

The English Consonants [S], [Z]

In pronouncing the English [S], [Z] the tip and the blade of the tongue are raised towards the alveoli.

A rounded narrowing of the air-passage is formed between the tip of the tongue and the alveoli. The air passes along the centre of the tongue between its raised sides.

The trace of the raised tongue forming the narrowing is shown by the palatograms (fig. 3.23).

The air passes through the narrowing with friction. The soft palate is raised, the vocal chords are made to vibrate.

The English [S] is a forelingual alveolar apical fricative (with a rounded narrowing) voiceless consonant phoneme.

The English [Z] is formed like the English [S] except that the vocal chords are made to vibrate, the tongue is less tense and occupies a somewhat lower position (fig. 3.21).

The English [Z] is a forelingual alveolar apical fricative (with a rounded narrowing) voiced consonant phoneme.

The English consonants [S], [Z] differ from the Ukrainian [C], [3] mainly in the place of obstruction. The English [S], [Z] are alveolar, the Ukrainian [C], [3] are dental. The difference between the place of articulation of the English [S] and the Ukrainian [C] is shown by palatograms (fig. 3. 23).

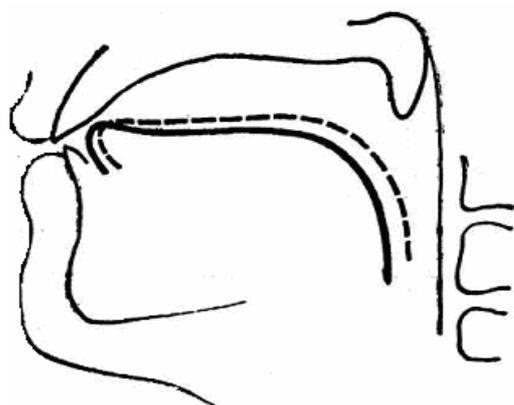


Fig. 3.21.

Tongue-position:

English [S] —————
English [Z] - - - - -



Fig. 3.22.

Lip-position of English [S]

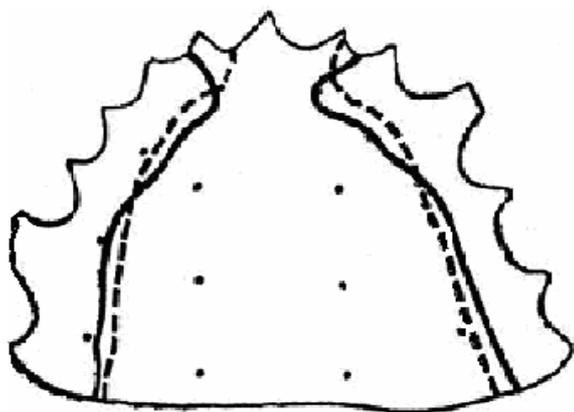


Fig. 3.23.

Palatograms:

English [S] _____
 Ukrainian [C] - - - - -

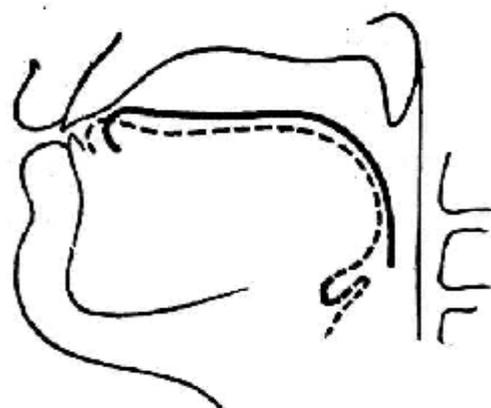


Fig. 3.24.

Tongue-position:

English [S] _____
 Ukrainian [C] - - - - -

Both the English [S], [Z] and the Ukrainian [C], [3] are articulated by the tip and the blade of the tongue. Though the Ukrainian [C], [3] tend more to a cacuminal articulation than to an apical one (fig. 3.24) the acoustic difference is not very noticeable. In pronouncing the Ukrainian [C], [3] the lips are pushed forward.

The correct pronunciation of the English [S], [Z] can be acquired by starting from the Ukrainian [C], [3]. As a rule the English [S], [Z] present no special difficulty for Ukrainian students, however attention should be paid not to palatalize the English [S], [Z] before [J], [I].