

English vowels. Principles of classification

Lecture 2

Contents

- ❖ Introduction. Vowel sounds. Principles
- ❖ The stability of articulation
- ❖ The position of the tongue
- ❖ The length of the vowels
- ❖ The degree of tenseness and the character of the end of a vowel

Vowel sounds. Principles of classification

Vowels

Sounds of speech, during the articulation of which the air flow passes freely through the pharyngeal and oral cavity, and the vocal cords are shifted and vibrate, are called vowels. Vowels are sounds produced by the voice (tone).

The Principles of classification



Principles

- ❖ The degree of tenseness and character of the vowel end

The stability of articulation

monophthongs

They are pure vowels, the articulation is almost unchanging: [ɪ, e, æ, a :, ɒ, ɔ :, ʊ, ʌ, ɜ :, ə]

diphthongs

The complex sounds consisting of two elements (nucleus and glide):

narrow [eɪ, əʊ, ɪə, eə, ʊə]

wide [aɪ, aʊ, ɔɪ]

diphthongoids

Vowel sounds having slightly changing articulation:

[i:], [u:]

The System of Cardinal Vowels by Daniel Jones

Front Vowels

Nº 1 i

Nº 2 e

Nº 3 ε

Nº 4 a

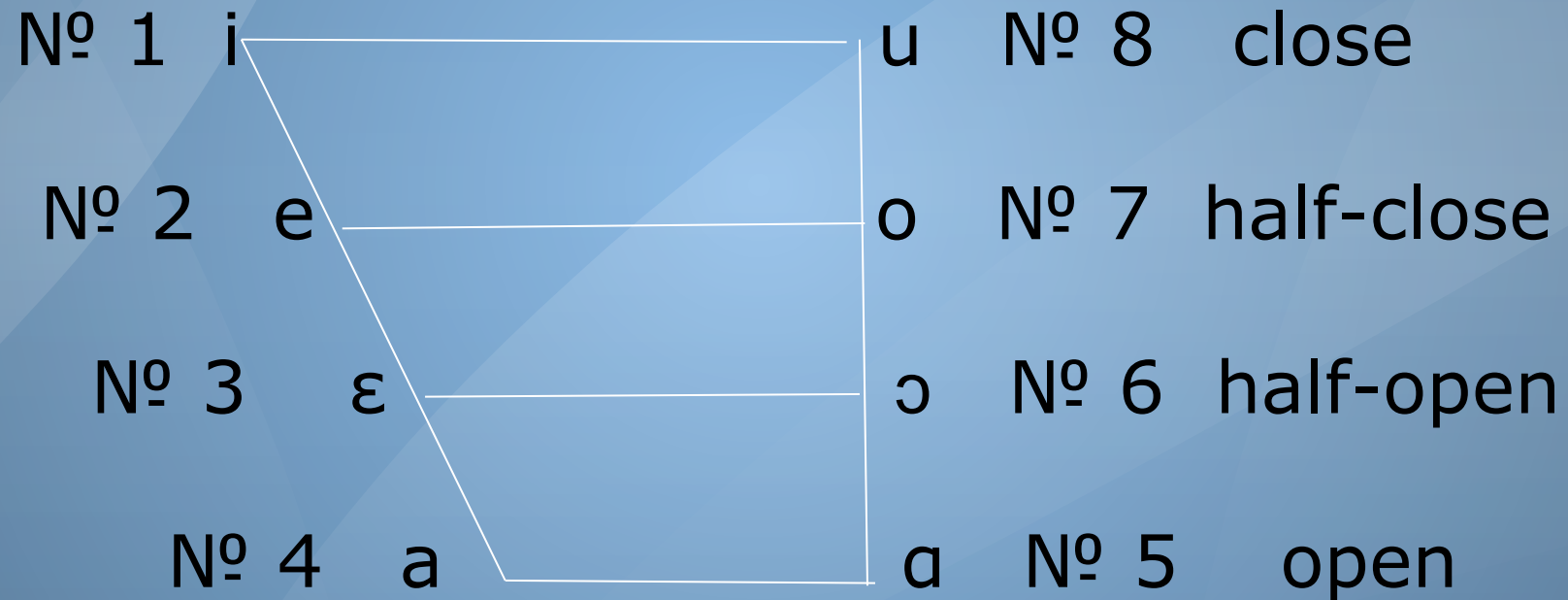
Back Vowels

u Nº 8 close

o Nº 7 half-close

ɔ Nº 6 half-open

ɑ Nº 5 open



The position of the tongue

Vowels

(according to the horizontal movements of the tongue)

front

central

back

Vowels

(according to the vertical movements of the tongue)

high

mid

low

Vowels



front

/i:, e, æ/ /eɪ, εə, aɪ/

front-retracted /ɪ/ /ɪə/

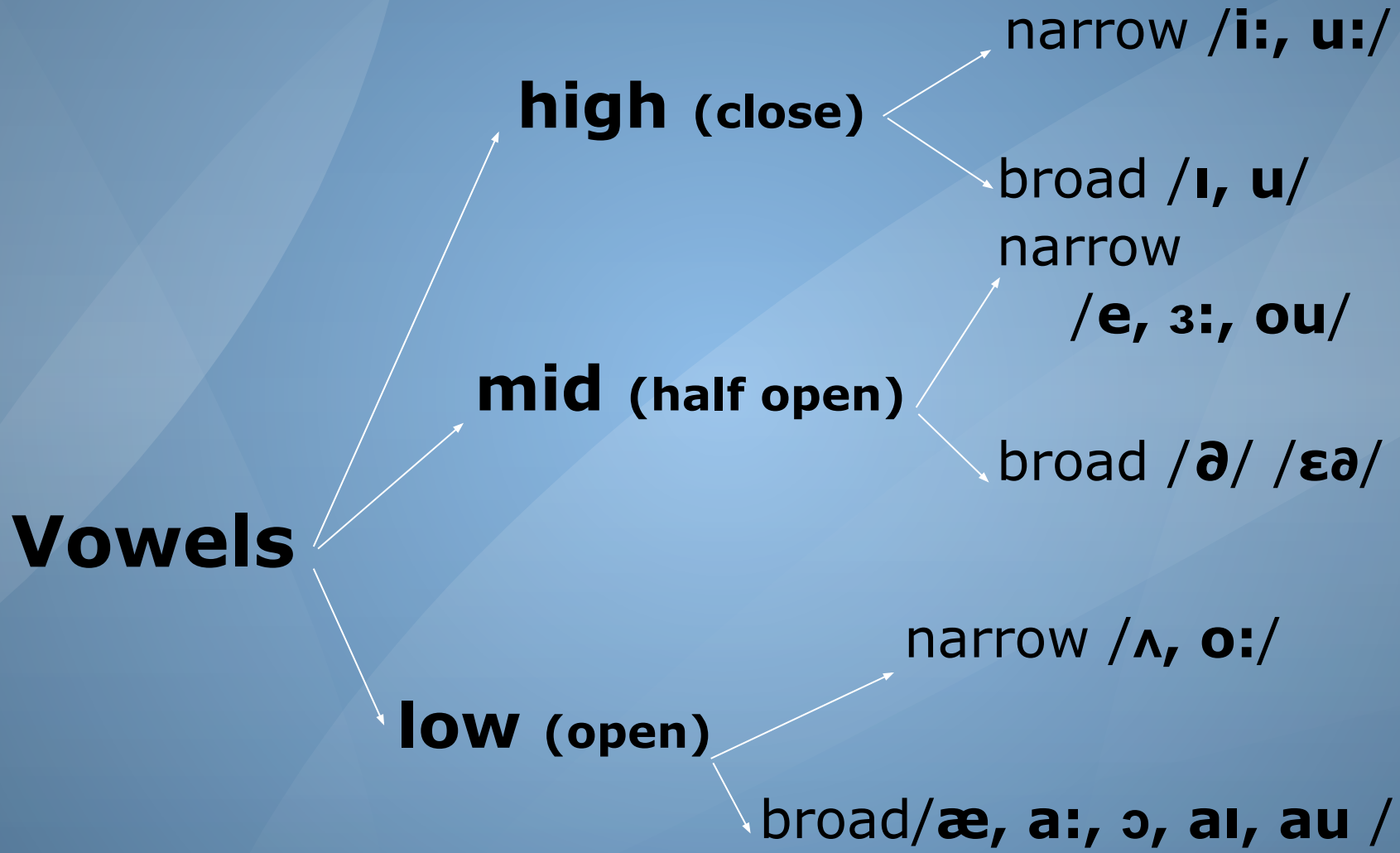
mixed or central /ə, ɜ: /

back-advanced

/ʌ, u, a: / /ou, uə/

back

/o, o:, u: / /oɪ/



The position of the lips



Vowels

[ɒ, ɔ :, ʊ, u:]

[i:, ɪ, e, æ, a :, ʌ, ɜ :, ə]

The length of the vowels



Vowel

A diagram consisting of two overlapping circles. The word "Vowel" is centered in the intersection of the two circles. The background of the slide features abstract blue and white curved shapes.

[i:, a :, ɜ :, ɔ :, u:]

[ɪ, e, æ, ʌ, ə, ɒ, ʊ]

The degree of tenseness and the character of the end of a vowel

According to the
degree of muscular tension

tense

lax

According to the
character of the end

free

checked

The degree of muscular tension & the character of the vowel end

**Tense
vowels**

**Lax
vowels**

**Free
vowels**

**Checked
vowels**

[i:, a :, ɜ :,
ɔ :, u:, eɪ,
əʊ, ɪə, eə,
ʊə, aɪ,
aʊ, ɔɪ]

[ɪ, e, æ,
ʌ, ə, ɒ,
ʊ]

monophtho
ngs,
diphthongoi
ds,
diphthongs
stressed
and
unstressed

short
vowels
under stress
followed by
a consonant