'red 'hot, 'good 'looking, 'bad 'tempered, 'first 'class, 'second 'hand*

- g. Double stress is used when the second word has special importance e.g.

*'gas 'stove, 'arm 'chair, but 'churchyard and 'graveyard*

- h. Observe the following : *'train for Water 'loo* but *'Waterloo 'Station, 'red hot 'poker* but *'just red 'hot ; 'inside 'out* but *'right in 'side*.

### 2.14.3. Weak Forms

In a sentence like *It was too expensive for them to buy* the words *too, expensive* and *buy* are stressed : it wəz 'tu : ik'spensiv fəðəm td 'bai. Notice the pronunciation of the words *was, for, them,* and *to*. All of them have the vowel / ə / . If those words are pronounced alone and usually they are not stressed, and then the forms with / ə / are used. We call these *weak forms* of those words.

The use of weak forms is an essential part of English speech and you must learn to use the weak forms of 34 English words if you want your English to sound English.

The following list of weak forms should be observed carefully :

Word	Weak form
and	ən
as	əz
but	bət
than	ðən
Word	Weak form
that	ðət (in phrases like <i>that man</i> it is ðæt)
he	i:
him	ɪm
his	ɪz
her	ə: (at the beginning of word groups hi:, hiz, hə: should be used.)

them	ðəm	
us	s	
do	də	(use the strong form hau du: ai nəu)
does	dəz	
am	m, əm	
are	ə, ə r	(before vowels)
be	bi	
is	s, z, d <sub>3</sub>	
was	wəz	
has	əz, s, z	(hæz when final word in the group)
have	v, əv	
had	d, əd	
can	kən	
shall	!	
will	l, l, ə l	
a	ə	
an	ən	
the	ðə	(ð i before vowels)
some	səm	(s^m when stressed)
at	ət	
for	fə, f ə r	
from	frəm	
of	əv	
to	tə (tu: before vowels)	
can	kən (kæn when stressed)	

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## 2.15. Intonation

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By intonation we mean the rise and fall of the pitch of the voice when we speak. It varies from district to district and from speaker to speaker, but in general there are certain regular speech tunes which are very important in conveying meaning. We cannot consider intonation without thinking of stress also. However, if the intonation is right, the stress does not matter so greatly, for the result is an English tune ; whereas if the intonation is wrong, the result is not English, regardless of the stress.

In ordinary speech the pitch of the voice is continually changing. When the pitch of the voice rises, we have a *rising intonation* ; when it falls we have a *falling intonation*. When it remains on one note for an appreciable time, we have level intonation.

It is significant that intonation performs two major functions : (i) it expresses meaning and (ii) it conveys the mood or attitude of the speaker, for example ‘Thank you’ can be said with a falling tone or with a rising tone. When it is spoken with a rising tone it has the meaning of a matter of fact-acknowledgement of something. But it ‘Thank you’ is said with a falling tone it expresses a genuine gratitude.

From this we understand that the selection of the right intonation pattern is very important in communication from the semantic point of view. If a wrong intonation pattern is used, the listener might get offended even though the speaker does not intend to offend him.

Moreover, the choice of an intonation pattern indicates the speaker’s mood or attitude, whether he is happy or annoyed or frustrated or disgusted and so on. Thus the learning of spoken English necessitates the learning of its intonation pattern also.

The two fundamental English tunes are known as Tune 1 and Tune 2.

*Tune 1 (Falling Tune)* : The stressed syllables form a descending scale, and within the last stressed syllable the pitch of the voice falls to a low level. Remember that it is the pitch of the stressed syllables that is most important. The unstressed syllables are not so important.

Before the stressed syllable where the voice falls we put ( \ ) mark.

Observe the following :

- (i) He was in an appallingly bad \temper. (How was John ?)
- (ii) He was in an appallingly \bad temper. (Was John in a good temper ?)
- (iii) He was in an app\allingly bad temper. (Was John in a bad temper ?)
- (iv) He \was in an appallingly bad temper. (He can’t have been in an appallingly bad temper !)

TUNE 1 is used in statements which are complete and definite e.g.

it wəz ɪmpɔːsəbəl.

Si: mi : ən \θə:zdi

hi: wəz \rɔ

TUNE 1 is also used in questions which begin with an interrogative word requiring an answer other than ‘yes’ or ‘no’.

weɪ lə 'i: w le ] eɪ w

ti tʌsde : u'd' eɪ i'veg : u: jɪ: tɔw

hʌs dʒi: n' : lʌi:k mʌi n' i: n' : hʌt

TUNE 1 is commonly used in short questions used as responses.

d' eɪz ɔn 'hʌt l'eɪdɪ || 'i: n' i:

ai w'eɪnt t'eɪ θ'eɪtʌ || 'dɪd jʌ:

TUNE 1 is used in commands

' k'l'eɪz θ'e 'd: c:

' eɪn' dʒi: n' : hʌt

' a:sk i'm t'e k'vɪn hɪə

' s'eɪnd i't h'e:k

TUNE 1 is used for exclamations

gʌd / h'eɪnz

' s'p'eɪndɪd

' n'eɪsənz

[ Remember Thank You comes in this class when it expresses real gratitude.]

### (TUNE 2 (Rising Tune))

TUNE 2 is used in questions requiring the answer 'yes' or 'no'

hɪ:z jʌ: m' eɪrɪd

h'eɪ jʌ: n' : d' i: tʌs d' eɪ l'eɪt

k'eɪn jʌ: n' : dɪ hɪə p' aɪ f' aɪv

TUNE 2 is also used for greetings and for saying good bye

gʌd m' o: nɪŋ

h'eɪ

gʌd b' aɪ

gʌd n' aɪ

TUNE 2 is very common in requests

' dʒi: n' : k'vɪn eɪn' : s'e

'du: kæv səm mɔ:ti:

'Send it əz su:n əz ju: kæn

TUNE 2 is used in exclamations which refer to something not very exciting or unexpected

θæk ju :

gud

gud /ʌk

ɪ:| rait

TUNE 2 is used when it is intended to be soothing or encouraging

ai f a:nt bi lɔ (so don't worry)

'dʒɒn ! bi hiə su:n (so please wait and don't worry)

ai 'wəunt 'draiv tu: fa:st (so don't worry)

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## 2.16. Falling – Rising Tune

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In the falling rising tune the pitch glides down first and then rises on the same syllable and rises on another syllable within the same tone group. If the tone falls on one syllable and rises on another it is called a divided falling rising tone.

If the statement is *not complete*, but leads to a following word-group the falling-rising tune is generally used :

ai 'lukt ət im (and recognized him at once)

f i: 'tuk ðə'ka : (and drove to London)

wen'evər i: 'kʌmz tə 'vɪzɪt əs (he tries to borrow money)

For statements which show reservations on the part of the speaker and which might be followed by *but* or by *you must admit* or *I must admit* the falling-rising tune is used :

hi:z 'dʒenərəs (but I don't rely on him)

hi:z 'hænsəm (you must admit)

ai kud 'teɪk ju: ðeə tɔ' mərəu (but not today)

If the statement is a correction of what someone else has said, the falling-rising tune is commonly used :

'fɔ : ti 'sɪks (he's forty-five)

ju: 'ju:s tə 'laɪk ɪm (I like him a lot)

ju: 'ka:nt du: ɪt ðæt 'wei

The falling-rising tune is used if the statement is a warning :

ju:l bi 'leɪt (so hurry up)

aɪ a:nt 'tel ju: ə'ven (so don't ask)

ju: 'mʌstnt 'eɪk ɪt tu: 'mʌt (it might be spoilt)

If the statement has two parts, of which the first is more important than the second, the falling-rising tune is used with the fall at the end of the first part and rise at the end of the second:

aɪ went tə 'lʌndən ən 'mʌndɪ

ju: kən 'ki:p ɪt ɪf ju: ri'əli wɒnt ɪt

hi: wəz veri 'wel wen aɪ lɑ:st 'sɔ: ɪm

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## 2.17. Exercises

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- A: 1. Is it necessary to set a standard of spoken English for India ?  
2. What are the advantages of RP and what are its disadvantages ?  
3. What difficulties does an Indian student encounter in his effort to communicate in spoken English ? Suggest some ways to overcome these difficulties.  
4. It is said that our mother tongue speech habits constitute the greatest hindrance to learning English pronunciation. Discuss.

- B: 1. Write the following words in *phonemic* transcription :

*hallo, pleasure, yellow, truth, with, five, song, charge, green, copper, sure, sheer, bears, bars, boys, loud, load, board, bird, look, lick, caught, cut, cot, might, dose, meet, mate, much*

2. *Bear* and *bare* are spelt differently, but pronounced the same / bɛə /. Make a list of ten similar other words.  
3. Make a list of the sounds of your language and see how many phonemes it uses.  
4. How many phonemes are there in the following words ?

*write, through, measure, six*

*half, where, one, first, voice, castle*

*scissors, should, judge, father, lamb.*

- C: 1. What are the different actions that take place in the larynx ?

2. How does the soft palate affect the direction of the air stream ?
  3. What does the tongue do in making the sounds ai, əi, au ?
  4. Which sounds in your language are voiced, and which are voiceless ?
- D:
1. Distinguish between a vowel and a consonant. Give examples of both.
  2. What is the difference between a voiced sound and a voiceless sound ? Give five examples of each.
  3. Classify the English Consonants according to the place of articulation.
  4. Classify the English Consonants according to the manner of articulation.
  5. What is the difference between a Plosive Consonant and a Fricative Consonant ? Give three examples of each.
  6. What are affricates ? How do they differ from the ordinary plosives ?
  7. Describe the following consonants :  
p, b, m, t , d<sub>3</sub>, ʒ, . Give examples.
  8. What is the essential difference between f and v ?
  9. Write a note on the nasal consonants.
  10. Write briefly on :
    - a) aspiration and aspirated consonants
    - b) nasal plosion and syllabic plosion
    - c) dark ! and clear !
    - d) gliding consonants
    - e) linking r and intrusive r
  11. Describe the function of the vocal cords.
  12. What is meant by a glottal stop ?
- E:
1. Distinguish between a pure vowel and a diphthong vowel.
  2. Write a short note on Cardinal Vowels.
  3. How are vowels classified ?
  4. Describe the front vowels.
  5. Describe the back vowels.
  6. Describe the central vowels.
  7. Describe the closing diphthongs. Give examples.
- F:
1. Indicate how the mother tongue can cause difficulties in acquiring English vowels and consonants.
  2. What is meant by stress ? Why is it considered so important in English.
  3. How do we know where the stress is to be given ? Give at least six different ways of determining the stress position if English words.
  4. What are weak forms ? Why are they important ? Discuss with appropriate examples.

5. (a) Mention three different instances of where the falling tones are to be used.  
 (b) Give five different examples of sentences that require rising tone.  
 (c) Where should one use falling-rising tone ? Give appropriate examples.
6. How many phonemes are there in the following words ?  
*write, through, measure, six, half, castle, judge,*  
*lamb, voice, first, sixth, heaven, shoot.*
7. *Bear* and *bare* are spelt differently, but are pronounced the same way. Make a list of a few other words which are spelt differently but are pronounced in the same way.
8. Transcribe the following words phonemically :  
*mat, mate, meet, meat, mate, might, mite,*  
*cot, caught, lick, leak, dose, medicine, board*  
*load, loud, boys, bars, bears, sheer, sure,*  
*grin, green, charge, five, with, pleasure, vision.*
9. **Transcribe the following passage phonemically :**  
*I bought the wood at the local handicraft shop, and I had plenty of screws. But I found my old saw, which had been left behind by the previous owner of the house was not good enough and I decided to buy a new one.*
10. **Transcribe the passage phonemically :**  
*When I went to work in the North of England, I stayed for some months in a fairly typical boarding house, and it was there that I met Mr Page. He was middle aged, small, quiet and rather timid. He'd been living in that same house for eighteen years. His was or appeared to be, a monotonous life and he had little enthusiasm for it. I was sorry for him.*
11. Transcribe the following passage phonemically  
 Tom : *Mr Rabbit was walking along one day with his fine bushy tail and...*  
 Frank : *But, Tom, rabbits' tails are quite short.*  
 Tom : *Am I telling the story, or are you ?*  
 Frank : *Please go on, Tom. This rabbit had a fine tail.*  
 Tom : *Yes, he had a fine tail, and as he was going along he saw Mr Fox.*  
 Frank : *And he ran away very quickly, didn't he ?*

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## 2.18. Selected Readings

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1. Daniel Jones : *An Outline of English Phonetics* (W. Heffer & Sons, Cambridge, U.K.)
2. Daniel Jones : *The Pronunciation of English* (W. Heffer & Sons, Cambridge, U.K.)
3. Peter Stevens : *Spoken Language* (Longmans Green & Co., London)
4. V. K. Gokak : *English in India : Its Present and Future* (Asia Publishing House, Bombay).



5. J. D. O'Connor : *Better English Pronunciation*, Cambridge University Press, London.
6. A. C. Gimson : *An Introduction to the Pronunciation of English*, Edward Arnold Ltd, London.
7. Armstrong & Ward : *Handbook of English Intonation*, Heffer, Cambridge.
8. Randolph Quirk : *An Outline of English Phonetics*, Haffer, Cambridge.
9. Roger Kingdon : *The Groundwork of English Intonation*, Longmans.