

Turkish Vowels

The vowels of Turkish can be characterized along several different dimensions.

1. Turkish vowels can be characterized according to their point of articulation in the vocal tract.

Those articulated in the back of the mouth can be characterized as [+ Back], the rest as [- Back].

Those articulated high in the mouth can be characterized as [+ High], the rest as [- High].

i	ü	ɨ	u	[+ High]
e	ö	a	o	[- High]
[- Back]		[+ Back]		

The features [High] and [Back] describe the position of the tongue.

2. Turkish vowels can be characterized as [+ Round] or [- Round], according to whether or not the lips are rounded.

ü	u	ö	o	[+ Round]
ï	ɨ	e	a	[- Round]

Thus, each feature has an articulatory basis.

The symbols “i”, “ü” etc. are just a shorthand for different combinations of feature values.

Exercise:

List the vowels of Turkish and the feature values that characterize each.