

Question

What is the difference between the above two differences between consonants and vowels?

The answer

The **first** difference (A) is a **phonetic** difference because it shows the difference in the **production of the sounds**, while the **second** one (B) is a **phonological** difference because it concerns the **organization of sounds** in speech



English consonants

- ▶ As we have said earlier, all speech sounds are originally airstreams flow from the lungs to the outer atmosphere.
- ▶ When the air leaves the lungs, it is silent.
- ▶ This air is converted into sound when it passes through the vocal tract.
- ▶ In the vocal tract there are many organs of speech. These organs take different positions to produce different sounds



English consonants

- ▶ Some sounds are produced by **completely closing** the path of air for a short time and then suddenly open the closure, like sounds /p, t, k/ (this is called **full obstruction**).
- ▶ Some other sounds are produced by **making a very narrow passage in one place** in the vocal tract and pushing the air through this narrowing like sounds /f, ʃ, s, θ/



English consonants

- ▶ Sounds which are produced by these methods are called ***consonants***.
- ▶ So, We can define ***consonant*** as:
“Any speech sound which is produced **by making some kind of obstruction** (either a full obstruction or a very narrow passage) in the vocal tract”
- ▶ Vowels are produced without any obstruction



English Consonants

What are consonants?

In a previous lecture, we have said that the sounds of any human language are divided into **two** main types: **Consonants** and **Vowels**. **Consonants** are the sounds which are produced by making some kind of **obstruction** in one place in the vocal tract.

This **obstruction** is either a (**full closure**), or it is a (**very narrow passage**)



- In English, there are **24 consonant** sounds.
- They differ from one another by **one or more** than one of the following features:

1. The manner of articulation.
2. The place of articulation.
3. Voicing

