An Animated and Narrated Glossary of Terms used in Linguistics presents

Place of Articulation

Articulators
By place of articulation, we refer only to the oral cavity.

**Place of Articulation**

- The place of articulation is the part of the oral cavity where stricture is greatest in the production of a phone (i.e. a linguistic sound).
**Lips (labial)**

- Close both lips to produce [p] or [m].
- Or draw them near without touching to produce [w].
- Or use only the lower lip to produce [f] or [v].

**Teeth (dental)**

- Recall [f] or [v] which require the upper teeth.
- Try [θ] in “that”.

The lower teeth are not known to be relevant in human languages.
**Alveolar**

- Make the [t] sound.
- The tip of the tongue touches the alveolar ridge.
- Try [s], where there is a narrow stricture at the alveolar ridge.

**Palatal and Velar**

- Use your tongue body to either touch the hard palate or velum to make other sounds.
- Or simply draw your tongue body close to them.
Places of Articulation in the IPA

- Bilabial (both lips)
- Dental
- Alveolar
- Palatal
- Velar
- Uvular
- Pharyngeal
- Glottal

Labiodental
- Upper teeth and lower lip.

Postalveolar
- The area just behind the alveolar ridge but not quite the center of the hard palate.

Retroflex
- Tip of tongue curled and pointing towards the postalveolar or palatal region.
Additional Note

- Among phonologists, it is also possible to talk about places of articulation for vowels.
- Also, instead of using the set of places given by the IPA chart, some theorists may prefer defining places of articulation with reference to the position of the tongue body, using features like [dorsal], [front], [high], etc.
Further reading


The End

Wee, Lian-Hee and Winnie H.Y. Cheung (2009)

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