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L. No. - 41
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Topic continued : The consonants of English (v)

Gliding Consonants :-

Three consonants of English qualify to be labelled as the 'gliding consonants'. They are: /j/, /w/ and /ɥ/.

/j/

This consonant is a quick glide from the position of the vowel /i/ or /ɛ:/ to any other ~~vowel~~ vowel. We usually transcribe the word 'yes' as /jəs/, but it can be easily transcribed as /iɛs/ or /ɛ:əs/, on the understanding that the /i/ or /ɛ:/ is very short and that we move smoothly and quickly to the following /ɛ/. Following are some of the words that contain the gliding con-

sonant /j/ :-

/jɑ:d/ (yard); /jələ/ (yellow); /ju:/ (you)
/jɒrɒp/ (Europe); /di:ti/ (duty); /kjʊə/ (cure)
/əmjuz/ (amuse); /mjuzɪk/ (music); /nju:/ (new).

(2)

/w/:-

This consonant is articulated with a quick glide from the position of short phoneme /u/ or its longer version /u:/ to any other vowel that follows. The native speakers take to the phoneme naturally but Indian speaker of English often commits mistake by pronouncing the phoneme /w/ of English as the phoneme /v/ of the Indian languages. They may say /vel/ instead of /wel/ while pronouncing the word 'well'. Following are the examples of the gliding consonant /w/:-

/swi:t/ (Sweet); /twaɪs/ (twice); /kwɪk/ (quick)
/twelv/ (twelve); /twenti/ (twenty); /wɔ:s/ (worse)
/wi:l/ (wheel); /waɪl/ (white); /weɪl/ (wail) etc.

/r/:-

This is the third of the gliding consonants, but it differs with the previous two of them as it does not resemble ~~the~~ one of the English vowels. The position of speech organs in articulating this gliding

consonant is as follows:—

- ② The tongue has a curved shape with the tip pointing towards the hard palate at the back of the alveolar ridge,
- ③ The tip of the tongue is just short of touching the palate so that friction is avoided.
- ④ The lips are somewhat rounded specially if the phoneme /r/ occurs in the initial position of a word.
- ⑤ The phoneme is voiced and the air stream is allowed to pass between the tip of the tongue and the palate without causing friction. Following are the examples of the gliding consonant /r/ :-

/red/ (red); /ri:d/ (read); /rɔ:/ (raw)
 /ru:d/ (rude); /rʌn/ (run); /reə/ (rare)
 /hɛər/ (here); /mæri/ (marry); /bɒrəʊ/ (borrow) etc.

Figure: speech organ position for the gliding consonant /r/.



(concluded)