

THE ORGANS OF SPEECH

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(I) LARYNX: The larynx which is also called adams apple is situated at the top of the windpipe. Inside the larynx, there remain two thick flaps of muscles placed horizontally from front to back. They are joined lightly in the front and can be separated at the back. They are called VOCAL CORDS as shown in the given figure. The opening between these two flaps is called glottis. These vocal cords can be opened and closed during the intake of food or water. During normal breathing, vocal cords remain wide apart to give smooth passage to air through glottis. In the production of certain sounds, these vocal cords remain wide apart and air passes out through glottis without any vibration. The sounds produced in this way are called voiceless sounds.

The sounds /p/, /t/, /k/ etc. of English are therefore voiceless sounds. On the other hand, during the production of some sounds, these vocal cords remain loosely closed, that is to say, the pressure of air stream causes them to open and close rapidly. The sounds produced with the vibration of these vocal cords are called voiced sounds. The sounds /b/, /d/, /g/, etc. of English along with all English vowel sounds are voiced sounds.

(ii) EPIGLOTTIS:

It is a structure of tissues at the root of the tongue which is lowered during the swallowing of food to prevent it from entering the windpipe.

PHARYNX: It is a cavity at the back of the mouth where passage to the nose, mouth and larynx begins. It has certain roles in articulation of some sounds.

(IV) **TONGUE:**

It is a very important organ of speech. It is basically divided into three parts — tip, front (blade) and back. Tip is the extreme outer part of the tongue that remains in touch with teeth ridge in rest position.

(V) **ROOF OF THE MOUTH CAVITY:**

It consists of teeth ridge, hard palate, soft palate and uvula. The teeth ridge is that part which remains just behind the upper teeth, facing the tip of the tongue. It is followed by hard palate which looks smooth, concave and bony. This hard palate is followed by soft and fleshy soft palate that is called velum also.

(VI) **TEETH:** Teeth are the outermost parts of lower and upper jaw. They are very hard and play an important role in articulation of some sounds in association with tongue or lips.

(VII) **LIPS:** The two lips are the outermost parts of the mouth that work as ceptain to mouth cavity. These are very important to block completely the passage of air-stream.

These are the organs of speech that produce different kinds of sounds of a language.

