

Answering questions

1. About previously obtained certificates:

If a student has obtained an English B2 certificate elsewhere, he/she can get a course exemption/credits for English 259, provided the certificate is considered valid and updated. The student must present a formal written request addressed to the Department and attach the certificate. Until getting a response, it is up to the student's judgment to attend to classes regularly.

2. About exams:

At the end of this course, the student will obtain the qualification "Approved-Non approved". A final written multiple-choice exam based on the syllabus content will be administered. Tentative dates for the exams: June 12, 2018; June 26, 2018; July 10, 2018.

3. Following and approving this course will not lead to a diploma or certification of any specific English level. At the end of the course, and having passed the final exam, the student will have the 3 units corresponding to English 259 approved.

Summary of previous lesson

1. The most spoken languages worldwide are Chinese, Spanish, English. English, for political, economical, strategic, reasons is the most studied language, the most consulted language in the Internet, etc.
2. English is a key to research: Most scientific articles, independently of the country they are published in, demand that at least the abstract be presented in English.
3. We'll concentrate first on oral difficulties encountered by Italian speakers.

English B2 objectives

Obiettivi

Il corso si propone di fornire agli studenti le seguenti competenze conoscitive e capacità:

- Preparazione per uno scambio verbale di idee con fluidità e spontaneità, particolarmente nel campo della specializzazione professionistica.
- Capacità di comprensione delle idee principali di testi complessi su argomenti concreti o astratti, includendo discussioni tecniche del campo della specialità dell'alunno.
- Abilità per la produzione scritta di testi riguardanti il campo accademico, professionistico dell'ingegneria con chiarezza e minuziosità.

Objectives

English 259 aims to provide students with the following cognitive skills and abilities:

- Preparation for a verbal exchange of ideas with fluidity and spontaneity particularly in the field of professional specialization.
- Ability to understand the main ideas of complex texts on concrete or abstract topics, including technical discussions of the field of the student's specialty.
- Ability for the written creation of texts concerning the academic and professional field of engineering with clarity and meticulousness.

Phonetics (sound units)

English consonants (23-26?)

The Consonants of English

	Bilabial	Labio-dental	Dental	Alveolar	Palato-alveolar (Post-alveolar)	Palatal	Velar	Glottal
<i>Unvoiced (-V)</i> <i>Voiced (+V)</i>	-V +V	-V +V	-V +V	-V +V	-V +V	-V +V	-V +V	-V +V
Stops (Plosives)	p b			t d			k g	ʔ ¹ ←
Fricatives		f v	θ ð	s z	ʃ ʒ			h ←
Affricates					tʃ dʒ			
Nasals	m			n			ŋ	←
Lateral (approximants)				l				
Approximants	w ²			r		j	w ²	

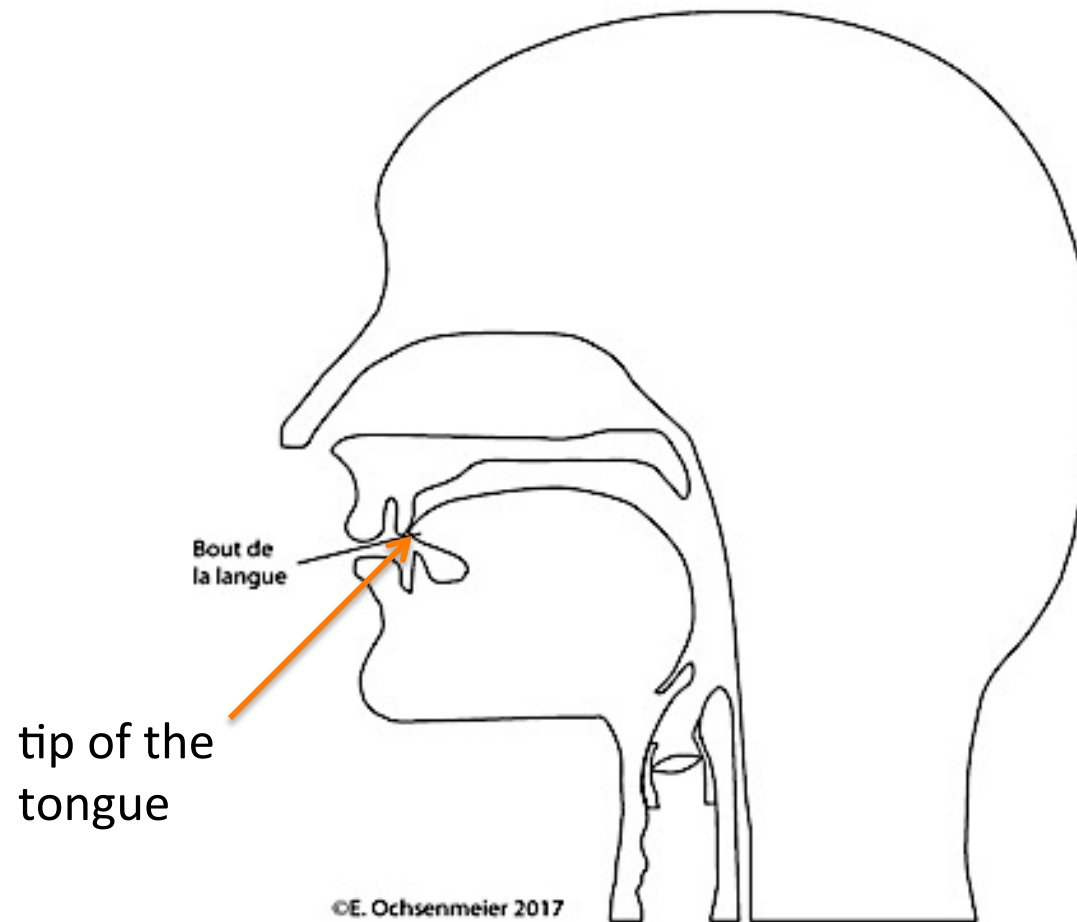
English and politicians

(video removed)

1. I need to buy a new flash
2. I'm looking for a store to buy bed sheets
3. How **thin** is a sheet of paper?
4. How expensive is a gram of pepper?
5. Do you **think** Mary is a tramp?
6. Where does Mr. Trump lives?
7. Who was Luke Skywalker?
8. I would like to look into **that**
9. Who are Bert and Ernie?
10. What's the **weather** like today?

/ð/

/θ/



θ and ð: two difficult sounds for the Italian speaker

Disclaimer: The following video has been used for pedagogical purposes only



th letters = two sounds

/θ/

- thin /tin
- thinker /tinker
- thigh /tie
- thug /tag?
- thrust /trust
- thanks /tanks

/ð/

- this, that
- they, them
- those
- this, these
- weather

Exceptions!!!

th = t in some nouns

Thames, Thailand, Theresa,
Thomas, thyme, Esther.

Thames /ˈtɛmz/



The river Thames flows through London

r and r-less dialects (rhotic/non rhotic)

r

- Scotland
- Ireland
- Canada
- America
- South west North west
England
- Caribbean

butter = bʌtər

r-less

England: East and central

Now: RP

Australia

South Africa

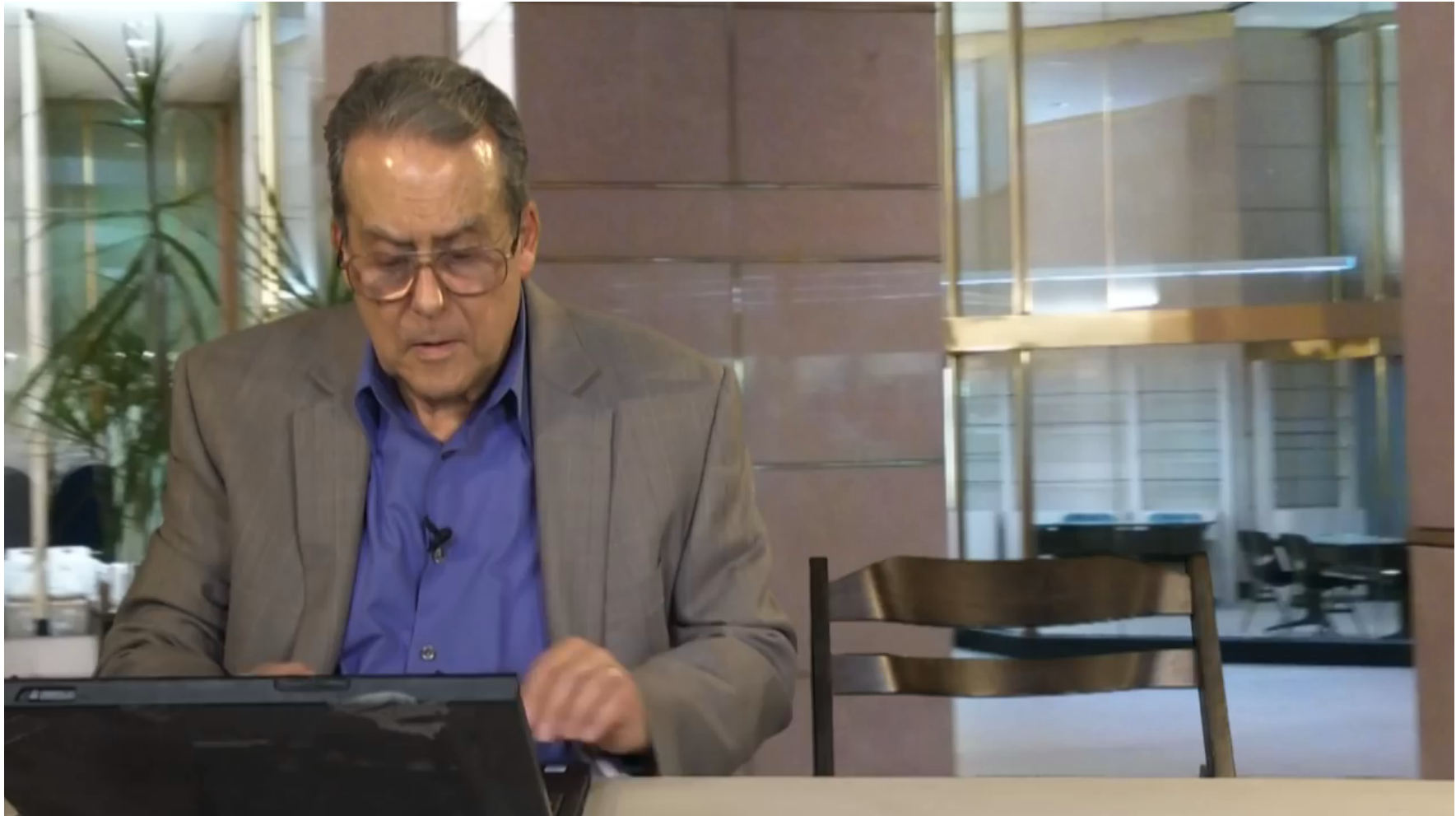
America: Black English
Vernacular

America: Boston area

butter = bʌtə

American and British /r/ sounds

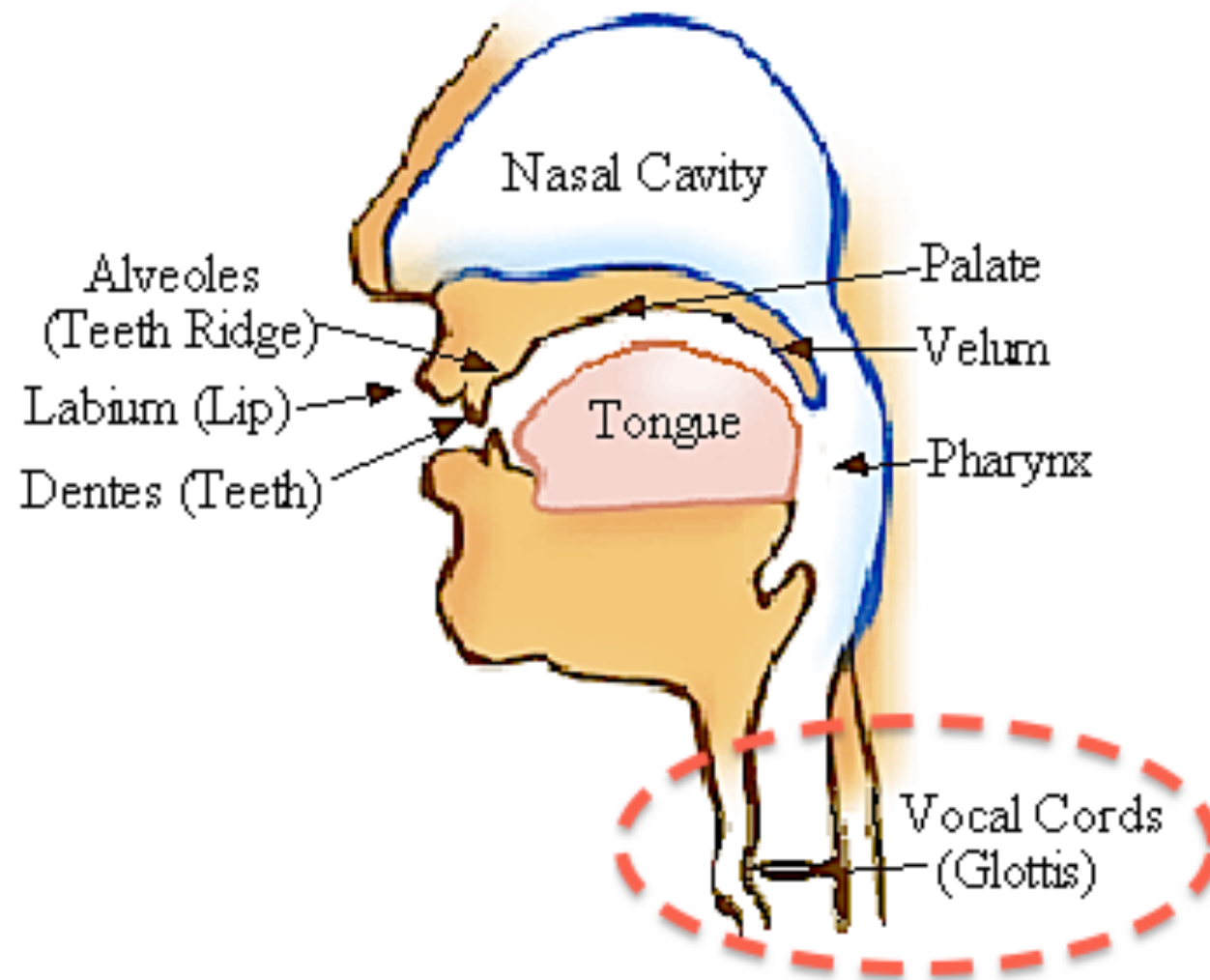
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The terrible /h/

- ham
- heart
- hair
- hate
- his
- hi
- heat
- home
- heater
- am
- art
- air
- eight / ate
- is
- eye
- eat
- Om
- eater

/h/ point of articulation



Lungs

the lovely /h/ ?

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Notes: according to slide number

1. Answering questions: a) How to obtain a waiver for English 259. a) About final exam. c) About certificates/diploma: the approval of English 259 MI does not lead to the obtention of a B2 diploma or certificate.
2. No notes.
3. Review of English B2” objectives. Concentration on “speaking fluently”. Pronunciation problems specific for the Italian learner.
4. Red arrows point to sounds difficult for the Italian speaker. Explain and discuss.
5. Discussion of how often politicians fail to perform in English.
6. Examples. Live pronunciation of red underlined words.
7. Point of articulation of dental fricative sounds in English (as in thigh/those).
8. Presentation of video. Discussion and practice if possible.
9. The mispronunciation of voiceless **th** sound leads to semantic misunderstandings.

Notes: according to slide number (cont.)

10. There are exceptions, some of which are important: Thames, for example.
11. No notes.
12. The case of /r/ across English dialects. Discussion.
13. Presentation and discussion of video about British and American /r/.
14. What is a “glottal stop”. why is it often ignored by Italian speakers? Discussion: when the speaker does not pronounce the glottal stop sound (represented as h in writing) she/he may end up saying a completely different word. Conclusion: You HAVE TO pronounce it.
15. Practice of glottal sound. Tricks to get it right.
16. Presentation of video. Pronunciation of /h/ for Italians. Discussion.