**The Tenth Lecture**

**The fourth criterion for the description of consonants**

**Classification of consonants based on the manner of articulation:**

The manner of articulationspecifies the kind of closure or narrowing involved in the production of a consonant sound. In other words, it specifies the kind of stricture (or constriction) involved in the articulation of a sound. Depending on the stricture involved, that is, on whether there is a complete closure, a partial closure, or only a narrowing that causes audible friction, consonants are classified into plosive, affricate*,* nasal, lateral, and fricative.Then there are‘consonants’ in the production of which the narrowing is not sufficient to cause noise and audible friction. These consonants are called frictionless continuants or approximant and semi-vowels. In the second chapter, there is a description for all these groups but below include a survey. It must be taken into consideration that in all nasal consonants, the soft palate is lowered and at the same time, the oral passage is blocked at some point, so that the breath goes out of the nose. The linguists classify the consonants according manner of articulation as follows:

(i) ***Plosive*** or ***stop***: It involves a stricture of complete closure. The articulators are lips, tongue, teeth, etc. e.g. /p, b, t, d, k, g/.

(ii)  ***Fricative***: It involves a stricture of close approximation*.* It means there is no closure anywhere; there is only a narrowing, e.g. /f, v, θ, ð, s, z, ∫, ʒ, h/.

(iii) ***Affricate****:* It involvesa stricture of complete closure followed by a slow release. The articulations are those that begin like plosives and end like fricatives, e.g. / t∫, dʒ /.

(iv) ***Nasal****:* It involves a stricture of complete closure of the oral passage only, e.g. /m, n, ŋ/.

(v) ***Lateral****:* It involves a stricture of partial closure. Since the air passes continuously, the sound produced is a continuant and frictionless, e.g. clear /l/ and dark/l/. In the production of the former there is a contact between the tip of the tongue and the centre of the teeth ridge; but there is no such contact, at least on one side, the airstream escapes on one or both sides of the contact, e.g. the initial sound in ʻlearnʼ /lɜːn /. The latter that is dark /l/ in production of which the back of the tongue is simultaneously raised towards the soft palate, e.g. the final sound in ʻcallʼ/ kɔːl /.

There are two more, namely, frictionless continuant or approximant and semi-vowel which, in strictly phonetic terms, must be regarded as vowels, but since in many languages they function phonologically as consonants, i.e. they appear at the edges of syllables, they cannot function as the nucleus of a syllable, they are grouped along with consonants. All of the approximant sounds characteristically involve a raised position of the tongue-back as a secondary articulation. Liquids and glides are the alveolar and pre-palatal approximants sometimes*.* These groups differ phonetically from the vowel sounds in either of two ways: 1) the articulation may not involve the body of the tongue, e.g. /r/ sound in 'red' that is post - alveolar and /v/ sound that is labiodentals. 2) Where they involve the body of the tongue, the articulation represent only brief glides to a following vowel. The manner of articulation category 'approximant' includes /r, l, w, j/ consonants as well as vowels. Nevertheless, there are two questions: 1) how do we distinguish these consonants from each other, especially between /l/ that is articulated when the tongue contacts the alveolar ridge and the absence of such contact in /r/ (as it is articulated as retroflex)? To answer this question according to place of articulation, favored to say that the sound /l/ is articulated with a firm voiced air stream through the mouth. The tongue-tip or blade is raised to touch the alveolar ridge firmly. /l/ is a continuant sonorant because its contact does not produce closure of the oral cavity. Its contact occurs in the middle of the mouth and the airstream escapes freely along the sides that are not raised. /l/ is a lateral approximant since the air stream escapes without friction. The sounds, which do not have that lateral articulation of /l/, are called central or non lateral*.* All English sounds are centralexcept /l/. The manner of articulation of /r/ is that of a central approximant and it is not different from those like /w, j/significantly. In one way or another, the retroflex position of the tongue is the feature of /r/ in many English accents. Some English speakers (Scottish) articulate /r/ as a series of rapid contacts of the tongue-tip with the back of the alveolar ridge (trill) or with a single tap in that place of articulation occasionally. The most important feature refers to /r/ as a post alveolar approximant. 2) What precisely is the difference between vowels and consonants in the set of approximants? The vowel in ʻwooʼ /wuː/ is rather similar to the consonant preceding it. It is a high back rounded vowel. This means that the tongue back is raised highly towards the velum and the lips are followed-up. The consonant /w/ has narrowing of the oral cavity both by lips and the tongue back (less obviously) towards the velum. Therefore, the two descriptions really express the same fact: narrowing in the bilabial and velar areas. The obstruction of the air stream does not produce closure and friction in the case of both sounds. The vowel and the consonant in ʻyeʼ /jiː/ are also approximants, as for place of articulation, the vowel is high front unrounded and the consonant is palatal. The lips are spread and the tongue-front is raised towards the palate without producing closure or friction in both sounds. The phonetic analysis or description of the previous sounds predicts that their qualities are rather similar.

(vi) ***Frictionless continuant***: In the oral passage of air, if there is a narrowing of such a degree that the sound produced is accompanied by audible friction, then the sound is called a fricative. If, on the other hand, the narrowing is of a lesser degree, i.e. the articulators do not come so close together, then no audible friction accompanies the sound produced. Such a sound is a frictionless continuant*,* now more often called an approximant,e.g. /r/.

(vii) ***Semi-vowel:*** Semi-vowels are essentially very short approximants. They are gliding sounds in which the organs of speech start at or near a ʻcloseʼvowel and at once glide apart to other vowel or to other sound, which is equal or greater prominence, such as the syllabic sound /l̩/. They differ from both approximants and vowels in that they are momentary in nature. Thus, /j/ in ʻyesʼ /jes/ is a glide since it starts from /i/ and /w/ in ʻwhenʼ /wen/ starts from /u/.