Figure2.2Divisions of the tongue.The position shown inFigure 2.1 is actually a slightly unusual one, but it's useful fordemonstration purposes.Finally, the part of the tongue in the pharynx is the root.2.2 Describing consonantsA consonant is a speech sound which involves an obstruction of the airstream as it passes through the vocal tract.Take some of the pairs which can be easily lengthened, such as /f v/ and /s z/, andalternate between the voiceless and the voiced consonants and feel how the vibrationin your larynx stops and starts.Note that in our diagrams of consonant articulations we use a plus sign at the larynx to indicate that the consonant is voiced, and a minus sign if it's voiceless.Describing a consonant involves describing the nature of the obstruction, and there are three factors to be taken into consideration: voicing, place of articulationand manner of articulation.2.2.1 VoicingVoicing refers to the actions of the vocal folds during the articulation of a consonant.?/, /p b/, /t d/, /k g/Consonants 11Table2.1English voiced and voiceless consonantsVoicing Description SoundsVoiced Voiceless The vocal folds are held gently together sothat the airflow from the lungs causes themto vibrate.The vocal folds are held apart as in theposition for normal breathing./b d g ?When not speaking, a healthy person would hold the jaws closer together with the lips and teeth touching, the tongue would fill the oral cavity,touching the roof of the mouth from the alveolar ridge to the soft palate, and the soft palate would be lowered (as in the diagram) to allow for normal breathing in and out via thenose.The tongue has few obvious natural divisions in the way that the vocal tract does.These pairs are /f v/, /?f ?s ??/.

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