

8/7/20
Lecture No. 36
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English (Hons.)

DTII / Paper VIII / Linguistics

(1)

Topic: The consonants of English

Consonants, to some extent, can be described as the more important of the English phonemes as compared to vowels because almost in all varieties of English being spoken in different parts of the world, if the speakers are able to pronounce the consonants of the language correctly, there is less risk of the speaker being misunderstood even if they make mistake in the pronunciation of the vowel sounds (vowels).

There are three variables which differentiate one consonant phoneme (con-
toid) from the other. These are:-

(i) The Place of uttering

(ii) The Manner of uttering
and

(iii) The voicing or Lack of it.

We shall be describing our consonants accordingly in the subsequent part of our

② Lecture.

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Fricative or Friction consonants.

There are nine consonants (phonemes) whose main sounds have all friction as their most important feature. They are:-

/f, v, θ, ð, s, z, ʃ, ʒ, and h, / For all of them lungs push air through a narrow opening where it causes friction of various kinds.

Labiodental Fricative : /f and v/

In the pronunciation of these two consonant phonemes /f and v/ the air pushed by the lungs is interfered by the help of the lip (lower) and the teeth (upper) even while the soft palate is raised so that no air goes through the nose and it is forced through the mouth only.



fig: /f/ and /v/

The difference between the /f/ and /v/ is
/f/ is a strong consonant, /v/ is a weak
one, /f/ is unvoiced but /v/ is voiced. So
we can describe these two like the following:-

- /f/ — Labio-dental fricative (~~voiced~~ and unvoiced)
- /v/ — Labio-dental voiced fricative.

θ and ð

/θ/ and /ð/ are also fricatives, /θ/ is strong
where as /ð/ is weak. In the utterance
of these two also the soft palate is
raised to block the nasal passage
so that the air, as it is expelled by
the lungs is forced through the mouth
passage only. The tip of the tongue is
close to the upper front teeth and the
amount of friction is lesser than for /s/
or /z/. The consonant phoneme /θ/ is un-
voiced and the consonant phoneme
/ð/ is voiced.

-x-x-
(Continued in the next lecture)