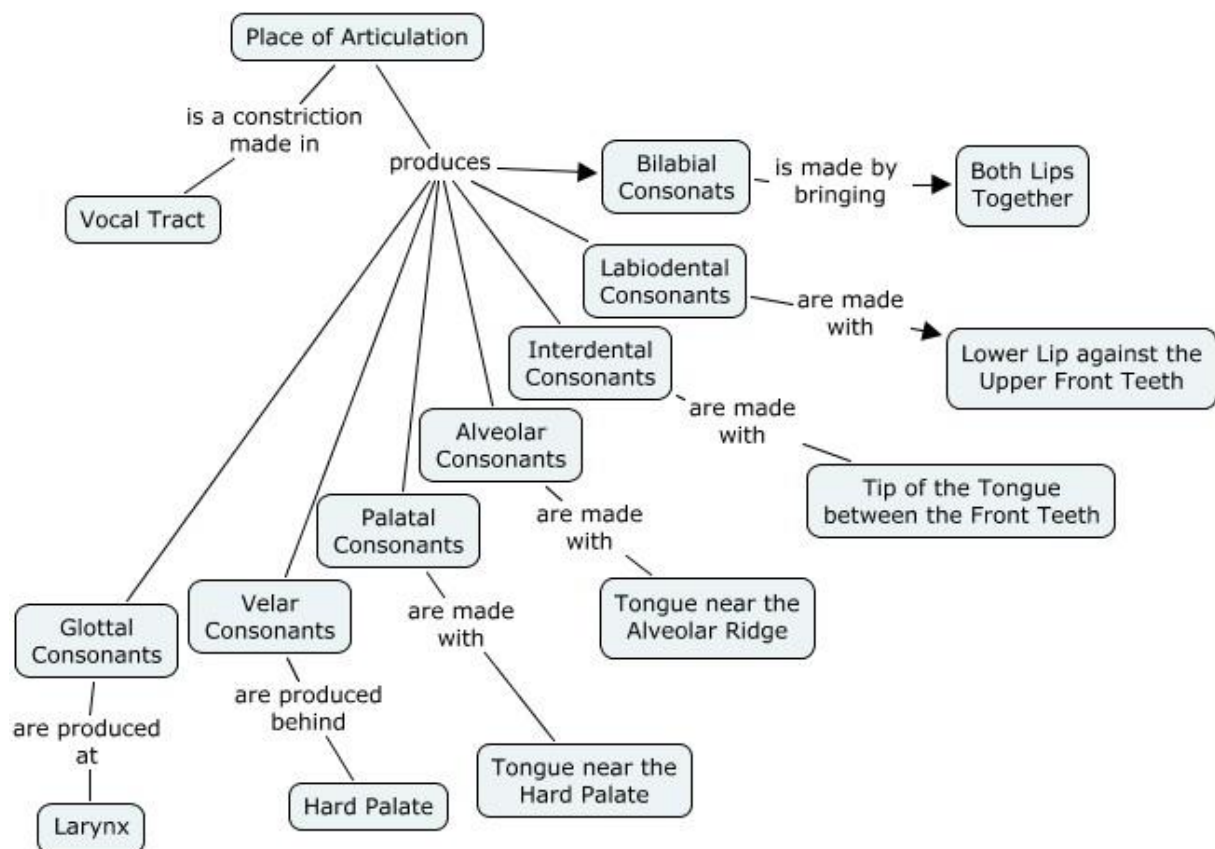


Consonants

Definition of Consonants

Any speech sound in the production of which the speaker completely stops and then releases the air stream, as in /p, t, k, b, d, g/, stops it at one point while it escapes at another, as in /m, n, ŋ, l, r/, forces it through a loosely closed or very narrow passage, as in /f, v, s, z, ʃ, θ, ð, ʒ, h, w, j/, or uses a combination of these means, as in /tʃ, dʒ/.

Place of Articulation



Manner of Articulation

We stated that in consonant sounds the airflow is interrupted, diverted or restricted as it passes the oral cavity. The respective modifications that are made to a sound are referred to as their manner of articulation. The manner of articulation, therefore, describes how the different speech organs are involved in producing a consonant sound, basically *how* the airflow is obstructed. Thus, the manner of articulation is a distinctive feature in the English language.

These are the different manners of articulation:

- Plosives/stops: In plosives, the speech organs are closed and the oral and nasal cavity completely closed blocking off the airstream. The upbuilding pressure in the oral cavity is then suddenly released. The audible puff of air that is released is called *aspiration*. Plosives of the English language are /p/, /t/, /k/ (voiceless) and /b/, /d/, /g/ (voiced).
- Affricates: Like with plosives there is a complete blockage of the airstream in the oral cavity. But in contrast to said plosives, the blocked-off airstream is not released suddenly, but rather slowly causing audible friction. Affricates can, therefore, be divided into two parts: a plosive followed by a fricative (as there is closure and friction in the same place). But note that affricates are always analyzed as only one phoneme. English affricates are /tʃ/ (voiceless) as in *cheese* and /dʒ/ (voiced) as in *jungle*.
- Nasals: In nasal sounds the velum (soft palate) is lowered blocking off the oral cavity. Air can only escape through the nose. English nasals are /m/, /n/ and /ŋ/ as in *sing*, which are all voiced.
- Fricatives: Fricatives are created when air forces its way through a narrow gap between two articulators at a steady pace. They can be divided into two categories: slit fricatives and groove fricatives. In slit fricatives the tongue is rather flat (as in /f/, /θ/ as in *thing* (voiceless), /v/, /ð/ as in *this* (voiced)) while in groove fricatives the front of the tongue forms the eponymous groove (/s/ as in *seal*, /ʃ/ as in *shock* (voiceless), /z/ as in *zero*, /ʒ/ as in *measure* (voiced)).
- Laterals: The tip of the tongue is pressed onto the alveolar ridge. The rims of the tongue are lowered so that the air escapes over the lowered tongue rims. The only English lateral sound is /l/ (voiced).
- Approximants: The name approximants refers to the fact that the articulators involved approach each another without actually touching. There are three approximants in the English language: /j/ as in *you*, /w/ as in *we* and /r/ as in *rise* (all voiced). Approximants are often referred to as *semi-vowels* (or *glides*) as they represent the “twilight zone” between consonants and vowels.

Sources

[Consonant Meaning | Best 20 Definitions of Consonant \(yourdictionary.com\)](#)

www.ello.uos.de/field.php/PhoneticsandPhonology/MannerOfArticulation