



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

# [voice]



## *Basic Idea*

- [voice] is a **phonological feature**.
- It is used as a **distinctive feature** for distinguishing different phones/phonemes/segments.
- It is also used as a distinctive feature for capturing a **natural class** of segments.

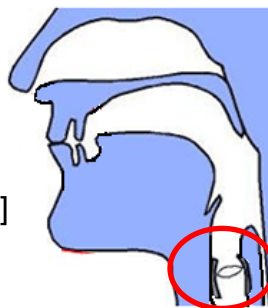


## Definition

A phone/phoneme X is [voice] if in the articulation of X under normal phonation, there is **vocal fold vibration**.

By the definition given,

- Obstruents like [b, g, z]
- Sonorant consonants like [l, n, r, w]
- Typical vowels like [u, o]



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## [voice] as distinctive feature

**Evidence 1:** Voicing is semantically relevant.

nab [næ <b>b</b> ]	nap [næ <b>p</b> ]
dog [dɒ <b>g</b> ]	dock [dɒ <b>k</b> ]
bad [bæ <b>d</b> ]	bat [bæ <b>t</b> ]

In each pair, everything is the same except for the [voice] of the final consonant.

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## *[voice] as distinctive feature*

**Evidence 2:** Relevance of [voice] in phonological alternation.

Russian (Padgett 2002)

Prefix /ot-/

ot-stupitʲ    “to step back”  
od-brositʲ    “to throw aside”

Prefix /pod-/

pod-3etʃ    “to set fire to”  
pot-pisatʲ    “to sign”

The final obstruent of a prefix must agree with the following obstruent in [voice].

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## 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.

