



Consonants

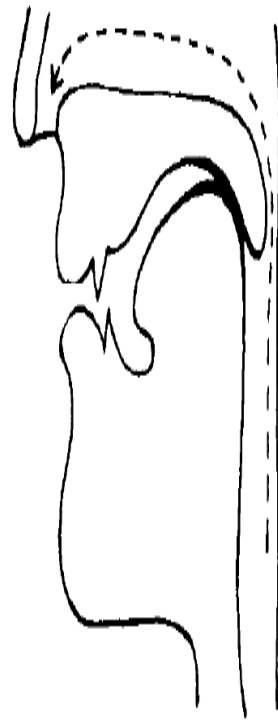


Fig. 22 /ŋ/

one sound for most English speakers: a few use two sounds and pronounce the word *siŋg*, so if you do this it will be perfectly well understood and it is better to pronounce *siŋg* than to confuse this word with



this easily, do the same thing with the teeth closer together in a more normal position, but be sure that the tip of the tongue stays in its low position. Now try the following words: make the final /ŋ/ long and let it die away into silence:



sɪŋ	sɪŋ	sæŋ	sæŋ	sɒŋ	sɒŋ	sʌŋ	sʌŋ
rɪŋ	rɪŋ	ræŋ	ræŋ	rɒŋ	rɒŋ	rʌŋ	rʌŋ

/ŋ/ does not occur at the beginning of words in English, but it does occur between vowels, where it is more difficult than in final position. The difficulty is to avoid putting in a /g/ after the /ŋ/, and pronouncing sɪŋgə instead of sɪŋə. If you do pronounce sɪŋgə it does not matter very much because some English speakers also do it; but most do not, so the /g/ should be avoided if possible. Go from the /ŋ/ to the following vowel very smoothly, with no jerk or bang. Try these examples, slowly at first, then more quickly:



4 The sound is voiced and there is no friction (except when it is immediately after /p/ or /k/ see pp. 40 and 45).

Most languages have a sound like English /l/, at least before vowels, and this can be used in such words as li:v *leave*, la:st *last*, lʊk *look*, fɒləʊ *follow*. Some languages, however (Japanese, for instance), do not have a satisfactory /l/ and such students must be very careful to make a firm contact of the tongue-tip and the sides of the blade with the alveolar ridge. If this is difficult for you try biting the tongue-tip firmly between top and bottom teeth; this will make a central obstruction and the air will be forced to pass over the sides of the tongue. In passing to the vowel the tongue-tip is removed from the alveolar ridge quite suddenly and the sound ends sharply; it may help to put in a very quick /d/-sound between the /l/ and the following vowel: l^di:v *leave*, etc.

Practise the following words, making the /l/ long and the central obstruction very firm to begin with:



li:f leaf

le:tə letter

lɒst lost

lu:s loose