

What is the benefit of that (calling them ‘voiced’ and ‘voiceless’)? It is beneficial in suttas such as ‘Vagge ghosāghosānam tatiya-paṭhamā’ (§ 30).

The Definition of the Terms:

§Parasamaññā = other designations < para (adj) another, other + samaññā (f) designation (technical term) § yā (f, nom, sg) = which, what, whatever; ca (indecl.) = and, then, now §pana (indecl.) = and, yet, but, on the contrary, moreover §paresu [ganthesu] (m, loc, pl) = in other [texts] §sakkataganthesu (m, loc, pl) = in the Sanskrit texts (grammar books) <sakkata Sanskrit + gantha (m) text §samaññā (f, nom, sg) = designation, technical/grammatical term eg: akkhara, sara, rassa, dīgha, byañjana, vagga, Sithila, Dhanita etc. §ghosā (m) = sound, shout, utterance; sonants

* Applied sense: sonorous consonants (letter)

eg: saṅgho, i.e. which have to be pronounced with sonorous or forceful voice §aghosa (indecl.)= non-sonorous consonants, surds §vā (indecl.) = either...or, or - ghosāti = the word or the name ‘ghosa’ §tā (f) [yā...tā...] = that one §payoge (optative, 3rd p. sg) = may be adopted, undertaken < pa + √ yuj + e ‘to undertake, apply, to employ’ > payojeti ‘undertaking, exercise, practice, adoption’ §sati (f)= mindfulness, recognition §etth’ āpi = ettha + api= in the word of Pāli grammar §yujjante (pre, medium–attanopada, 3rd p. pl) < yujjati = be suitable or proper

Chart 1 The forty-one letters (Akkharā)

Thāna Place of articulation		Sara 8 vowels			Byañjana (33 consonants)							
		Rassa short	Dīgha long	Diphthongs	Vagga (group)				Avagga			
					Aghosa (Hard, surds) Mutes	Ghosa Soft, Sonants					Sibilant	No
						Mutes	Nāsika nasal	Resonants	Spirants	purenasal		
1	Kaṇṭhaja (guttural)	a	ā		k kh	g gh	ṇ		h			8
2	Tāluja (palatal)	i	ī		c ch	j jh	ṇ	y				8
3	Muddhaja (cerebral)				ṭ ṭh	ḍ ḍh	ṇ	r ṛ				7
4	Dantaja (dental)				t th	d dh	n	l			s	7
5	Oṭṭhaja (labial)	u	ū		p ph	b bh	m					7
6	Niggahita (pure nasal)									m		1
7	Kaṇṭhaja-tāluja			e								1
8	Kaṇṭhaja-oṭṭhaja			o	1	2	3	4	5			1
9	Dantaja-oṭṭhaja				Sithila loss, voiceless (non-aspirate)					v		1
		3	5		Dhanita sound, noise, voiced (aspirate)							
Total		8			25				8			41

Guide to the Table

Ṭhāna: *Place of articulation*

Kāraṇa: *Instrument of articulation (production)*

Payatana: *Manner of articulation (degree of effort)*

<u>Four Kāraṇa:</u>	1. Jivhā majjha	: <i>Middle of tongue</i> (i, ī, c, ch, j, jh, ñ, y)
	2. Jivho pagga	: <i>Near the tip of tongue</i> (ṭ, ṭh, ḍ, ḍh, ṇ, r, l)
	3. Jivhagga	: <i>Tip of tongue</i> (t, th, d, dh, n, l, s)
	4. Sakaṭhāna	: <i>Its own place</i> (a, ā, u, ū, e, o, k, kh, g, gh, ṇ, p, ph, b, bh, m, v, h, ṁ)
<u>Four Payatana:</u>	1. Saṁvuṭa	: <i>Closed (restrained); a</i>
	2. Vivaṭa	: <i>Opening of the lips; ā, ī, u, ū, e, o</i>
	3. Phuṭṭha	: <i>Touched</i> (ṭhāna & karaṇa); k, c, ṭ, t, p - groups (25)
	4. Isaṁphuṭṭha	: <i>Touching a little; y, r, l, v</i>

* Additional notes:

- **Ghosa:** They have to be pronounced in loud sound.
- **Aghosa:** They have to be pronounced in soft sound.
- Another classification of 33 consonants is Sithita & Dhanita
- **Niggahita** is a nasal consonant; it is not included in the group of ghosa or aghosa. Following is still another classification of the 33 consonants.

Sithila (23) <i>Pronounced flabbily</i>	k, g, ṇ, c, j, ñ, ṭ, ḍ, ṇ, t, d, n, p, b, m, y, r, l, v, s, h, ḷ, ṁ (remaining all the letters)
Dhanita (10) <i>Pronounced with forceful voice, as that of ghosa</i>	kh, gh, ch, jh, ṭh, ḍh, th, dh, ph, bh (2 nd and 4 th letter of 'groups')

- **Digha and Rassa Sara:** All short vowels—*a, i, u* are prosodically long that comes before a conjunct or double consonant; for instance in bhikkhu. They are also long when followed by ṁ (niggahīta) as in pupphaṁ⁷⁹
- **Sonant vowels:** In pālī, 'a' and 'ā' are the only pure vowels. The vowels i, ī, and u, ū are called sonant vowels—they can serve both as vowels and as consonants. They are vowels when followed by a consonant; they are consonants when followed by a vowel; e.g. su-kara>sukara 'easy', su-ākāra>svākāra 'of good disposition'. Hence sonant vowel has a corresponding sonant consonant: i>y, u>v⁸⁰

⁷⁹ A Practical Grammar of the Pālī Language, p.1

⁸⁰ A Grammar of the Pālī Language, p.2

- **Diphthongs:** A diphthong is a double sound consisting of a pure vowel and a sonant vowel. In pāli the pure vowels are ‘a’ and ‘ā’, and the only genuine sonant vowels are ‘i’ and ‘u’. Hence the only possible diphthongs are ‘ai’, ‘āi’, and ‘au’ which give rise in pāli to ‘e’ and ‘o’ respectively. E.g. savaniya>sau + aniya>so + aniya; sāveti>sāu + eti>so + eti.

They are the vowels of variable length. They are long in an open syllable, i.e. when they come at the end of a syllable as in ne-tuṃ ‘to lead’, so-tuṃ ‘to hear’; and they are short in a closed syllable, i.e. when they are followed by a consonant with which they make a syllable as in upek-khā ‘indifference’, sot-thi ‘safety’.⁸¹

They are diphthongs only grammatically, because they are supposed to be the product of the meeting and contraction of the two vowels (a+i>e; a+u>o). In reality and practically they are simple vowels.⁸² They can also be obtained through the process of guṇa (which means that ‘i’ and ‘ī’ becomes e; u and ū becomes o). e.g. sumana>somana.⁸³

- **Vaṇṇa:** All the letters have got their own seats or sources of utterance. Those letters which belong to a common seat and are expressed with similar effort, are called **sa-vaṇṇa** (‘similar’ or homogenous letters). Thus ‘a’ and ‘ā’, ‘i’ and ‘ī’ as well as ‘u’ and ‘ū’ are homogenous letters. But there can be no similarity or homogeneity between a vowel and a consonant. Of the ‘similar’ vowels, again, ‘a’ and ‘ā’ are also known as **a-vaṇṇa**; ‘i’ and ‘ī’ are also called **i-vaṇṇa**; ‘u’ and ‘ū’ are also called **u-vaṇṇa**; ‘e’ and ‘o’ are **a-savaṇṇa**.⁸⁴

“**Dissimilar**” denotes the dissimilarity in the place of articulation. For instance, “ā” and “ā” are said to be “similar” because they are pronounced at the throat (kaṇṭha); likewise, “ī” and “ī” are similar as they are pronounced at the soft palate with the middle of the tongue in proximity to the palate, and so on. But, ‘a’ and ‘i’ are dissimilar because they are pronounced at different places of articulation.⁸⁵

Similar (Sarūpa) and dissimilar (Asarūpa) vowels: When the places of articulation are same, they are called similar vowel, for instance, ‘a’ and ‘ā’ (guttural vowels). But, if the places of articulation differ, they are called dissimilar vowels, for instance, the guttural vowels ‘a’, and ‘ā’ are dissimilar to the hard palatal vowels ‘i’, ‘ī’, the labial vowels ‘u’, ‘ū’, and so on.

⁸¹ A Grammar of the Pāli Language, p.2

⁸² A Practical Grammar of the Pāli language, p.1

⁸³ Pāli Grammar, p.2

⁸⁴ Ibid, p.4

⁸⁵ The source is taken from Ven Nandisena.

Sarūpa vowels & their places of articulation	Their asarūpa (dissimilar vowel)
a ā (<i>guttural</i>) i ī (<i>palatal</i>) u ū (<i>labial</i>)	i ī u ū e o a ā u ū e o a ā i ī e o
a + a/ā; ā + a/ā i + i/ī; ī + i/ī; u + u/ū; ū + u/ū	a + i / ī / u / ū / e / o i + a / ā / u / ū / e / o u + a / ā / i / ī / e / o

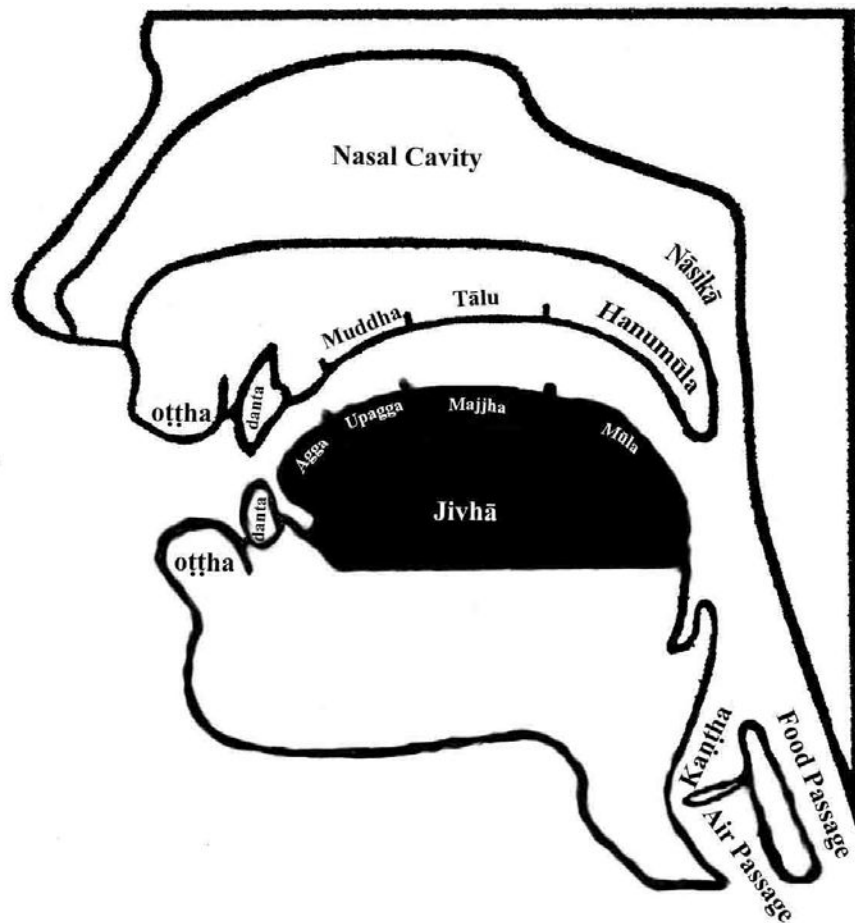


Figure 1. The places of articulation

10. 12. Pubbam adhoṭṭhitam assaraṁ sareṇa viyojaye (28)

Tattha sandhiṁ kattukāmo pubbavyañjanaṁ adhoṭṭhitam assaraṁ katvā saraṇ ca upari katvā sareṇa viyojaye.

Separate the initial vowel from the preceding final consonant.

In Tatrāyamādi, the initial vowel “ā” of “ādi” is to be separated from the preceding