

# American English Consonants for Japanese Speakers

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**LEVEL:** For intermediate-level learners of English

**PURPOSE:** For student review and practice

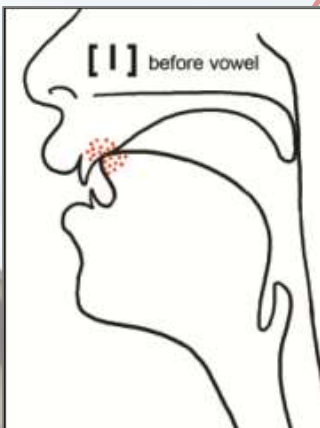
## **NOTES:**

- 1) Listen to "American English Vowels" before you start this presentation.
- 2) **Rōmaji** used: Hepburn (Hyōjun-shiki)



**You have  
homework.**

## GENERAL NOTES



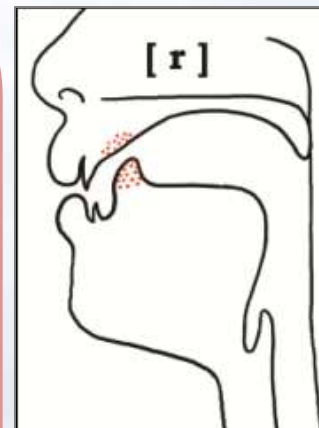
1) English words and English loan words are pronounced a little differently from each other.

2) The U.S.-[l] touches the gum ridge longer than the J-flapped [ɾ].

3) The U.S.-[r] does not touch anywhere in the mouth like the J-flapped [ɾ] does. If your tongue touches, the sound then becomes a U.S.-[l].

4) Consonant blends are often split in Japanese by extra vowels. For example, U.S.-[bra] → J-[bu-ra].


5) Japanese has a raised pitch accent, while stress in English includes increased pitch, vowel lengthening, and loudness.

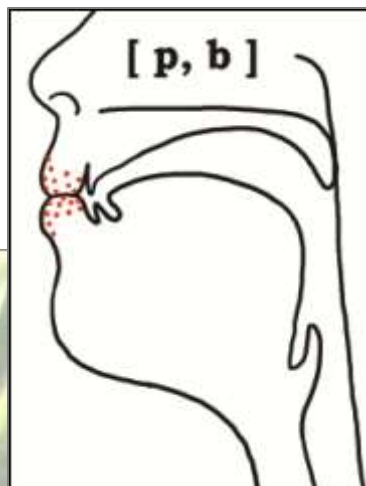




*Listen and repeat!  
'Follow your ear, not your eye.'*\*



*\*Bloch & Jorden, 1945*

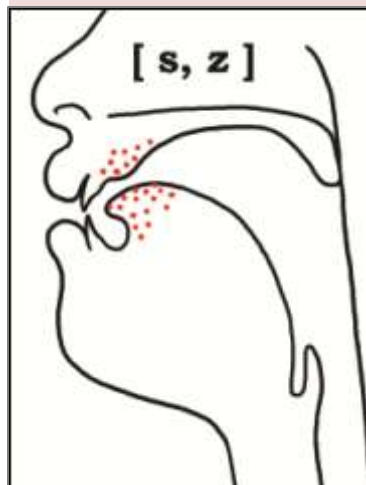
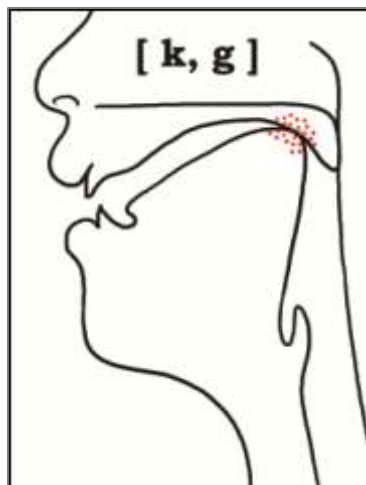
LETTER	ENGLISH NAME	ENGLISH SOUND	ENGLISH WORD	J-TRANSLATION	ERROR
<b>A a</b>	ei				
<b>B b</b>	bi:	[ b ]	<u>b</u> a'na / bə-'næ-nə /	' <u>b</u> anana 	[ æ ] → [ a ]
		[ br ]	<u>br</u> akes	<u>bu</u> 'rēki	[ breɪ ] → [ bure: ] plural "s" → ∅
		"	<u>br</u> ush	' <u>bu</u> rashi	[ brʌ ] → [ bura ]



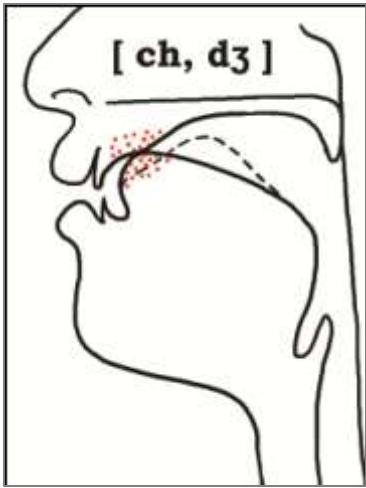

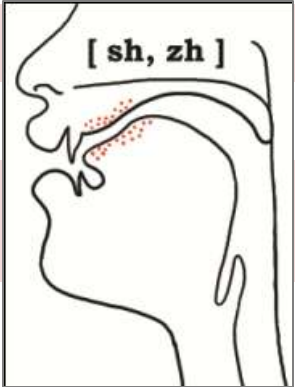
high front	high center	high back
<b>i</b>		<b>u</b>
<b>e</b>		<b>o</b>
<b>æ*</b>	<b>a</b>	
low front	low center	low back

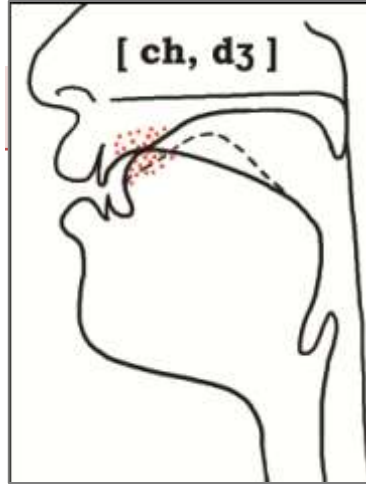
*\*IPA = æ, U.S. = ă*

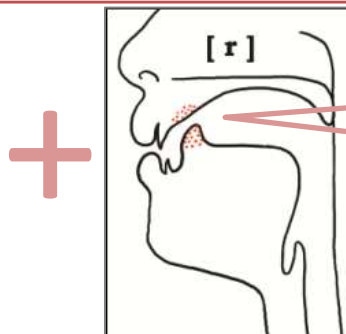
LETTER	ENGLISH NAME	ENGLISH SOUND	ENGLISH WORD	J-TRANSLATION	ERROR	
C c	si:	[ k ]	<u>ca</u> n	<u>ka</u> n		[ kæ ] → [ ka ]
		"	' <u>ca</u> ndy / 'kæn-di: /	' <u>ky</u> andē		[ kæ ] → / kya / [ i: ] → [ e: ]
		"	' <u>co</u> ffee / 'ka-fi: /	<u>kō</u> 'hī		[ ka ] → [ ko ] [ f ] → / h /
		"	<u>cu</u> p (for drinks)	' <u>ka</u> ppu		[ kʌ ] → [ ka ]
		[ s ]	<u>ce</u> nt	<u>se</u> nto		
		"	' <u>ce</u> real / 'sir-i:-əl /	' <u>shi</u> riaru		[ sɪ ] → / shi /
		"	' <u>ci</u> nnamon / 'sɪ-nə-mən /	' <u>shi</u> namon		[ sɪ ] → / shi /
		"	' <u>cy</u> cle / 'sai-kəl /	' <u>sa</u> ikuru		



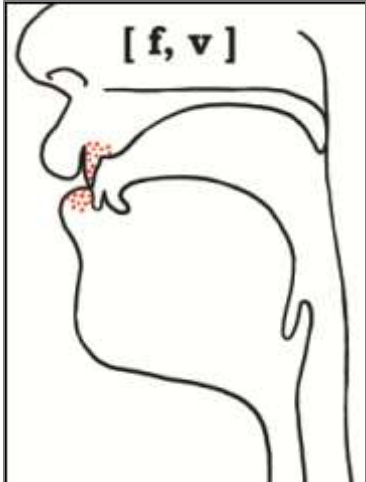
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LETTER	ENGLISH NAME	ENGLISH SOUND	ENGLISH WORD	J-TRANSLATION	ERROR
<b>C c</b>	si:		<i>(continued from previous page)</i>		
	①	/ ch /	<u>ch</u> eck (bill)	' <u>ch</u> ekku	
	②	[ k ]	' <u>ch</u> aos / 'keɪ-as /	konton	
	③	/ sh / <i>(words of French origin)</i>	<u>ch</u> am'pagne / shæm-'peɪn /	<u>sh</u> an'pen	
	"		' <u>ch</u> auffeur / 'shoʊ-fər /	'utenshu	
	"		<u>ch</u> ef	<u>sh</u> efu	
	[ kr ]		' <u>cr</u> acker / 'kræ-kər /	<u>ku'</u> ra <del>kkā</del>	[ kræ ] → [ kura ]
	"		' <u>cr</u> edit / 'krɛ-dət /	<u>ku'</u> re <del>jitto</del>	[ krɛ ] → [ kure ]

LETTER	ENGLISH NAME	ENGLISH SOUND	ENGLISH WORD	J-TRANSLATION	ERROR
<b>D d</b>	di:	[ d ]	<u>d</u> ance	' <u>d</u> ansu	[ æ ] → [ a ]
	/ jr /	' <u>dr</u> ama / 'jra-mə /	' <u>dora</u> ma	/ jra / → [ dora ]	
	"	<u>dr</u> eam	yu'me		
	"	<u>dr</u> ess	' <u>dore</u> su	/ jrɛ / → [ dore ]	
	"	<u>dr</u> ink	no'mimono		
	"	<u>dr</u> ive	<u>do</u> 'rai <u>bu</u>	/ jraɪ / → [ dorai ] [ v ] → [ bu ]	
	"	<u>dr</u> um	' <u>dora</u> mu	/ jrʌ / → [ dora ]	
	"	<u>dr</u> y	kawa'kasu		




- IPA [ dʒ ] = / j / as in "jump"
- USA-[ r ] does not touch.

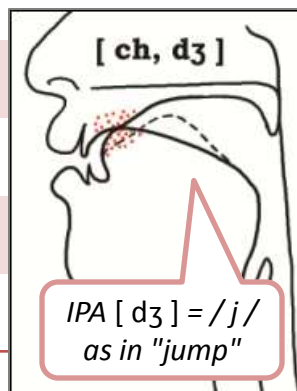
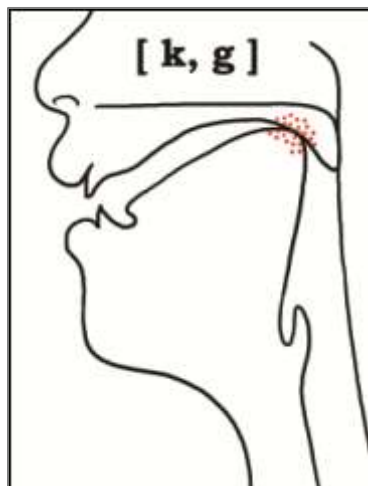
LETTER	ENGLISH NAME	ENGLISH SOUND	ENGLISH WORD	J-TRANSLATION	ERROR
<b>E e</b>	i:				
<b>F f</b>	ef	[ f ]	<u>f</u> an (enthusiast)	' <u>f</u> an	
	"	"	<u>f</u> ine	'yoku	
	"	"	<u>f</u> ish	sakana	
	"	"	<u>f</u> ood	tabe'mono	
	"	"	<u>F</u> uji	<u>F</u> uji	
	[ f ]		'break <u>f</u> ast / 'brɛk-fəst /	'asagohan	
	[ f ]		o <u>f</u>	kara hana'rete	
[ v ]		o <u>f</u>	no		[ v ] → [ f ]
[ fr ]		<u>f</u> resh	<u>f</u> u'resshu		[ frɛ ] → [ hure ]
"		<u>f</u> riend	<u>f</u> u'rendo		[ frɛ ] → [ hure ]

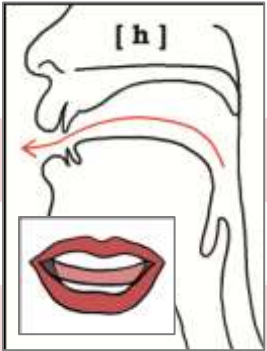
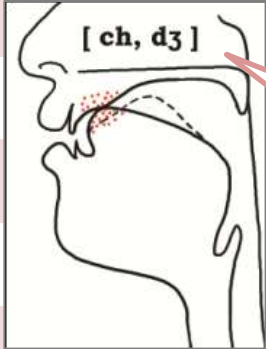
Japanese speakers often use a whistle-like /h/ or [ φ ] for USA-[ f ], especially when the letter "f" is followed by [ u ].


USA-[ f ] uses the upper front teeth and the back of the lower lip.

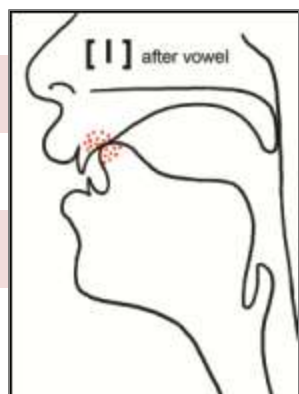
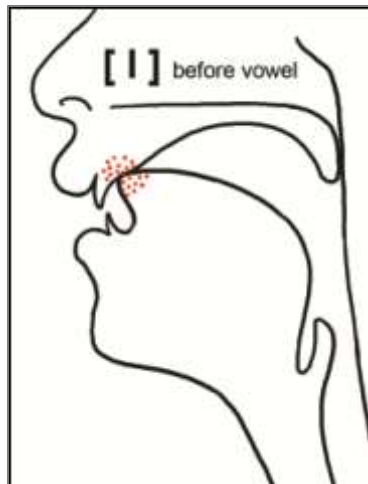
[ v ] is [ f ], but strong and with tone.

LETTER	ENGLISH NAME	ENGLISH SOUND	ENGLISH WORD	J-TRANSLATION	ERROR
G g	ji:	[g]	<u>g</u> as	' <u>g</u> asu	[gæ] → [ga]
		"	<u>g</u> olf	' <u>g</u> orufu	
		"	<u>g</u> um	' <u>g</u> amu	[g^] → [ga]
		① [g]	<u>g</u> et	uketoru	
		② /j/	<u>g</u> em	hōseki	
		① [g]	<u>g</u> ift	' <u>g</u> if(u)to	
		② /j/	' <u>g</u> iant /'jaɪ-ənt/	<u>ja</u> ianto, kyojin	
		① ∅	<u>n</u> ight	'yoru	
		② [f]	<u>t</u> ough	katai	
		③ [g]	<u>g</u> host	o'bake	

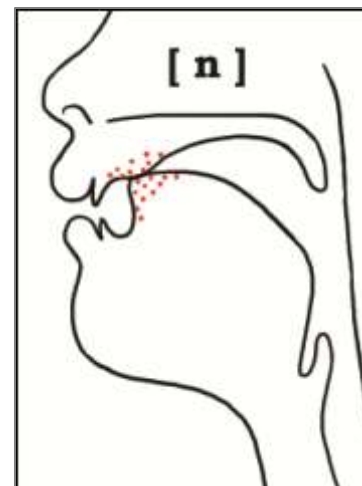
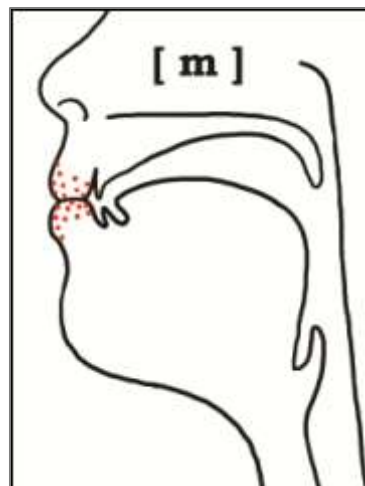



LETTER	ENGLISH NAME	ENGLISH SOUND	ENGLISH WORD	J-TRANSLATION	ERROR
<b>H h</b>	eich	[ h ]	<u>h</u> am	' <u>h</u> amu	
		"	<u>h</u> ood (head covering)	' <u>f</u> ūdo	[ h ] → whistle-like / h /, ∅
		∅	<u>h</u> onest	shō'jiki na	
		"	<u>h</u> our	jikan	
<b>I i</b>	ai:				
<b>J j</b>	jei	/ j /	<u>j</u> uice	' <u>j</u> ūs(u)	
		"	<u>j</u> elly	' <u>z</u> erī	 / j / → [ z ] long [ l ] → short [ r ]
<b>K k</b>	kei	[ k ]	<u>k</u> ey	' <u>k</u> ī, ka'gi	
		[ n ]	<u>k</u> nife	' <u>n</u> aifu	[ f ] → / h /, [ φ ]

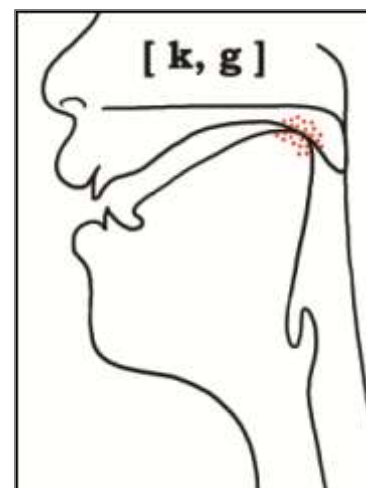
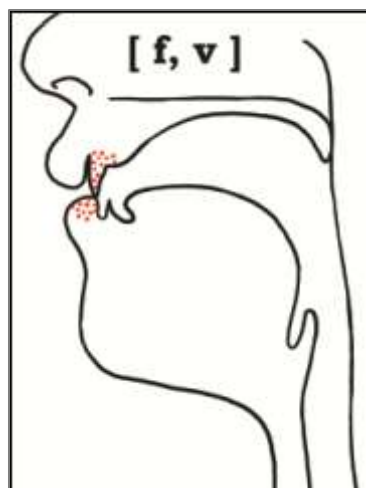
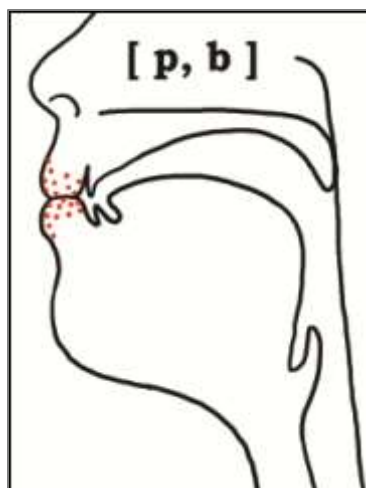
LETTER	ENGLISH NAME	ENGLISH SOUND	ENGLISH WORD	J-TRANSLATION	ERROR		
L I	el	[ l ]	<u>l</u> amp		' <u>r</u> anpu	<p><i>Japanese speakers use a flapped /r/ or [ɾ] for [l]. The tongue tap is <u>too short</u>. So, glue your tongue to the gum ridge.</i></p>	
		"	' <u>l</u> ess		'yori s(u)ku'nai		
		"	<u>l</u> ight		' <u>r</u> aito		
		"	<u>l</u> ine		' <u>r</u> ain		
		"	<u>l</u> unch		' <u>r</u> anchi		long [ l ] → short [ ɾ ] [ ʌ ] → [ a ]
				[ l ]	'ca <u>l</u> endar / 'kæ-lən-dər /	ka' <u>r</u> endā	long [ l ] → short [ ɾ ]
				"	'ny <u>l</u> on / 'nai-lan /	'nai <u>r</u> on	long [ l ] → short [ ɾ ]
				[ l ]	ba <u>ll</u>	bō <u>ru</u>	[ ə ] → [ ru ]
				"	sty <u>l</u> e	s(u)'tai <u>ru</u>	[ ə ] → [ ru ]
				"	'ta <u>b</u> le / 'teɪ-bəl /	tē <u>bu</u> ru	[ bə ] → [ buru ]



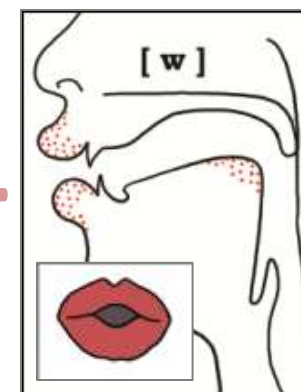
LETTER	ENGLISH NAME	ENGLISH SOUND	ENGLISH WORD	J-TRANSLATION	ERROR
<b>M m</b>	em	[ m ]	' <u>m</u> emo / 'mε-mou /	' <u>m</u> emo	[ oʊ ] → [ o ]
<b>N n</b>	en	[ n ]	<u>n</u> uts / ng / 'talking / 'tak-ɪŋ /	' <u>n</u> attsu hana'shi	[ ʌ ] → [ a ] [ s ] → [ su ]
		[ ny ]	<u>m</u> enu / 'mɛn-yu /	' <u>m</u> enyū	






LETTER	ENGLISH NAME	ENGLISH SOUND	ENGLISH WORD	J-TRANSLATION	ERROR
O o	ou				
P p	pi:	[ p ]	<u>pie</u>	' <u>pai</u>	
		[ f ]	' <u>ph</u> oto / 'foʊ-toʊ /	shashin	
Q q	kyu	[ kw ]	' <u>q</u> uiet / 'kwai-ət /	'shizuka (na)	

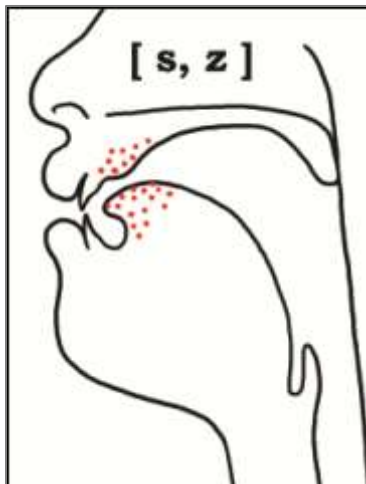


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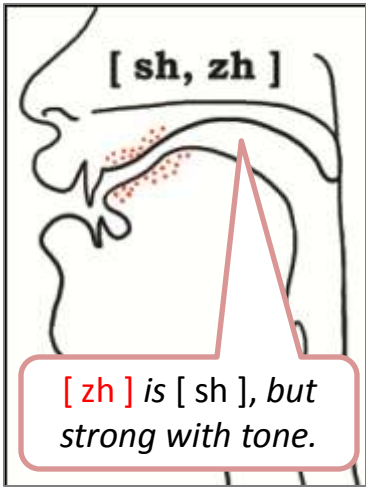



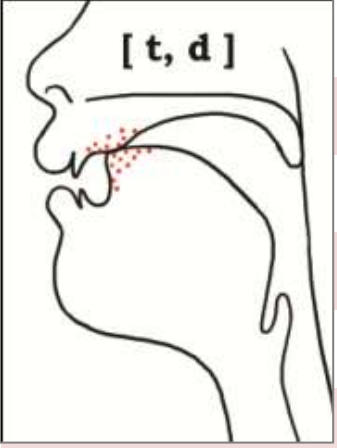

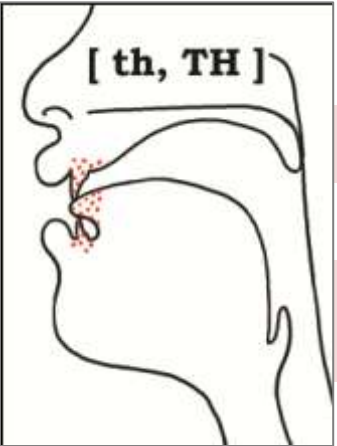
LETTER	ENGLISH NAME	ENGLISH SOUND	ENGLISH WORD	J-TRANSLATION	ERROR	
<b>R r</b>	ar	[ r ]	' <u>r</u> adio / 'rei-di:-,oʊ /	' <u>r</u> ajio	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• J-/ r / or [ r ] touches.</li> <li>• USA-[ r ] does <u>not</u> touch.</li> </ul>	
		"	<u>r</u> ight	migi no		
		"	<u>r</u> ing	' <u>r</u> ingu		
		"	<u>r</u> oute / rut / or / raʊt /	' <u>r</u> ūto		
		"	'ma <u>rr</u> y / 'mɛr-i: /	kekkon suru		
		/ ər /	h <u>er</u>	'kanojo no	<p>For / ər /, your lips look like you're making [ u ], but are <u>more relaxed</u>.</p> 	
		"	'con <u>cert</u> / 'kan-sɜrt /	'kons <u>ā</u> to		
		"	'hamb <u>urger</u> / 'hæm-,bɜr-gɜr /	han'b <u>āgā</u>		
		 	[ ər ]	ba <u>r</u>	b <u>ā</u>	<p>[ ər ] is like / ər /, but weak and blended.</p>
			"	door <u>u</u>	'do <u>a</u>	
"	<u>for</u> k		' <u>fō</u> ku	[ foʊər ] → / ho: /		

LETTER	ENGLISH NAME	ENGLISH SOUND	ENGLISH WORD	J-TRANSLATION	ERROR
S s	es	[ s ]	<u>s</u> ound	o'to	
		"	<u>s</u> cene	shīn	
		"	<u>s</u> cience / 'saɪ-əns /	'kagaku	
		[ z ]	<u>is</u>	imasu, 'arimasu	
		[ sk ]	<u>s</u> care	odosu	
		"	<u>s</u> chedule / 'skɛ-ju <sup>ə</sup> l /	<u>s(u)</u> 'kejūru	[ ə ] → [ ru ]
		"	<u>s</u> chool	gakkō	
		[ st ]	<u>s</u> teak	<u>s(u)</u> 'tēki	

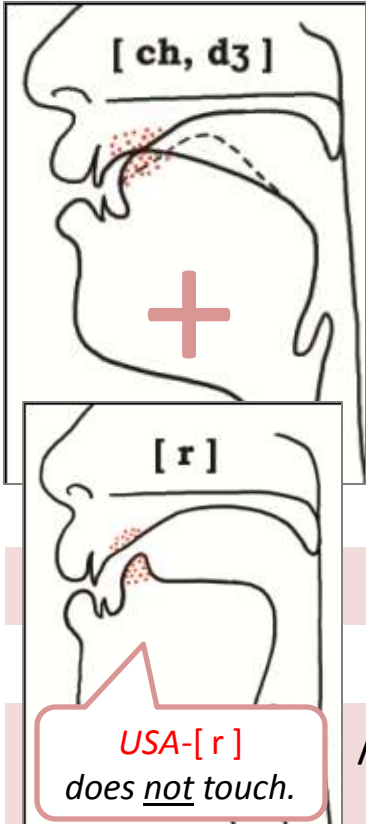



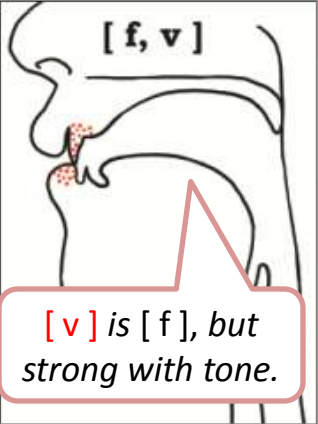
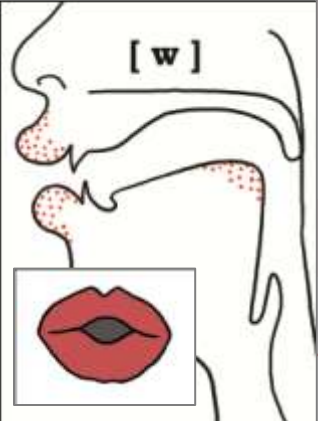
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LETTER	ENGLISH NAME	ENGLISH SOUND	ENGLISH WORD	J-TRANSLATION	ERROR
<b>S s</b>	es		<i>(continued from previous page)</i>		
		/ zh /	' <u>u</u> sual	'itsu-mo no	
		/ sh /	<u>sh</u> am'poo	' <u>sh</u> anpū	
		/ shən /	' <u>mi</u> ssion / 'mɪ-shən /	misshon	/ ə / → / o /
		/ shər /	' <u>pr</u> essure / 'prɛ-shər /	pu'resshā	/ ə / → / a: /
		[ zhən ]	' <u>vi</u> sion / 'vɪ-zhən /	shikaku	
		/ chən / or / shən /	' <u>m</u> ansion <i>(large castle-like residence)</i> / 'mæn-chən /	'manshon <i>(condo)</i>	/ ə / → / o /
		"	' <u>t</u> ension / 'tɛn-chən /	kinchō	

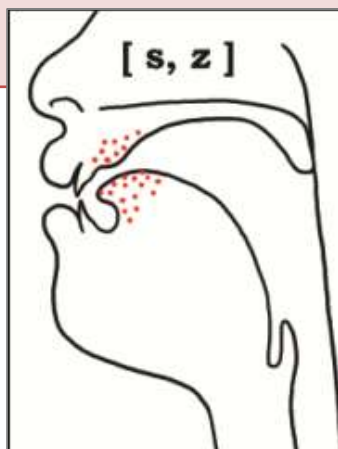
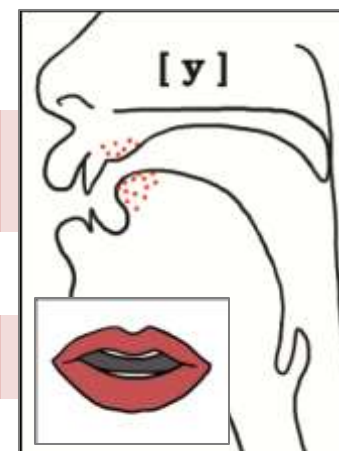
LETTER	ENGLISH NAME	ENGLISH SOUND	ENGLISH WORD	J-TRANSLATION	ERROR
<b>T t</b>	ti:	[ t ]	' <u>t</u> icket / 'tɪ-kæt /	<u>chi</u> 'ketto	[ tɪ ] → / chi /
	"	"	t <u>o</u> 'm <u>a</u> to / tə-'meɪ-tou̯ / or / tə-'ma-tou̯ /	' <u>t</u> om <u>a</u> to	
	"	[ t <sup>h</sup> ]	w <u>a</u> ter / 'wa-t <sup>h</sup> ər /	mizu	
	① / th /	"	<u>th</u> in	ho'soi	
	"	"	ba <u>th</u> ( <i>noun</i> )	(o)fu'ro	
	"	"	clo <u>th</u> ( <i>noun</i> )	nuno	
	② / TH /	"	<u>th</u> is	kore	
	"	"	ba <u>th</u> e ( <i>verb</i> )	(o)fu'ro ni 'hairu	
	"	"	clo <u>th</u> e ( <i>verb</i> )	fu'ku o kiseru	
	"	"	'clo <u>th</u> ing ( <i>noun</i> ) / 'kloʊ-THɪŋ /	fu'ku	
	<b>TH</b> or <b>∅</b>	"	clo <u>th</u> es ( <i>noun</i> )	fu'ku	

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LETTER	ENGLISH NAME	ENGLISH SOUND	ENGLISH WORD	J-TRANSLATION	ERROR
<b>T t</b>	ti:		<i>(continued from previous page)</i>		
		/ chər /	' <u>picture</u> / 'pik- <u>ch</u> ər /	e	
		/ chr /	<u>tr</u> ain	'ressha	
	"	<u>tr</u> ee	ki		
	"	<u>tr</u> ip	ryokō		
	"	<u>tr</u> uck	<u>to</u> 'rakku	/ chrʌ / → [ tora ]	
	"	<u>tr</u> ue	hontō no		
	"	<u>tr</u> y	'doryoku suru		
		/ chən / or / shən /	a't <u>ttention</u> / ə-'tɛn- <u>ch</u> ən /	chūmoku	
		/ chən /	' <u>question</u> / 'kwɛs- <u>ch</u> ən /	shitsumon	
		/ shən /	va' <u>ca</u> tion / veɪ-'kei- <u>sh</u> ən /	yasumi	

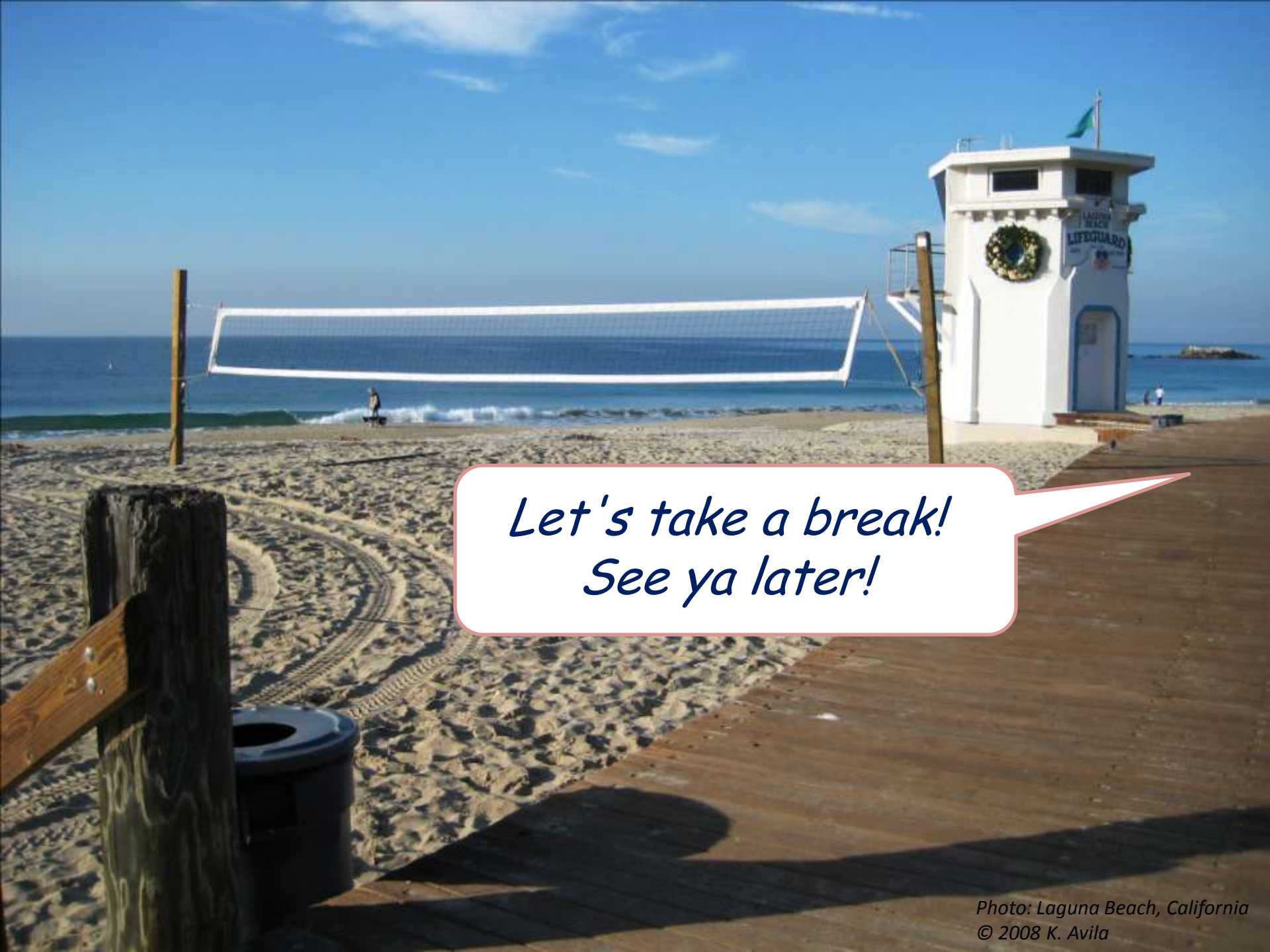
LETTER	ENGLISH NAME	ENGLISH SOUND	ENGLISH WORD	J-TRANSLATION	ERROR
<b>U u</b>	yu:				
<b>V v</b>	vi:	[ v ]	' <u>v</u> an	<u>b</u> an	[ v ] → [ b ]
		"	' <u>v</u> est	' <u>b</u> esuto, chokki	"
		"	' <u>v</u> ideo / 'vi-di:-, oo /	' <u>b</u> ideo	"
		"	' <u>v</u> isa / 'vi:-zə /	' <u>b</u> iza, sashō	"
		"	' <u>v</u> itamin / 'vai -tə-mən /	<u>bi</u> 'tamin	[ vai ] → [ bi ]
<b>W w</b>	'da-bol-yu:	[ w ]	<u>w</u> ine	' <u>w</u> ain, budōshu	
		"	<u>w</u> aist	' <u>u</u> esuto, koshi	[ w ] → stops at [ u ]
		"	<u>w</u> ool	' <u>ū</u> ru, yōmō	[ w ] → stops at [ u ] [ l ] → [ ra ]
		[ w ]	<u>w</u> hat	'nani	
		[ h ]	<u>w</u> ho	'dare	

LETTER	ENGLISH NAME	ENGLISH SOUND	ENGLISH WORD	J-TRANSLATION	ERROR
X x	eks	[ ks ]	ex'cuse /ɪk-'skyuz /	benkai	
		[ gz ]	ex'act /ɪg-'zækt /	seikaku na	
		[ z ]	'xerox /'zɪr-aks /	zerokkusu	
Y y	wai	/ y /	y <u>ard</u>	'y <u>ā</u> do	
Z z	zi:	[ z ]	' <u>zero</u> /'zi:-roʊ / or /'zɪr-ou /	' <u>zero</u>	/'zi:-roʊ / → /'ze-ro /



*You did great!*





*Let's take a break!  
See ya later!*