

Sounds and sound-groups

an English /d/ occurs between vowels he will be in danger of using /ð/, and confusing *breeding* bri:diŋ with *breathing* bri:ðŋ, and whenever English /ð/ occurs in initial position he will be in danger of using /d/, confusing *they* ðei and *day* dei. In general, if two sounds belong to one phoneme in your language, but to two different phonemes in English there will be danger of confusions until you have learnt to forget the habits of your language and use the sounds independently as in English. This can be done by careful listening and accurate use of the speech organs and a great deal of practice.

1.7 Words and utterances

Most of what I have said so far has been about the pronunciation of short pieces of speech, sounds or single words; it is necessary at first to be sure that the basic sounds of the language are being properly pronounced and the best way of doing that is to practice with...

mistakes.

Secondly, in a longer English utterance some of the words are treated as being more important to the meaning than others, and it is necessary to know which these words are and how they are treated in speech. And words which are not regarded as being particularly important often have a different pronunciation because of this; for example, the word *can* which is pronounced *kæn* if it is said by itself, is often pronounced *kən* in phrases like *You can have it* *ju: kən hæv ɪt*.

Thirdly, the rhythm of English must be mastered. That is, the different lengths which the syllables of English are given and the reasons why these different lengths occur. An example of this would be the following:

The c h a i r collapsed.

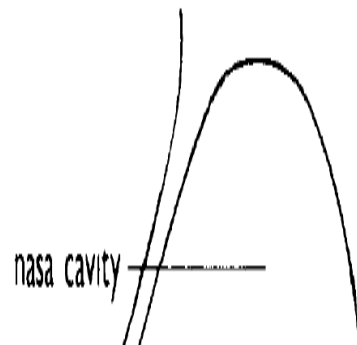
The chairman collapsed.

The word *chair* has the same length as the word *chairman*, and therefore

II

2 How the speech organs work in English

In all languages we speak with air from the lungs. We draw it into the lungs quickly and we release it slowly and then interfere with its passage in various ways and at various places. Figure 1 is a diagram showing a side view of the parts of the throat and mouth and nose which are important to recognize for English.



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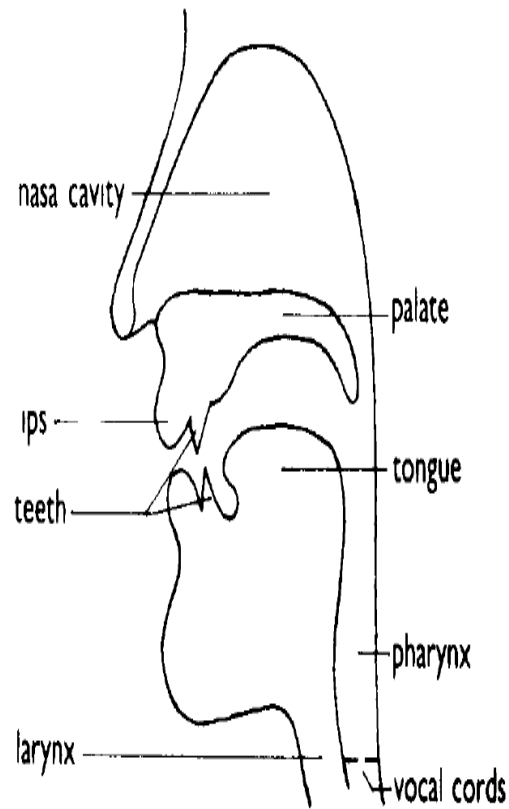


Fig. 1 The speech organs