

University of Basrah
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Gliding Consonants/j,w,r/

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Gliding Consonants

- There are only 3 gliding consonants in English, they are /j, w, r/. They consist of a quick, smooth, non-friction glide towards a following vowel sound.
- /j/ : This consonant is a quick glide from the position of the vowel /i:/ or /I/ to any other vowel. When /j/ follows /p, t, k/, it loses the voice which it usually has and it is made voiceless. This, in turn, causes some friction to be heard and it is important to do this because otherwise the stop consonants may be heard as /b, d, g/.

/w/

This consonant consists of a quick glide from the vowel /u:/ or /u/ to whatever vowel follows. It is more difficult than /j/ because many languages do not have an independent /w/.

- **/w/** when follows **/t/ or /k/** , the glide is not voiced. It becomes voiceless.
- **/w/** does not occur in final position . If it occurs, it does not pronounced.

/r/

- It is third gliding consonant .It does not resemble one of the English vowels as /j , w/ do .The position of the organs of speech is as follows:
 - 1-The tongue has a curved shape with the tip pointing towards the hard palate at the back of the alveolar ridge.
 - 2-The tongue-tip is not close enough to the palate to cause friction.
 - 3-The lips are rather rounded, especially when/r/ is at the beginning of words.
 - 4-The soft palate is raised and voiced air quietly between the tongue-tip and palate with no friction.

Pronunciation of /r/ in English

In R.P. /r/ only occurs before vowels. At the end of words R.P., has /r/ only if the immediately following word begins with a vowel. The /r/ is pronounced. But, /r/ is not pronounced if it occurs before a pause or before a word beginning with a consonant as in "never better".

Types of /r/ in English

There are two types of /r/ : **linking /r/ and intrusive /r/**.

When /r/ occurs at the end of the word and followed by a vowel sound at the beginning of the second , this /r/ is pronounced and called "**linking/ r/** " as in (**never again**).It is usual to hear linking g/r/ following the vowel /ə/ even if there is no letter r in the spelling as in Africa and Asia .This kind of /r/ is called intrusive /r/.

/r/ is called intrusive /r/ because it is not exist in original form of the word .The speaker added it to avoid the pronunciation of two approximating vowels as in :

- **Lindaa and Ann(intrusive r).**
- **After /p ,t ,k / there is no voice in /r/.**

THE end •

