

University of Tikrit

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Fricatives and Affricates

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1 .Introduction

Fricatives and affricates are consonants produced with a narrow constriction in the vocal tract, creating turbulent airflow.

- Fricatives – continuous friction sound
- Affricates – combination of a stop + fricative

Mastery of these sounds is crucial for accurate pronunciation, minimal pairs, and IPA transcription.

2 .Fricatives

Fricatives are consonants produced by forcing air through a narrow constriction, creating friction.

2.1 Voiceless Fricatives

/f/ – as in fat – labiodental, no vocal cord vibration

/θ/ – as in think – dental, voiceless

/s/ – as in sip – alveolar, voiceless

/ʃ/ – as in ship – postalveolar, voiceless

/h/ – as in hat – glottal, voiceless

2.2 Voiced Fricatives

/v/ – as in vat – labiodental, voiced

/ð/ – as in this – dental, voiced

/z/ – as in zip – alveolar, voiced

/ʒ/ – as in measure – postalveolar, voiced

Tip: Students can feel voicing by placing fingers on the throat. Voiced fricatives vibrate, voiceless do not.

3 .Affricates

Affricates are stop + fricative combinations, produced as one unit in a single syllable.

3.1 English Affricates

/tʃ/ – as in chip – voiceless, postalveolar

/dʒ/ – as in judge – voiced, postalveolar

Tip: Affricates start with a complete closure like a stop, then release into a fricative.

4 .Comparison Table (Text Version with Dash)

Voiceless Fricatives:

/f/ – labiodental – fat – no vocal cord vibration

/θ/ – dental – think – no vocal cord vibration

/s/ – alveolar – sip – no vocal cord vibration

/ʃ/ – postalveolar – ship – no vocal cord vibration

/h/ – glottal – hat – no vocal cord vibration

Voiced Fricatives:

/v/ – labiodental – vat – vocal cords vibrate

/ð/ – dental – this – vocal cords vibrate

/z/ – alveolar – zip – vocal cords vibrate

/ʒ/ – postalveolar – measure – vocal cords vibrate

Affricates:

/tʃ/ – postalveolar, voiceless – chip

/dʒ/ – postalveolar, voiced – judge

5 .Minimal Pair Examples

/ • f/ – /v/ → fan / van

/ • θ/ – /ð/ → thin / then

/ • s/ – /z/ → sip / zip

/ • ʃ/ – /ʒ/ → she / measure

/ • tʃ/ – /dʒ/ → chip / judge

Exercise: Repeat slowly, notice airflow, voicing, and tongue/lip position.

6 .Teaching Tips

.1 Voicing practice: fingers on throat for students

.2 Contrast practice: use minimal pairs repeatedly

.3 Affricate articulation: emphasize the stop → fricative glide

.4 Listening exercises: distinguish /ʃ/ vs /s/; /tʃ/ vs /ʃ/

7 .Summary

- Fricatives – narrow constriction, turbulent airflow
- Affricates – stop + fricative, single syllable
- Voicing is key for minimal pairs and intelligibility
- Proper articulation requires awareness of place and manner

Next Step: Combine fricatives and affricates with other consonants to practice connected speech, stress, and rhythm.