

## The English Consonants [S], [Z]

The English [S] is articulated by the tip and the blade of the tongue against the back of the alveoli.

The tongue is raised. A narrowing of the air passage is formed between the tip of the tongue and the alveoli. The distance between the front of the tongue and the hard palate is rather narrow, a front secondary focus is formed there.

In pronouncing the English [S] the soft palate is raised, the vocal chords are made to vibrate. The lips are slightly pushed forward.

The English [S] is a forelingual post-alveolar apical fricative (with a flat narrowing) voiceless bicentral consonant phoneme with a front secondary focus.

The English [Z] is formed like the English [S] except that the vocal chords are made to vibrate, the tongue is not so tense and occupies a somewhat lower position (fig. 3.30).

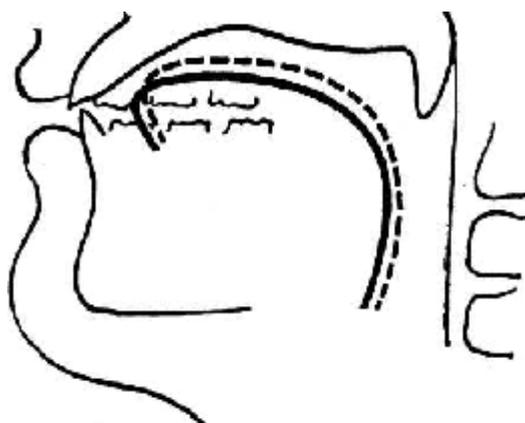


Fig. 3.30.

Tongue-position:

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



Fig. 3.31.

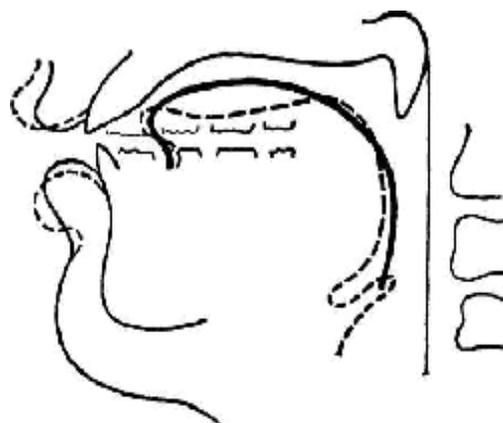
Lip-position of English [S]

The English [Z] is a forelingual post-alveolar apical fricative (with a flat narrowing) voiced bicentral consonant phoneme with a front secondary focus.

The English [S], [Z] differ from the Ukrainian [Ш], [Ж] mainly in the shape of the tongue. In pronouncing the English [S], [Z] the front part of the tongue is raised while in the Ukrainian [Ш], [Ж] a depression is formed in the front part of the tongue

(fig. 3.32).

Fig. 3.32.  
Tongue-position:  
English [S]      \_\_\_\_\_  
Ukrainian [Ш]    - - - - -



In pronouncing the English [S], [Z] the lips are slightly pushed forward, forming an oval-shaped opening. In pronouncing the Ukrainian [Ш], [Ж] the lips are more protruded, the opening between the lips is bigger.

To obtain the correct pronunciation of the English [S], [Z] one may start from the Ukrainian [Ш], [Ж] in the position before [I].

Care should be taken not to soften the English [S], [Z] too much, that is to avoid a too high position of the front of the tongue.

As a rule students whose native language is Ukrainian find no special difficulty in acquiring the correct pronunciation of the English [S], [Z]. Their most typical mistakes are too hard or too palatalized varieties of the English [S], [Z]. Such mistakes can be corrected by raising or lowering the tongue respectively.