

### 3.1.3. CLASSIFICATION OF CONSONANTS ACCORDING TO THE WORK OF THE VOCAL CHORDS

According to the work of the vocal chords consonants are divided into two groups – voiced and voiceless.

1. In pronouncing voiceless consonants the vocal chords are not made to vibrate.

The voiceless consonants are as follows:

in English: [p], [t], [f], [s], [tʃ], [ʃ], [k], [h];

in Ukrainian: [П], [Ф], [Т], [Т'], [Т̄], [С], [С'], [С̄], [С̄'], [Ц], [Ц'], [Ц̄], [Ц̄'], [Ч], [Ч'], [Ч̄], [Ч̄'], [К], [Х].

2. In pronouncing voiced consonants the vocal chords are made to vibrate, so that “voice” is produced during their articulation.

The voiced consonants are as follows:

in English: [b], [d], [m], [w], [v], [n], [z], [dʒ], [D], [Z], [l], [r], [j], [g], [N];

in Ukrainian: [Б], [М], [М̄], [В], [Д], [Д'], [Д̄], [Н], [Н'], [Н̄], [Н̄'], [Дʒ], [Дʒ'], [Дʒ̄], [Дʒ̄'], [З], [З'], [З̄], [З̄'], [П], [П'], [П̄], [Л], [Л'], [Л̄], [Л̄'], [Дʒ], [Дʒ'], [Дʒ̄], [Дʒ̄'], [Г], [Г].

There are various systems of classification of consonants introduced by different phoneticians.

One of the most detailed classifications of consonants was introduced by H. Sweet. According to H. Sweet consonants admit a twofold division: 1) according to form; 2) according to place.

By “form” H. Sweet means the manner of the production of noise, by “place” – the active organ of speech and the place of obstruction.

In his “Sounds of English” – a detailed and distinct description of different possible groups of consonants is given. But the division of sounds into the groups according to all those minute characteristics of the sounds makes the system rather complicated.

D. Jones divides consonants according to the place of articulation into bilabial, labio-dental, dental, alveolar, post-alveolar, palatoalveolar, palatal, velar and glottal consonants (Jones D., 1962). The role of the active organs of speech is

underestimated. According to the manner of the production of noise (according to “the state of the air-passage at the place of articulation”, as D. Jones defines it) consonants are divided by him into ten separate classes – plosive, affricates, nasal, lateral, rolled, flapped, fricative, frictionless, continuant consonants and semi-vowels.

Dealing with the classification of consonants D. Jones introduces the term of “cardinal consonants”. But he himself understands their uselessness saying that “Fortunately most consonants either cannot be or don’t require to be referred to cardinal consonants. Consonants can as a rule be learnt from plain description of the actions which have to be performed by the organs of speech.”

G.P. Torsuyev, O.I. Dikushina, V.A. Vassilyev and others give detailed classifications of English consonants in comparison with the Russian ones. They suit well the aims of comparison of English consonants with the corresponding Russian consonants.

Dealing with the main principle of classification of consonants it is advisable to mention the place of obstruction as it helps in comparative study of the sounds of English and the mother tongue.

A classification of consonants with graphic illustrations of different positions of speech organs was introduced by A.L. Trakhterov (Трахтеров А.Л., 1948).

The table makes it easier for students to realize the formation of English and Russian sounds and see the difference between a foreign and a similar native sound.

The comparative chart of English and Ukrainian consonants given in this book contains English and Ukrainian consonant phonemes and is based on the phonematic principle (see table 3.1, page 106).

Such details as classification of consonants according to the shape of the tongue, the form of the narrowing, etc. are not always necessary for practical purposes, therefore no reference is made in the chart as to the division of forelingual consonants into apical, dorsal and cacuminal (as it is known all the English forelingual consonants but [r] are apical, all the Ukrainian non-palatalized forelingual consonants are cacuminal, and the Ukrainian palatalized forelingual consonants are dorsal).

No reference is made as to the form of the narrowing of the air-passage and the existence of a secondary focus of articulation. The English [w] is the only consonant which is formed with a back secondary focus and one can easily remember it. There are four consonant phonemes with the front secondary focus in English. They are: [s], [z], [tʃ], [dʒ]. All the Ukrainian palatalized consonant phonemes are formed with a front secondary focus.

