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English (Hons.)
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Topic: The consonants of English (continued...)

/s/ and /z/

These two consonant phonemes (contoids) are also friction consonants (fricatives) like /f, v, θ, ð/ but the amount of friction is much greater here, specially in /s/. In producing these two, other processes adopted by the speech organs are the following:-

② The soft palate is raised so that all the breath is forced to go through the mouth



Fig: speech organ position for /s/ and /z/

② The tip and the blade of the tongue are very close to the alveolar ridge.

(2)

(2)

There is a very considerable narrowing at this point, not near the teeth and not near the hard palate.

(iii) ^{and} The teeth are very close together.

Like other pairs of friction consonants, in this pair also one is longer and voiceless (/s/) and the other is ~~voiced~~ short and voiced in most of the cases.

/s/ and /z/

Of these two friction consonants, the amount of friction is more in the case of /s/ than it is in the case of /z/. The position of the speech organs for the utterance of these sounds remains as follows:-

(2) Soft palate raised to stop the flow of air into the nasal cavity

(2) There is a narrowing between the

the tip of the tongue and the back of the alveolar ridge.

(iii) The front of the tongue is higher than for /s/ and /z/.

(iv) The ~~tips~~^{lips} are rounded very slightly.



Speech organ position for /s/ and /z/

Of these two the consonant /s/ is voiceless whereas the consonant /z/ is voiced when it occurs between the vowels.

Following are the fricative consonant sound examples as used in the utterance of words and speech: - /f/ as in /fa:st/ (fast); /v/ as in /va:st/ (vast); /θ/ as in /θin/ (thin); /ð/ as in /ðen/ (then); /s/ as in /bas/ (bus); /z/ as in /bazz/ (buzz); /ʃ/ as in /ʃip/ (ship); /ʒ/ as in /gæra:ʒ/ (garage). Apart from the consonants mentioned above we may keep /h/ also in this category. Example /h/ as in /hæ:/ (her).
(continued...)