Tongue-Tied? A Guide to Flute Articulation for the Music Educator

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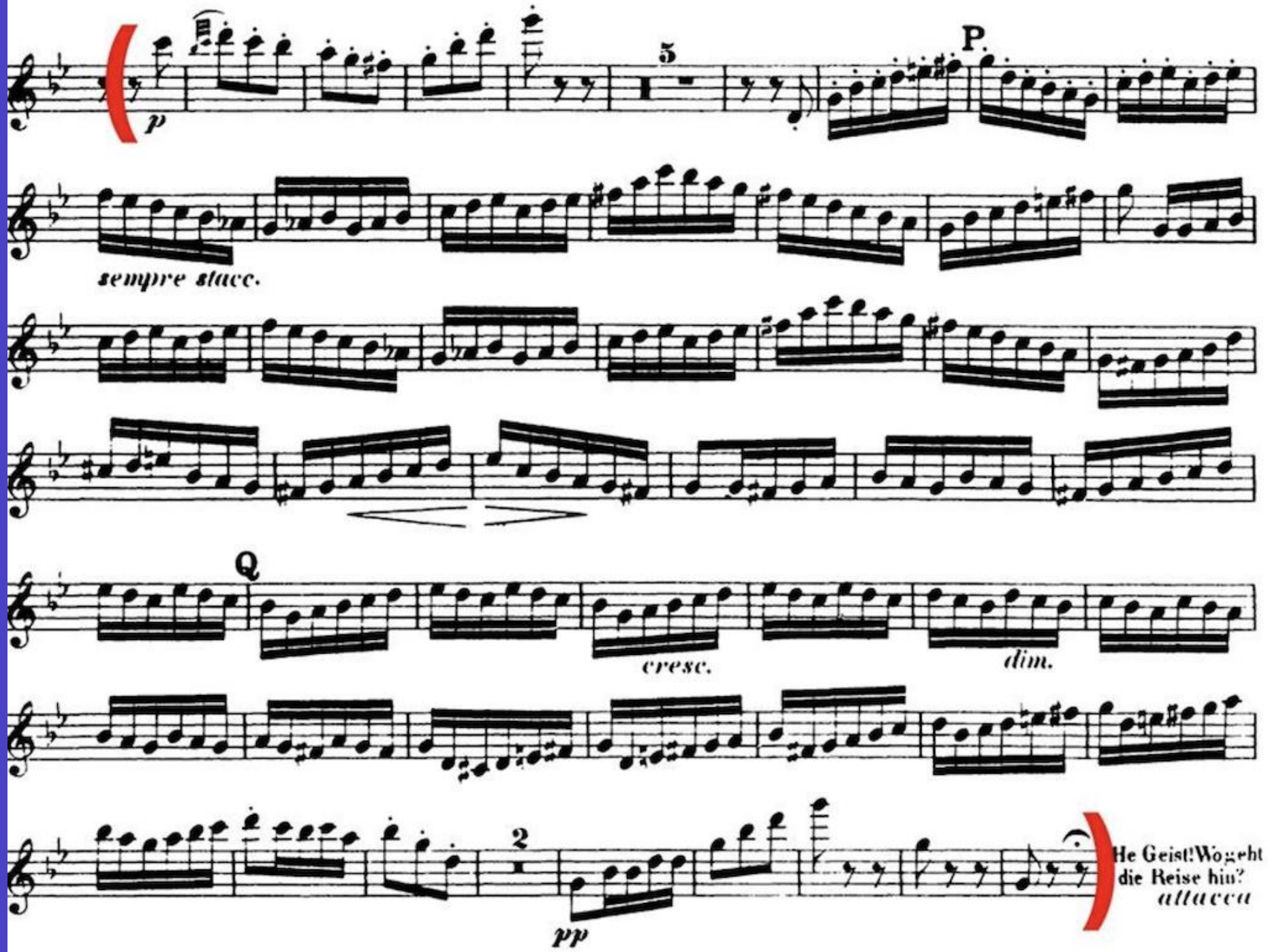
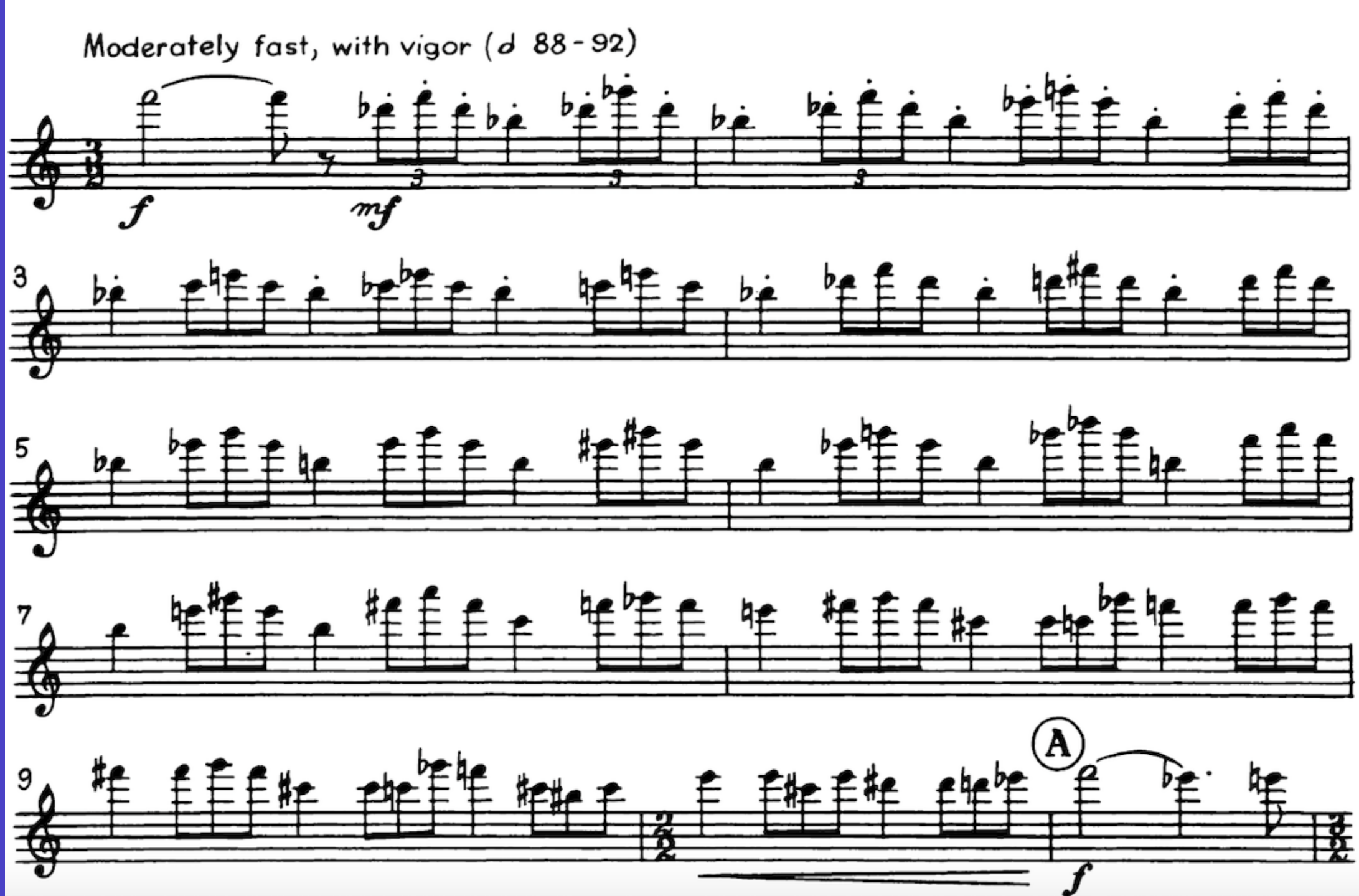

p
5
P.
sempre stacc.
Q
cresc.
dim.
2
pp
He Geist! Wo geht
die Reise hin?
attacca


Moderately fast, with vigor (♩ 88 - 92)
f
mf
3
5
7
9
A
f

Inherent Challenges with Flute Articulation

- **Why is teaching flute articulation so…tricky?**
  a. It’s just HARD to make a sound on at the beginning
  b. No air resistance
  c. Students learn to move air first without the aid of the tongue
  d. Trying on their own adds tension
  e. Teachers default to consonant default

Step 1: Correct Flute Breathing

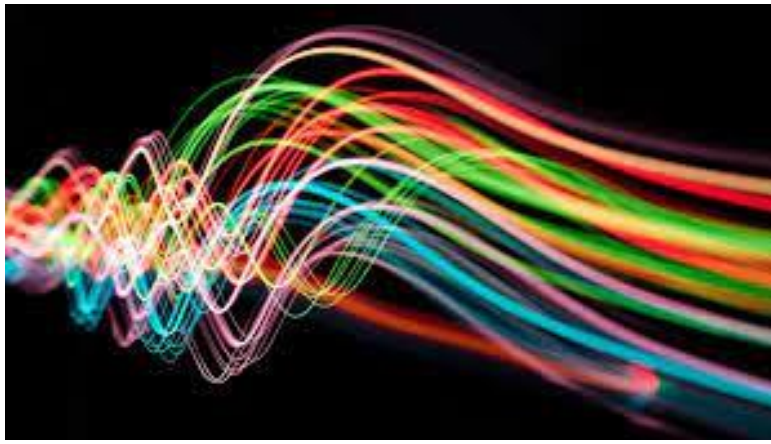
- Placement and understanding of the spine and ribs
- Find your lungs!
- “HA-WAI-I” breath

Step 2: Correct Flute Sound

Three Pillars to Great Flute Tone

a. Air Direction

a. Placement of air column changes for range (down for low, across for middle, high for high, all supported by the "wet part" of the lip, the bottom especially)



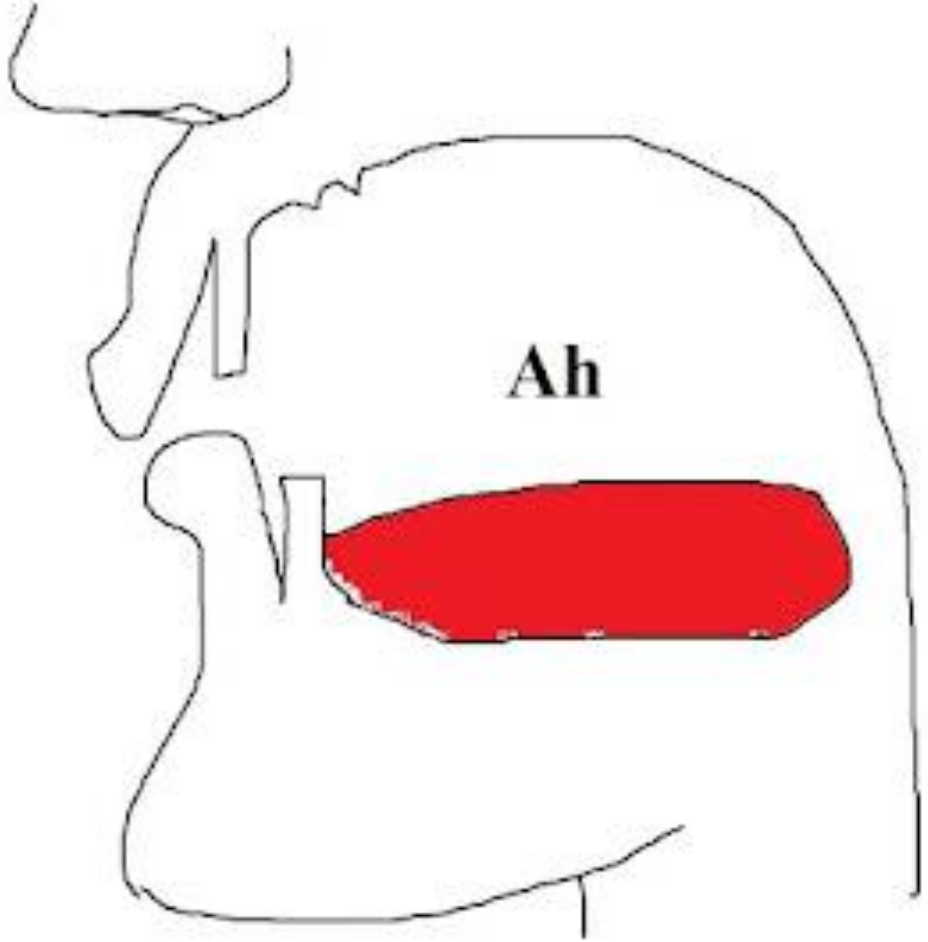
b. "Air Reed"

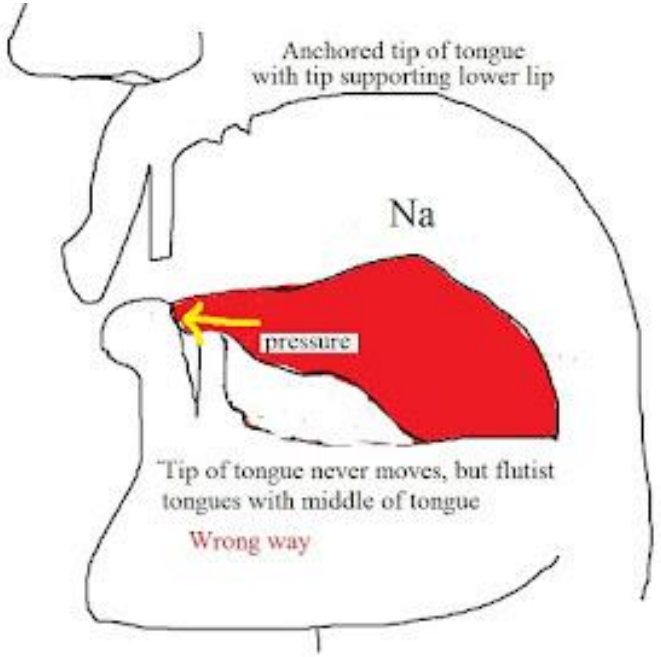
a. The vibrative column that spins into the flute cannot be too short

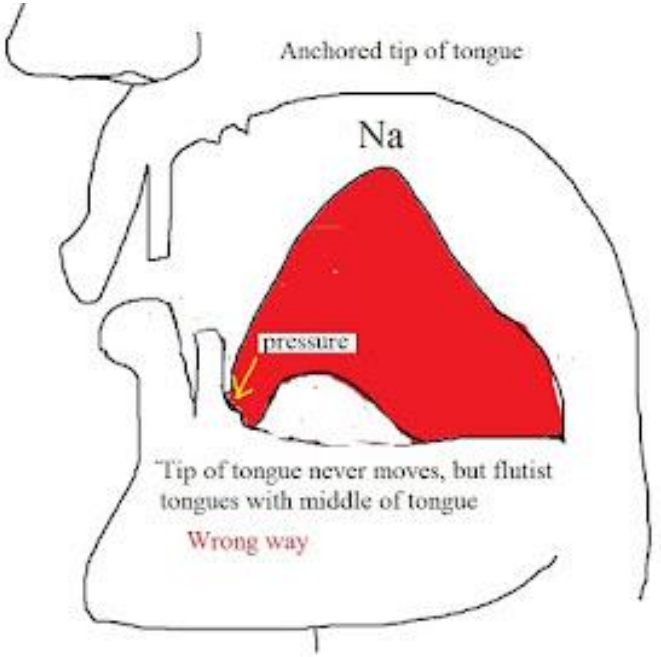
c. Contact

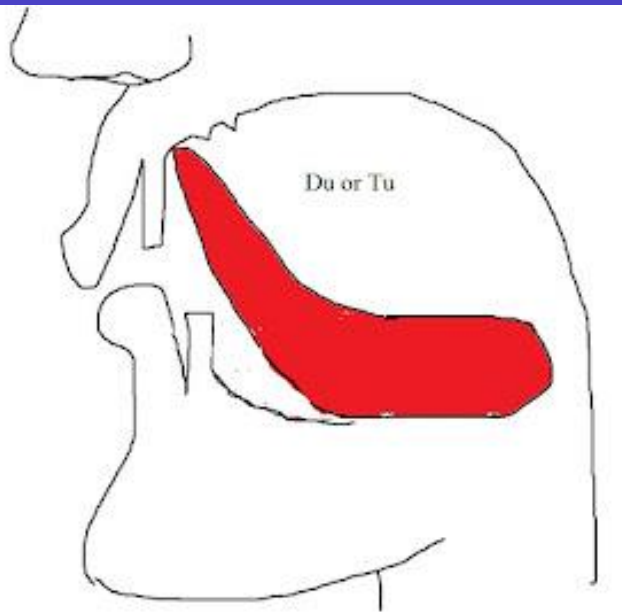
a. Three points of contact on the flute

Step 3: Body Mapping the Face/Tongue







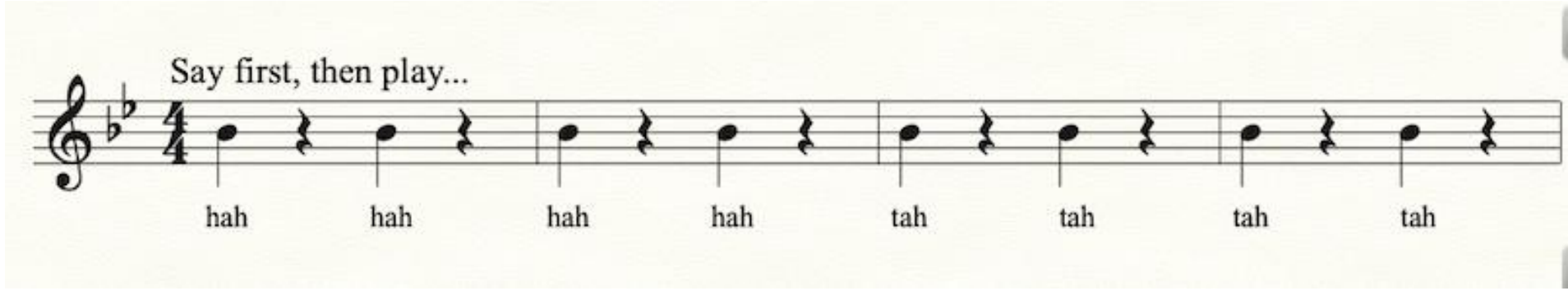


Step 4: Isolating the Air Attack

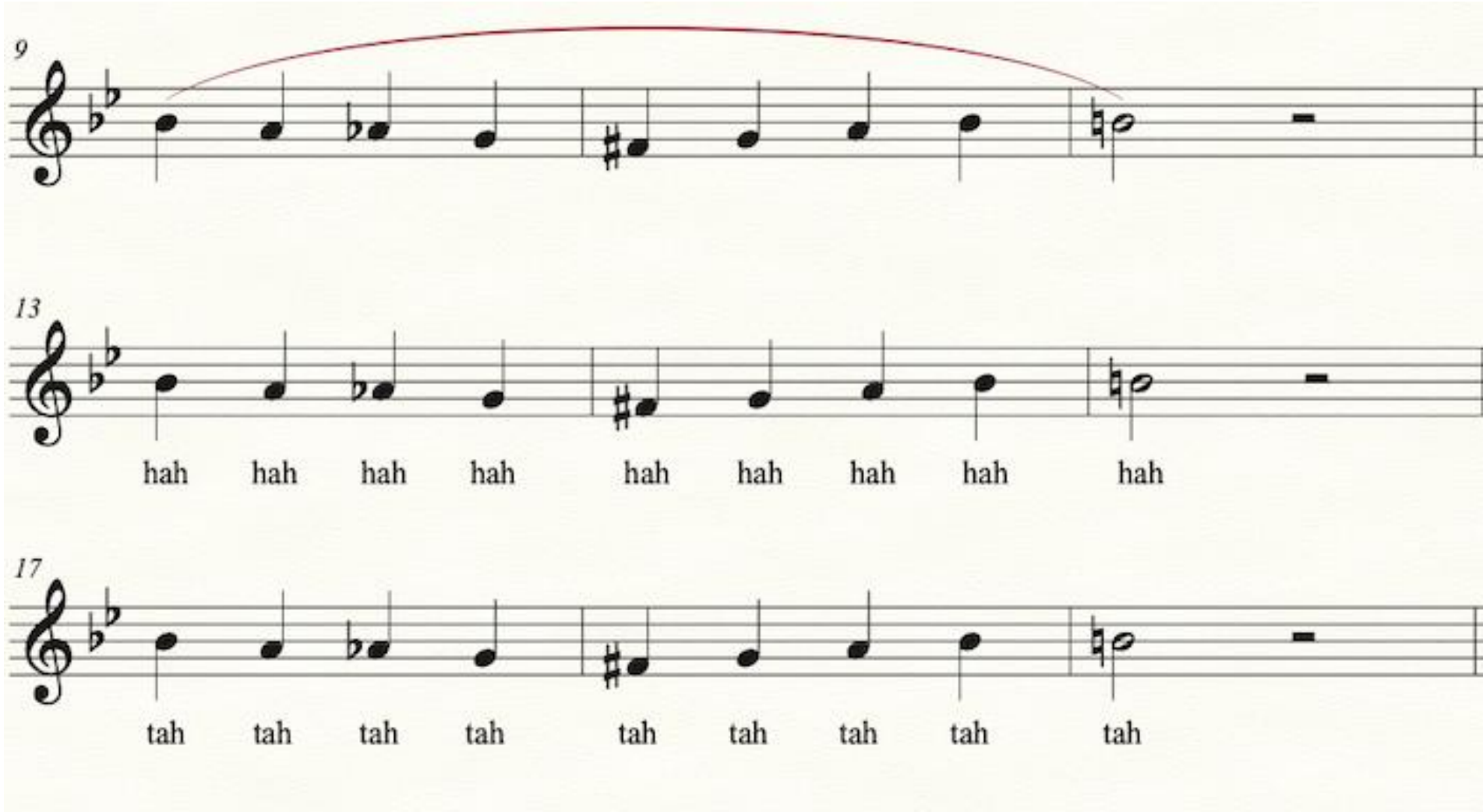
Tongue in the right place…but now where do we strike?

a. Where does the tongue strike? (alveolar ridge)
b. How does the tongue strike? (As little tongue area as possible)

"Hah" Air Attacks to "Tah"

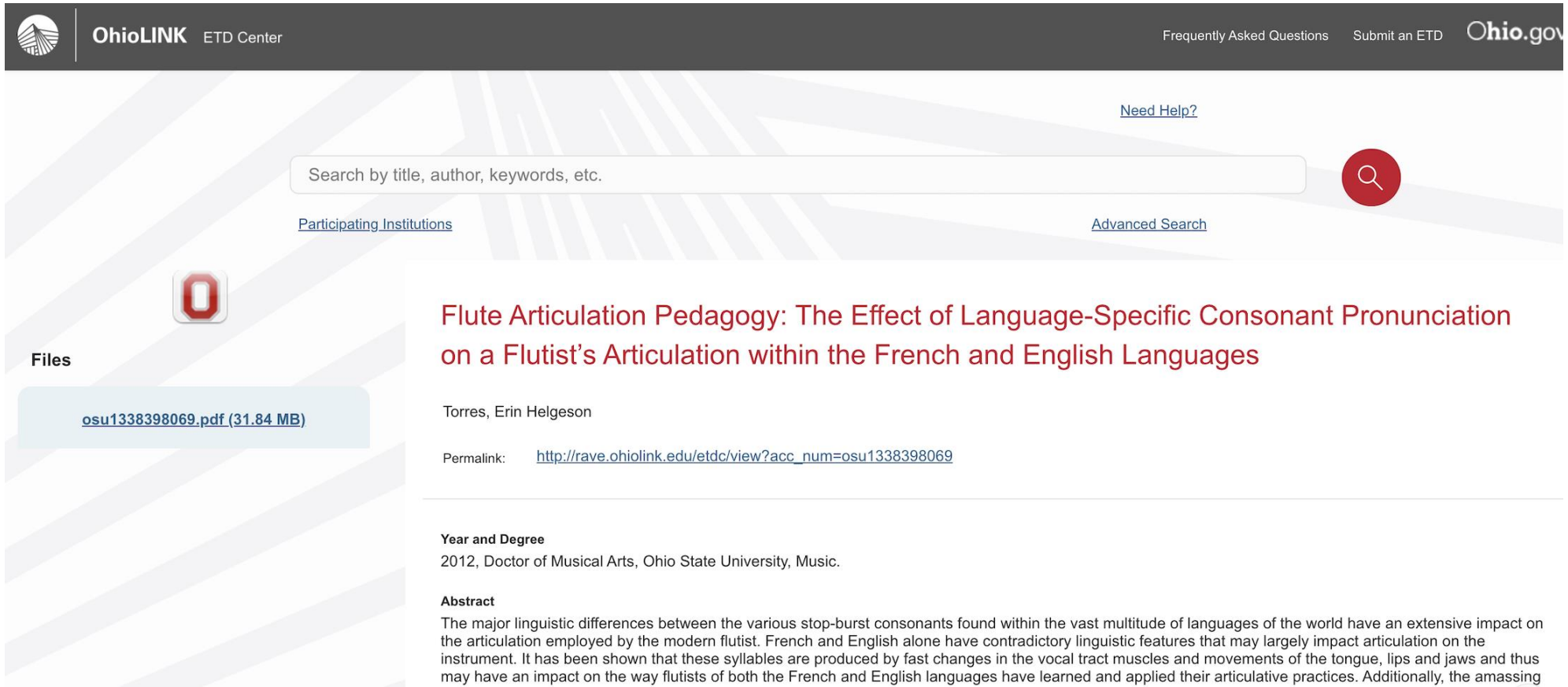


Step 4B: Diagnosing the Air behind the Tongue



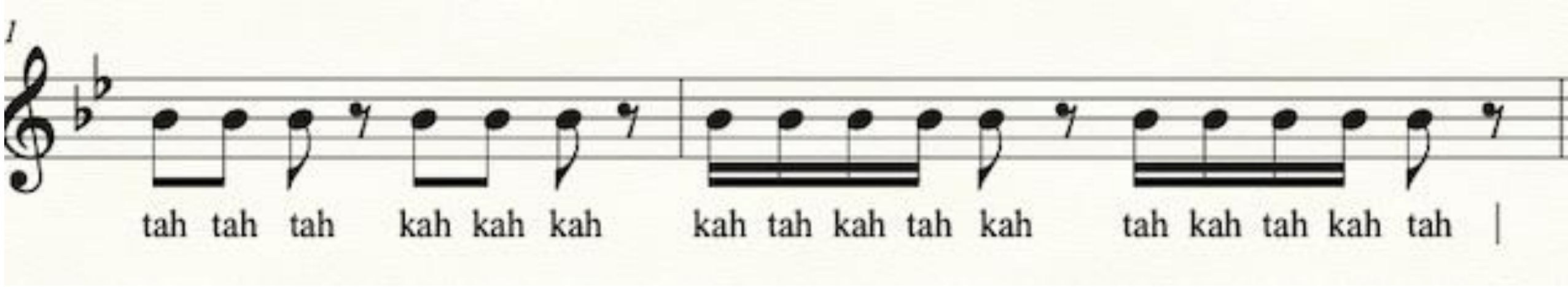
Educator Aside: Stop Consonants, Glottal Consonants, and Resultant Vowels

- Oral Stop Consonants: “T” & “D”
- Velar Stop Consonants: “K” & “G”
- Resultant Vowels: “T-oo” or “T-ah”



Step 5: Advancement

- Double Tonguing – Combination of oral stop and velar stop consonants
- (“T” and “K” or “D” and “G”)



THANK YOU!

Please feel free to reach out!

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