

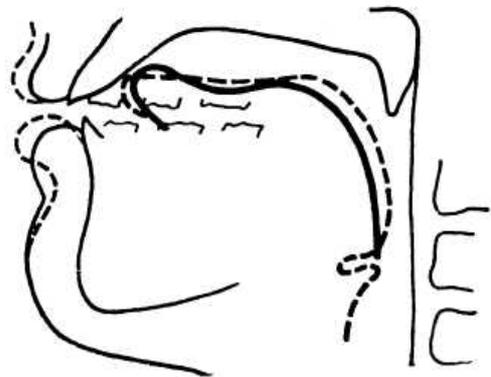
The English Consonant [r]

In pronouncing the English [r] the tip of the tongue approaches the back of the alveoli, forming a rather wide narrowing of the air-passage. A spoon-shaped depression is formed in the front of the tongue, the back of the tongue is raised to the soft palate (fig. 3.40). The soft palate is raised and the air escapes through the mouth along the tongue. The vocal chords are made to vibrate.

When the sound [r] occurs between two vowels, it is heard as a single tap (vibration) of the tip of the tongue against the alveoli.

The English [r] is a forelingual post-alveolar cacuminal constrictive central sonant.

Fig. 3.40
Tongue-position:
English [r] —————
Ukrainian [P] - - - - -



The English [r] considerably differs from the Ukrainian [P].

1. The English [r] differs from the Ukrainian [P] in the manner of the production of noise. In pronouncing the English [r] the narrowing of the air-passage, formed between the tip of the tongue and the back of the alveoli, is rather wide. In pronouncing the Ukrainian [P] the tip of the tongue approaches the alveoli, nearly touching them, and the air escaping through this obstruction widens it and makes the tongue vibrate (fig. 3.40).

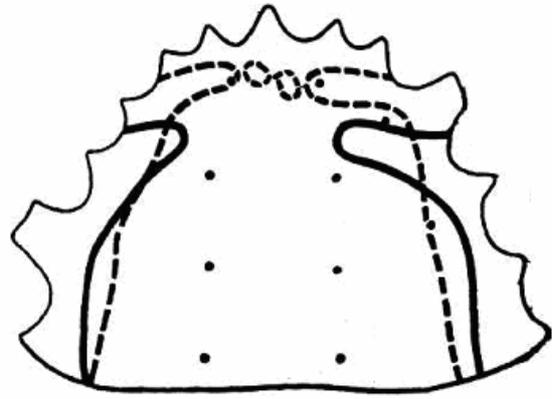
2. The English [r], like the Ukrainian [P], is a forelingual cacuminal constrictive central sonant, but the place of obstruction in pronouncing the Ukrainian [P] is nearer to the teeth. The English [r] is post-alveolar, the Ukrainian [P] is alveolar.

The difference between the English [r] and the Ukrainian [P] in the place of obstruction is shown by palatograms (fig. 3.41).

Fig. 3.41.

Palatograms:

English [r] —————
Ukrainian [P] - - - - -



3. In forming the English [r] the lips are flat, slightly rounded or even protruded with some speakers, and in all the cases they are tenser than in the Ukrainian [P], in which they are lax and neutral.

The English [r] is best acquired by starting from the Ukrainian [Ж]. In such cases one should try to pronounce the English [r] keeping the tongue in the position characteristic of the Ukrainian [Ж].

Care should be taken to keep the lips flat and to avoid the vibration of the tongue which is typical of the Ukrainian [P].

Most students experience difficulty in pronouncing sound combinations such as [Tr, pr, br, fr, gr, kr, tr, dr] where [r] becomes flapped. These combinations require special training.