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English (Hons.)

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DIII / Paper VIII / Linguistics

(Continued) Topic: Speech Mechanism (concluding part)

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 can completely block the mouth; the lower lip can be drawn inward and slightly upward to touch the upper front teeth as in the sounds /f/ or /v/ and they can be kept apart either flat or with different amounts of rounding, and they can be pushed forward to a greater or ~~less~~ lesser extent.

Of course, the closed position for ~~the~~ /p/, /b/, /m/ and the lip-teeth-combination position for /f/ and /v/ are used in English, but apart from this the English do not move their lips with much energy. Their lips are never very far apart, they do not take up

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very rounded shapes, they are rarely spread very much and almost never pushed forward or protruded.

Thus, in a nutshell, the speech organs of English may be enumerated as, apart from the vocal and nasal cavities, the vocal cords, hard and soft palates, alveolar ridge, lips, teeth and lungs which has to expell the air for the production of different sounds. (concluded.)

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Source book: "Better English Pronunciation"
by J. D. O'Connor
