

# **BETTER ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION**

**J.D.O. CONNER**

**LECTURE NO.7**

**PAGES: 35-39**

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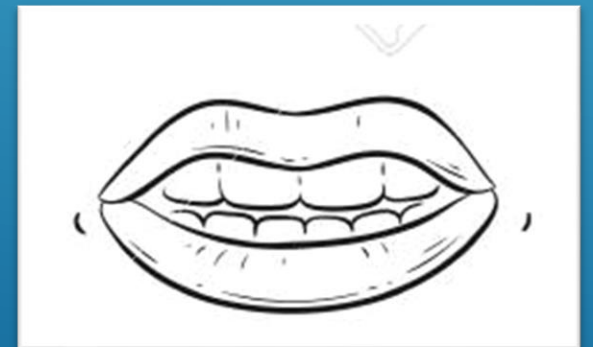
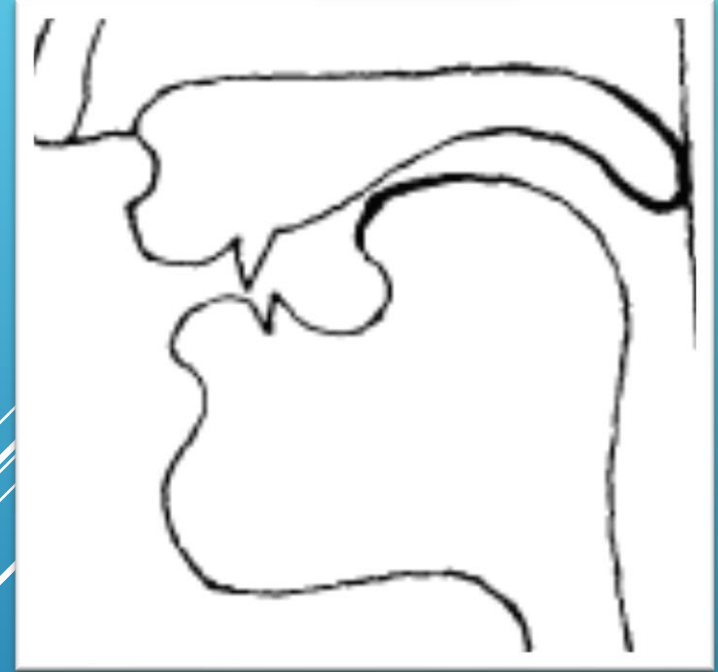
# BETTER ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION

## J.D.O. CONNER

/ʃ/ and /ʒ/

### How to pronounce them?

- ❖ The soft palate is raised so that all the breath is forced to go through the mouth.
- ❖ There is a *narrowing* between the *tip* of the tongue and the *back of the alveolar ridge*.
- ❖ The front of the tongue is higher than for /s/ and /z/.
- ❖ The lips are very slightly *rounded*.



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### **/ʃ/ and /ʒ/**

#### **The difference between the two sounds**

- ❖ **/ʃ/ is a strong, voiceless, long consonant**
- ❖ **/ʒ/ is a weak, perhaps voiced, short consonant.**

**Start from /s/: pull the tip of the tongue backwards a little so that the narrowing is at the back of the alveolar ridge ( draw the breath inwards to check that you have the tongue in the right place). Keep this position and put the rest of the tongue in position to say the vowel /ɪ/, slightly round the lips, and push the breath through strongly. /ʃ/ is a much noisier sound than /f/ and /θ/ and only a little less noisy than /s/. For /ʒ/ the friction is weaker, and shorter.**

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### **/ʃ/ and /z/**

- ❖ **/z/** does not occur at the beginning of words, but **/ʃ/** does. For example: ʃi: *she*, ʃəʊ *show*, ʃɒp *shop*.
- ❖ Between vowels, **/z/** is voiced and if you voice this sound naturally in that position so much the better; if not, make it very gentle and very short. **/ʃ/** is always voiceless. Practice these words: preʃəs *precious*, trezə *treasure*, əʊʃən *ocean*, ɪkspləʊzən *explosion*, neɪʃən *nation*, ɪnveɪzən *invasion*.

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### /ʃ/ and /ʒ/

- ❖ At the end of words, /ʃ/ is quite common, and it makes the vowel before it shorter:

fɪnɪʃ finish  
wɒʃ wash

rʌbɪʃ rubbish  
pʊʃ push

kræʃ crash  
liːʃ leash

krʌʃ crush  
hɑːʃ harsh

- ❖ /ʒ/ is very rare at the end of words and occurs only in a few words borrowed from French. It makes the vowels before it longer.

ɡærɑːʒ garage

beɪʒ beige

ruːʒ rouge

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### /ʃ/ and /ʒ/

The friction of /s/ is higher than for /ʃ/ as the tip of the tongue is nearer to the teeth in /s/. Practice the following words and make sure that you move your tongue to the right position for the two consonants:

səʊ	so	ʃəʊ	show	sai	sigh	ʃai	shy
sɒk	sock	ʃɒk	shock	si:	see	ʃi:	she
sɔ:t	sort	ʃɔ:t	short	seɪm	same	ʃeɪm	shame
pɜ:sən	person	pɜ:ʃən	Persian	beɪsən	basin	neɪʃən	nation
lɪsən	listen	mɪʃən	mission	mɪsɪŋ	missing	wɪʃɪŋ	wishing
li:s	lease	li:f	leash <sup>v</sup>	æs	ass	æʃ	ash
mes	mess	meʃ	mesh				

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### /ʃ/ and /ʒ/

The chance of confusing /z/ for /ʒ/ is very small; however, doing so will make your English seems wrong. Practice the following words:

rɪzən	risen	vɪʒən	vision	reɪzə	razor	ɪreɪʒə	erasure
reɪzən	raisin	ɪnveɪʒən	invasion	rəʊzə	Rosa	kləʊʒə	closure
ruːz	ruse	ruːʒ	rouge	beɪz	bays	beɪʒ	beige

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### */ʃ/ and /ʒ/*

Some of the most common English words which contain */ʃ/* are: *shape, she, ship, sharp, shop, shall, should, short, shut, shout, show, shoulder, shoe, shoot, shine, shore, sure, anxious, ashamed, machine, patient, position, station, motion, nation, ocean, mention, pressure, precious, bush, crash, crush, fish, flesh, foolish, fresh, greenish ( etc.), punish, push, rush, selfish, wash, wish, dish.*

Some of the most common English words which contain */ʒ/* are: *measure, pleasure, usual, division, revision, collision, invasion, vision, inclusion, illusion, provision, explosion, leisure, garage, barrage, rouge, beige.*



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### /h/

- ❖ There are as many /h/ sounds in English as there are vowels, because /h/ always occurs before a vowel.
- ❖ /h/ is made with the *sound of breath* passing between the *open vocal cords* and out of the mouth which is already prepared for the following vowel. Before /i:/ the mouth is in position for /i:/, before /a:/ it is ready for /a:/, and so on. In order to make /h/ sound, the mouth is held ready for the vowel and a short gasp of breath is pushed up by the lungs.
- ❖ /h/ does not make very much noise, but it must not be left out when it should be sounded, for two reasons:
  1. Many words are distinguished by the presence or absence of /h/, like hɪə here and ɪə ear.
  2. English speakers consider that the leaving out of /h/ is the mark of an uncultivated speaker.

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### /h/

Try not to make /h/ sound too noisy. Practice the following words and keep in mind preparing the mouth for the vowel which immediately follows /h/. Say all those words several times and be sure that the /h/ sound is there, but not too noisy just the sound of breath streaming from the mouth:

hɑ:t heart	hɜ: her	hæt hat
hɔ:l hall	hu: who	hi: he

Now compare the following pairs, one word with /h/ and one without:

hɑ:m harm	ɑ:m arm	hi:t heat	i:t eat
hedʒ hedge	edʒ edge	hɔ:l hall	ɔ:l all
heə hair	eə air	hɪl hill	ɪl ill

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/h/

/h/ also occurs in the middle of words (although never at the end of words) and should be made in the same way as before. If the vocal cords happen to vibrate and give voice during /h/ this is normal, but there is no need to try especially to voice the sound. Try these words, with a definite /h/, but no scraping:

bɪhaɪnd	behind	rɪhɜ:s	rehearse	ri:haʊz	re-house
enihaʊ	anyhow	ki:həʊl	key-hole	ʌnhəʊli	unholy
ælkəhɒl	alcohol	bɪfɔ:hænd	beforehand		

haʊz a:θə  
aʊt əv hænd  
ɪt sɔ:flɪ hevrɪ  
hɪz həʊmz ɪn aɪələnd  
helən went aʊt

how's Arthur?  
out of hand  
it's awfully heavy  
his home's in Ireland  
Helen went out

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**/h/**

A few common words sometimes have /h/ and sometimes do not, for example, *he, him, her, have*.

Some of the commonest words which always contain /h/ are: *half, hand, hat, head, health, hear, here, heart, heavy, hide, high, history, hit, hold, hole, home, hope, horse, hat, house, how, hundred, husband, behind, beforehand, household, anyhow, greenhouse, manhole, inhale, rehearse, coherent*.

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**Thank you for your listening!**