



## ARTICULATORY CHARACTERISTICS OF VOWEL SOUNDS IN THE RUSSIAN LANGUAGE

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### Abstract

The sound of speech is the minimum, indivisible unit of the speech flow, perceived by the ear. This is a real sound, pronounced by a specific person at a specific moment in time. The variety of speech sounds is infinite. Each speaker pronounces sounds in his own way, it is not for nothing that you can recognize a person by hearing his speech. On the other hand, we are able to evaluate certain sounds of speech as identical, from the point of view of belonging to a particular sound type. This sound type, the standard of sound existing in the linguistic consciousness of speakers, is called the sound of the language. It unites similar, close sounds of speech and is an abstract unit. This article considers the formation of vowel sounds in English and Russian, and also makes a comparative analysis of them.

**Keywords:** low vowels, middle row, back row, back vowels, the shape, the tongue.

### Introduction

Phonetics is the science of the sound side of human speech. It is one of the main sections of linguistics. The word "phonetics" comes from the Greek *phonetikos* "sound, voice" (phone sound) [1]. The special position of phonetics as a science is determined by the fact that it is the only one of all linguistic sciences that studies such units of language whose nature is material. The material carrier of sounding speech is air vibrations specially formed by the speaker. The listener receives information about the meaning of the message transmitted by the speaker primarily on the basis of his auditory perception [2].

All speech sounds are divided into vowels and consonants. They differ articulatory and acoustically.

1. When forming vowels, the air stream passes through the mouth freely, without encountering any obstacles. When consonants are formed, the air stream overcomes an obstacle in the oral cavity. This basic articulatory difference between vowels and consonants determines their other differences [3].

2. Vowels are tonal sounds; they are formed as a result of vibration of the vocal cords at the moment a stream of air passes through the larynx. These vibrations are periodic,





they create a tone, a musical sound. Consonants are characterized by the presence of noise [4]. Noise is a non-periodic sound; it arises as a result of an air stream overcoming various obstacles.

3. Vowels are characterized by a weak air stream, and to overcome an obstacle when pronouncing consonants, a stronger air stream is needed.

4. When forming vowels, muscle tension spreads almost equally throughout the entire oral cavity, and when forming consonants, muscle tension is concentrated in the place where the obstruction occurs [5].

5. V.A. Bogoroditsky called vowels mouth openers, consonants mouth closers: the louder we want to pronounce a vowel, the wider we should open our mouth; the louder we want to pronounce a consonant, the closer we should bring the organs of speech together.

6. M.V. Panov cited another difference between vowels and consonants: vowels can be shouted, but it is impossible to shout with consonants alone [6].

Based on the participation of the lips, vowels are divided into rounded (labialized) and unrounded (non-labialized) (from the Latin labium - lip (labialized) and unrounded) long (about this sound, the position of the rasons can change as a result of the movement of the lip timbre). When rounded vowels are formed, the lips come closer together, rounded and protruded forward, reducing the outlet and lengthening the oral resonator [7]. The degree of rounding can be different: less in [o], greater in [u]. Vowels [a], [e], [i], [s] are unrounded.

According to the degree of rise in relation to the palate, the vowels of the upper rise differ [15]: [i], [s], [y]; medium rise [e], [o]; lower [a]. When articulating high vowels, the tongue occupies the highest position. In this case, the lower jaw usually moves slightly away from the upper, creating a narrow mouth opening [8]. Therefore, high vowels are also called narrow vowels. When articulating low vowels, the lower jaw is usually lowered to its lowest position, creating a wide mouth opening, which is why such vowels are also called wide.

The front vowels differ according to the degree to which the tongue moves forward or is pushed back horizontally [8]: [i], [e]; middle row: [s], [a] and back row: [y], [o]. When articulating front and back vowels, the tongue is concentrated in the front or back of the mouth, respectively. In this case, the shape of the tongue can be different: when the vowels of the front row are formed, the front part of the tongue is raised towards the front of the palate, and when the vowels of the back row are formed, the back of the tongue is raised towards the back of the palate [9]. When forming the vowels of the middle row of the tongue, it is either concentrated in the middle part of the oral cavity and raised by the middle part to the middle part of the palate, as





sometimes happens when pronouncing [s] (a number of such vowels are otherwise called central), or lies flat, as when pronouncing [a] ( a number of such vowels are otherwise called mixed).

#### 1. Articulatory classification of vowel sounds in Russian

Vowels are purely tonal sounds. Having arisen in the larynx as a result of vibrations of the vocal cords, a musical tone, the voice acquires a special timbre in the supraglottic cavities [14]. The mouth and pharynx are the resonators in which the differences between vowels are formed. These differences are determined by the volume and shape of the resonating cavities, which can change as a result of the movement of the lips, tongue and lower jaw. Each vowel is pronounced with a special position of the speech organs, characteristic only of this sound.

The classification of vowel sounds is based on three features:

- participation of the lips:
- the degree of elevation of the tongue vertically in relation to the palate:
- the degree of advancement of the tongue forward or backward along the larynx

Based on the data from sonograms and oscillograms of English and Russian vowel sounds, certain conclusions can be drawn [10]:

- The articulation of the sounds of these languages is radically different. Firstly, because in English, when pronouncing sounds, the lips remain passive, and the sounds are pronounced with the participation of the larynx. And secondly, even the position of the tongue is different at the moment of pronouncing sounds: In Russian, the tongue is narrowed and moved forward, in English it is expanded and pushed back [11].
- The format structures are also different, as can be seen in the sonograms [12].
- You can also notice that the same sounds in the same position between consonants have either different lengths or have different effects on adjacent consonants [13].
- The formants of stressed/unstressed vowels also differ. The comparison of stressed/unstressed vowels is distorted by factors: the influence of the phonetic environment; position of the end of the utterance; individual characteristics of informants. In general, the formant structure in English is weakly dependent on stressed/unstressed position, which indicates a small qualitative reduction. The duration of vowels is shortened in the unstressed position, which confirms the presence of quantitative reduction in the English language. In Russian, there is both a strong qualitative and a strong quantitative reduction.





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