

4/7/20
Lecture No - 34
Dr. Hemanti Jha

English (Hons.)
DIII / Paper VIII

(1)

(Contd.) Topic: Speech Mechanism (3rd lecture)

The alveolar ridge

The part of gums that is immediately behind the upper front teeth is called alveolar ridge as can be seen in the figure given in my last lecture (Lecture No. 33). This organ assumes significance in English because many of the consonants like /t, d, n, l, r, s, z, ʃ, ʒ, ʤ/ are uttered by tongue touching alveolar ridge or close to it.

The Teeth

The lower front teeth are not important except that if they are missing certain sounds like /s/ and /z/ will be difficult to utter. But the two upper front teeth are used in English to some extent. To produce the sound like English /θ/ as in thin one has to put the tip of his tongue very close to the edge of these teeth and blow and again, if in this way, the voice is turned on, the result

② is the English /ð/ sound as in that (ðæt).

The Tongue

Owing to its versatile movement tongue happens to be by far the most important speech organ. Although it has no obvious natural divisions like the palate, it is useful to think of it as divided into four parts that can be done as shown below:-

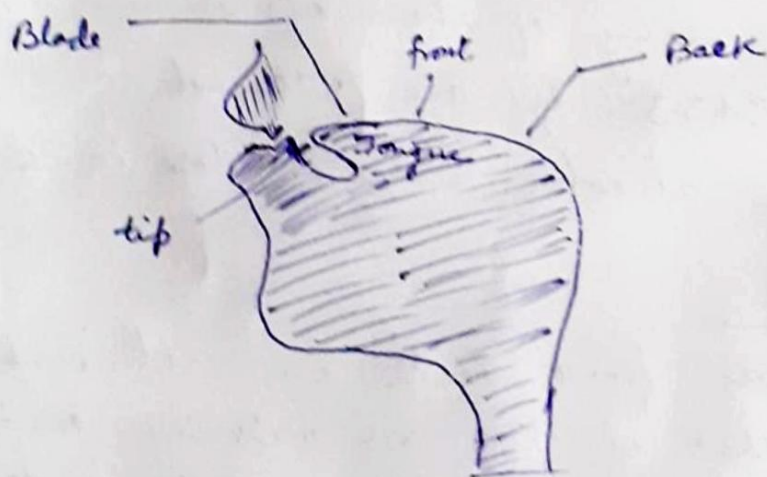


Fig: parts of the tongue

Under the position of rest, the back of tongue lies under the soft palate and the front part lies under the hard palate. The remaining two, the tip and the blade, lie under the alveolar ridge. Of these two, the tip is the most forward part where as the blade lies between the tip and the front.

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the tip and the blade are particularly mobile as they can touch the whole of the lips, the teeth, the alveolar ridge and the hard palate. The front can be flat on the bottom of the mouth or it can ^{be} raised to touch the hard palate, or it can be raised to any extent between these two extremes. The raising or otherwise (unraising) of the part of tongue as innumrated above determines the particular vowels as shown in the figure below:-



Fig: Tongue position for the vowels /i:/, e, æ, and a:/

The back of the tongue too can be flat in the mouth, or it can be raised to any position between these two extremes, the other

extreme position of the back being when it almost touches the soft palate ^{the rounds} getting uttered by the help of ^{raising of the} this, back of the tongue are :- /k/, /a:/, /u:/, /u/, /ɔ/ and /ɒ/. as are shown in the following figures:-



fig: Tongue positions for /a:/ and /k/ fig: Tongue positions for /u:/, /u/, /ɔ:/ and /ɒ/

The tongue can also change its shape in another way. It can either remain flat or be grooved to produce certain kinds of sounds. This grooved position of the tongue is very important for English because many of the consonant sounds are pronounced with the sides of the tongue curved up to meet the sides of the palate. (To be continued in the next lecture) - X - X -