



An Animated and Narrated Glossary of  
Terms used in Linguistics  
*presents*

**[nasal]**



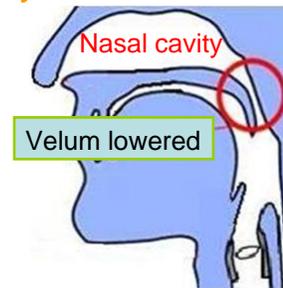
*Basic Idea*

- “Nasal” comes from a Latin word meaning **nose**.
- Nasal in the IPA chart is a **manner of articulation**.
- **[nasal]** is a **phonological feature**.
- [nasal] is used as a **distinctive feature** for distinguishing different phones/phonemes/segments.
- It is a distinctive feature for capturing a **natural class** of segments.



## Definition

- A phone/phoneme X is [nasal] if in the articulation of X, the velum is lowered and air flows out through the nasal cavity.



- By the definition given,
  - [m, n, ŋ] are [nasal]
  - Whether or not fricatives, glides and vowels are [nasal] depend on whether air flows through the nose

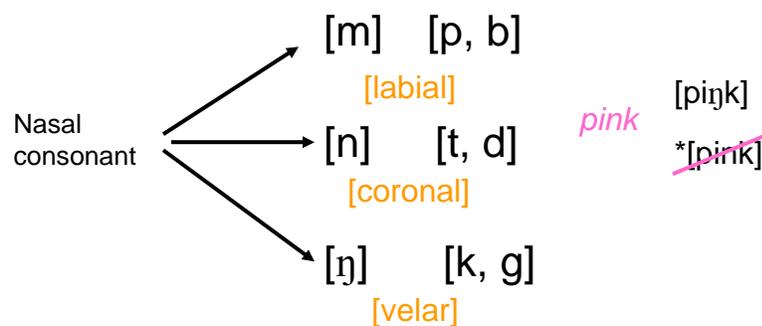
Slide 3



## [nasal] as a natural class

### Evidence 1

Across languages nasals assimilate to the place of articulation of the immediately following plosive.



Slide 4



## *[nasal] as a natural class*

- Evidence 2

Across languages (such as Malay and Sundanese) nasals trigger spreading.

Sundanese (Odden 2005:57)

abot	“heavy”	luhur	“high”
maĩr	“skillful”	anõm	“young”

- More... but we will leave for you to discover

Slide 5



## *Compatibility of [nasal]*

- [nasal] is **not compatible** with the production of plosives.
  - The velum must be raised to produce plosives since plosives require total obstruction of airflow.
- [nasal] is compatible with vowels
  - we can have nasalized vowels, as in French.
- It is also possible to produce nasalized laterals and fricatives though these are rare.

Slide 6



## Further Reading

- Chomsky, Noam and Morris Halle (1968) *The Sound Pattern of English*. MIT Press.
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- Davenport, Mike and S. J. Hannahs (2005) *Introducing Phonetics and Phonology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. New York: Hodder Arnold Publication.
- Gussenhoven, Carlos and Haïke Jacobs (2005) *Understanding Phonology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Chapter 5. New York: Hodder Arnold.
- Hall, T. A. (2007). Segmental features. In Paul de Lacy (ed.) *The Cambridge Handbook of Phonology*, (pp. 311-334). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kenstowicz, Michael J. (1994) *Phonology in Generative Grammar*. Blackwell Publishers.
- Odden, David (2005) *Introducing Phonology*. Cambridge University Press.
- Padgett, Jaye (1995) *Stricture in Feature Geometry*. Stanford: CSLI.

Slide 7



## The End

Wee, Lian-Hee and Winnie H.Y. Cheung (2009)  
*An animated and narrated glossary of terms used in Linguistics*.  
Hong Kong Baptist University.