

BETTER ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION

J.D.O. CONNER

LECTURE NO.3

PAGES: 15-17

LECT. KARRAR HAIDER

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The Aims of This Lecture

- ❖ To be familiar with the organs of speech; namely the palate and the teeth.
- ❖ To know how these organs contribute to the production of sounds in English.
- ❖ To be familiar with the parts of each of these organs.

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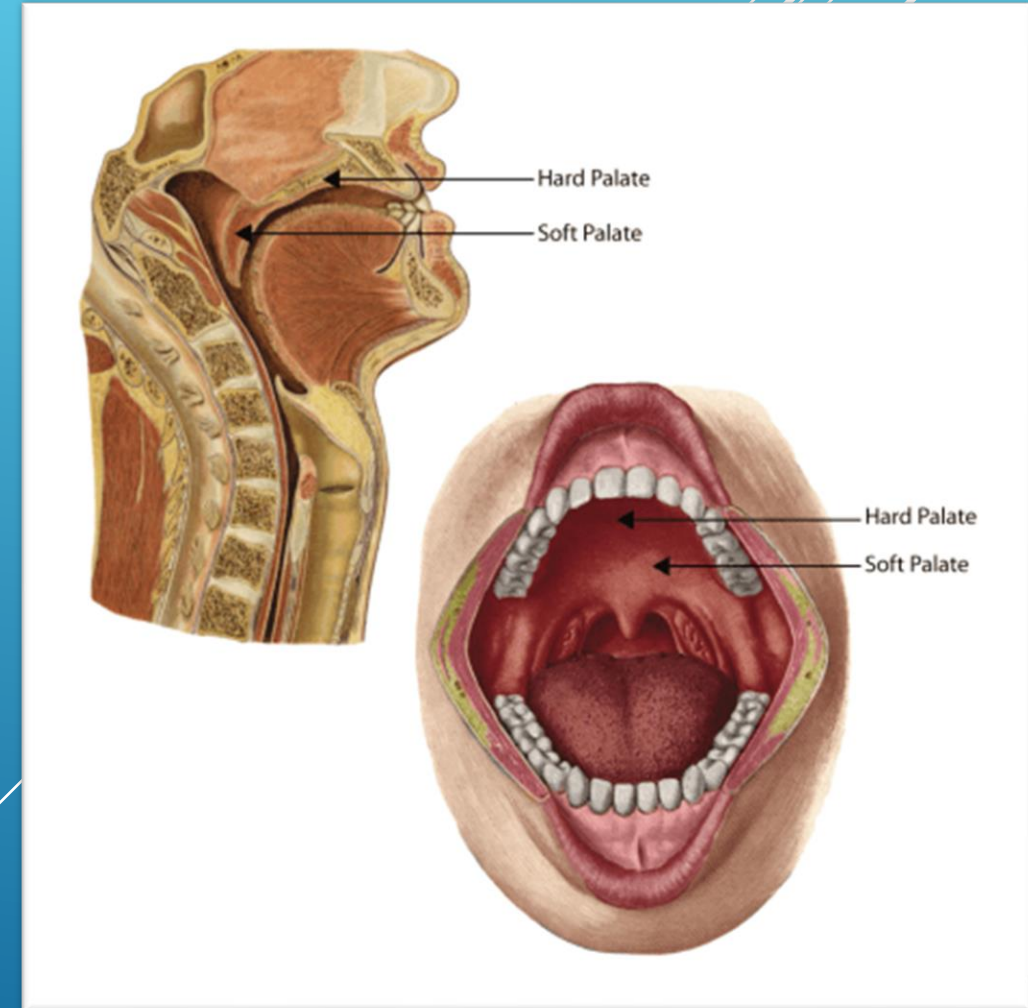
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The Palate

The palate forms the *roof of the mouth* and separates the *mouth cavity* from the *nose (or nasal) cavity*.

Most of the palate is *hard* but the ending part is *soft*.

If you open your mouth wide and say the vowel /a:/, and move the mirror so that the light shines into your mouth. You will be able to see the soft palate curving down towards the tongue and becoming narrower as it does so until it ends in a point called the *uvula* /ju:vjula/.



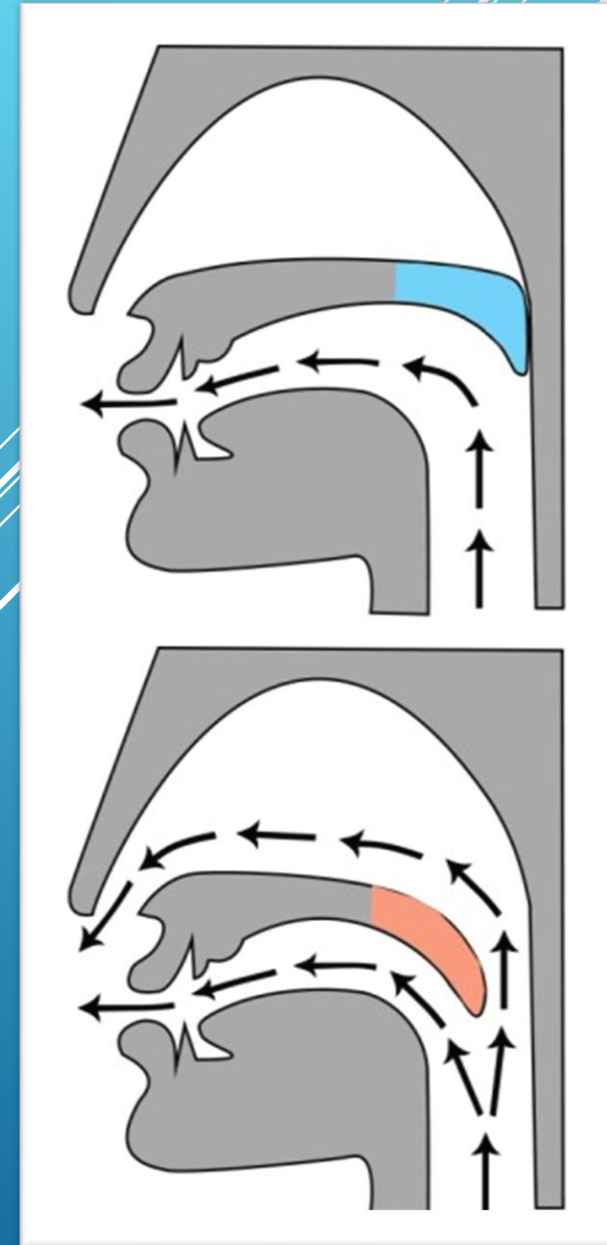
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The Palate

Behind the soft palate is the part of the *back wall of the pharynx*. The soft palate can *move*:

- ❖ it can be *raised* so that it makes a firm contact with the back wall of the pharynx and this stops the breath from going up into the nasal cavity and forces it to go into the mouth only such as when producing the vowel /a:/.
- ❖ when you relax after this, the soft palate will come down again into its *lowered position*. In this position, the soft palate allows the breath to pass behind itself and up into the nasal cavity and out through the nose,. This is the *normal position* of the soft palate when we are not speaking but *breathing* quietly through the nose, with our mouth closed and when producing the sounds /m/-, /n/- and /ŋ/.



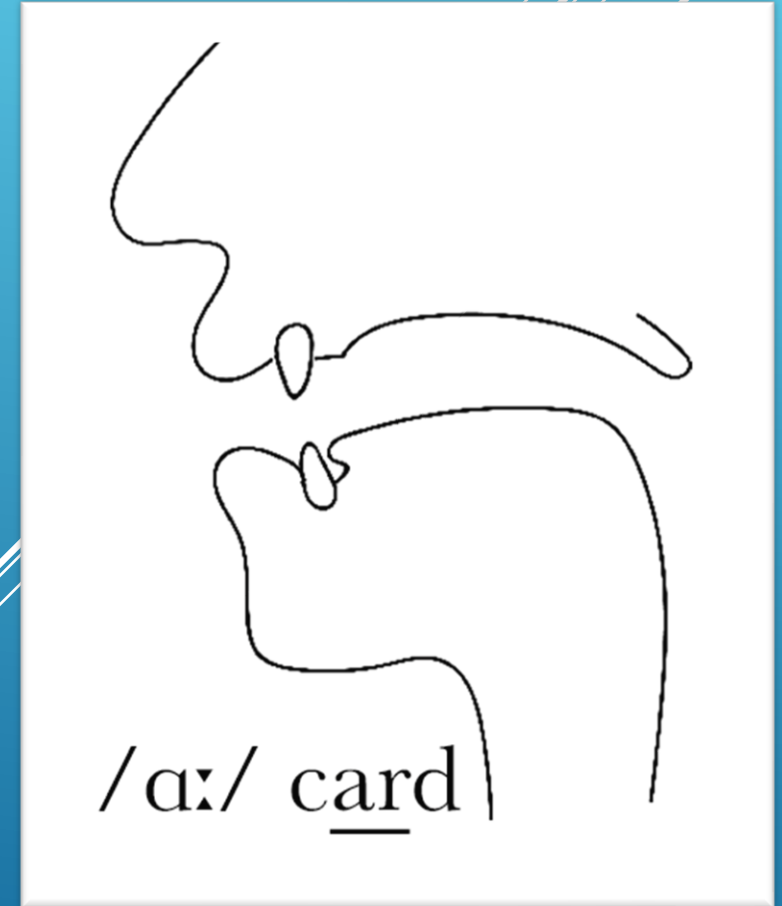
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The Palate

For most of the sounds of the languages the soft palate is raised, so that the air is forced to go out through the mouth only.

The whole of the palate, including the soft palate, is used by the *tongue* to *interfere* with the *air stream*. Say the vowel /a:/ again and watch the tongue in your mirror: it is flat in the mouth. Now add a /k/ after the /a:/ and you will see the back part of your tongue rise up and touch the soft palate so that the breath is completely stopped; then when you lower your tongue the breath rushes out again.



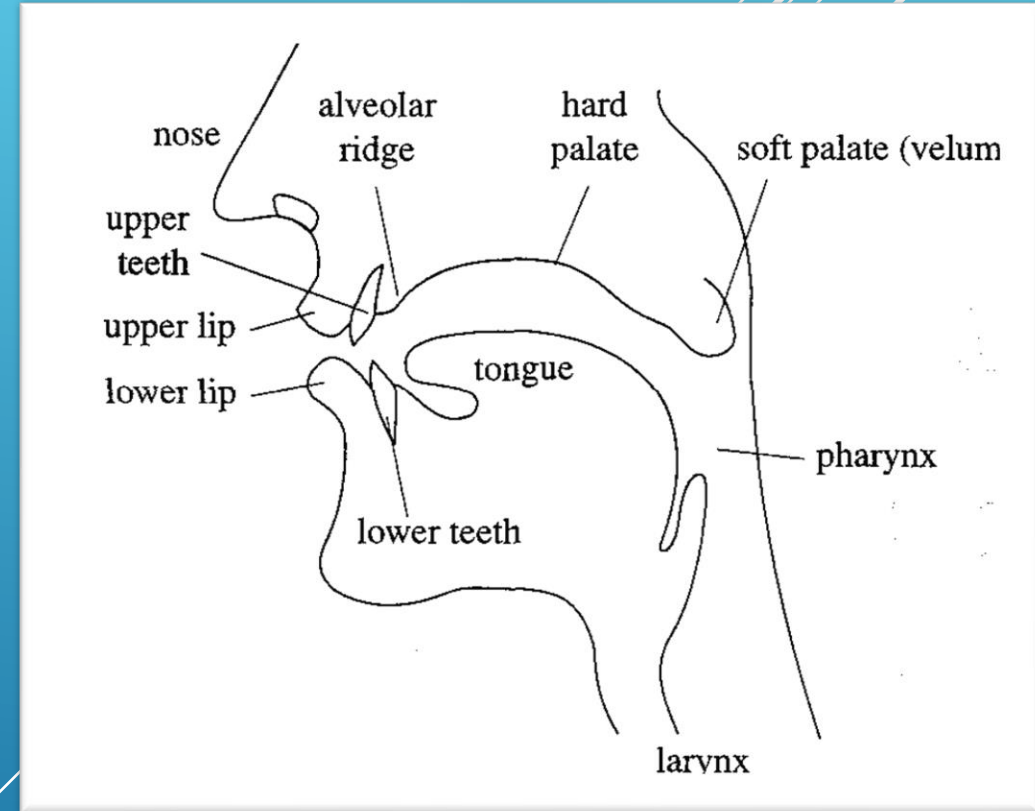
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The Palate

The hard, fixed part of the palate is divided into two sections:

- ❖ The *alveolar ridge*: is that part of the gums immediately behind the *upper front teeth*. It is especially important in English because many of the consonant sounds like /t d n l r s z ʃ ʒ tʃ dʒ/ are made with the tongue touching or close to the alveolar ridge.
- ❖ The *hard palate*: is the highest part of the palate, between the alveolar ridge and the beginning of the soft palate.



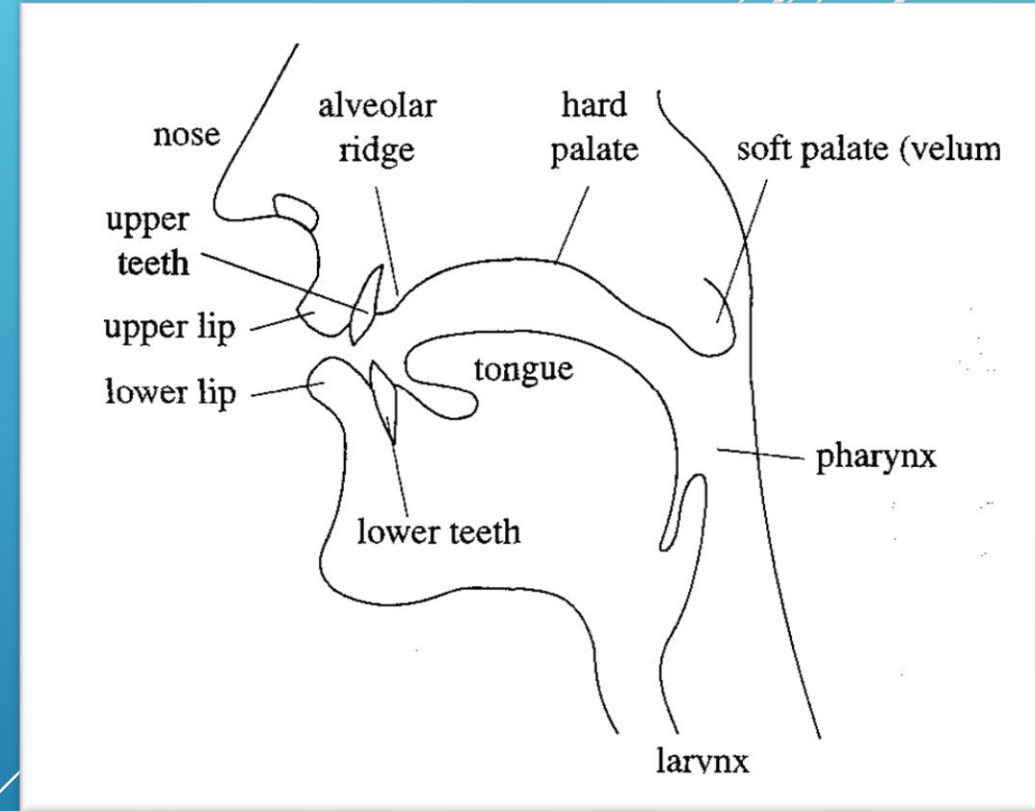
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The Teeth

The lower front teeth are not important in speech except that if they are missing certain sounds, e.g. /s/ and /z/, will be difficult to make.

But the two *upper front teeth* are used in English to some extent. Put the tip of your tongue very close to the edge of these teeth and blow: this will produce a sound like the English /θ/ in *thin*; if you turn on the voice during this /θ/-sound you will get a sound like the English /ð/ in *this*.



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Thank you for your listening!

Several thin, white, parallel lines of varying lengths and slight curves are positioned in the lower right quadrant of the slide, extending from the bottom right towards the center.