

2.2. ARTICULATION OF ENGLISH AND UKRAINIAN VOWELS PHONEMES IN DETAIL

2.2.1. ENGLISH FRONT VOWELS IN COMPARISON WITH UKRAINIAN FRONT VOWELS

The English Vowel [J]

In pronouncing the English [J] the tongue moves forward and upward.

The front of the tongue is raised high in the direction of the hard palate. The air passage between the tongue and the hard palate is narrow. The tip of the tongue is near the lower teeth. The resonance chamber is enlarged in the back part of the mouth cavity. In the production of the English [J], as in that of all the other English vowels, the soft palate is raised and the air, exhaled from the lungs, passes freely through the mouth cavity. The lips are spread, slightly revealing the upper and lower teeth.

In pronouncing the English [J] and other front vowels a deep depression is formed along the central line of the tongue. The sides of the tongue are raised in comparison with the central line, as may be clearly seen on lateral and frontal radiograms.

At the beginning of 1960s the articles by H.M. Truby (Sverige), J.D. Subtelny and J.D. Subtelny (USA) were published, containing reproductions of radiograms which also prove the existence of the above mentioned depression along the central part of the tongue.

The articulation of the English [J] is not the same at the beginning and at the end of it. At the beginning of the articulation of this sound the tongue occupies a somewhat lower position while at the end the front part of the tongue is raised higher towards the hard palate.

The end of the English [J] is more advanced than its beginning (fig. 2.4).

The English [J] is a comparatively long vowel. It is especially long at the end of words, before sonants and voiced consonants.

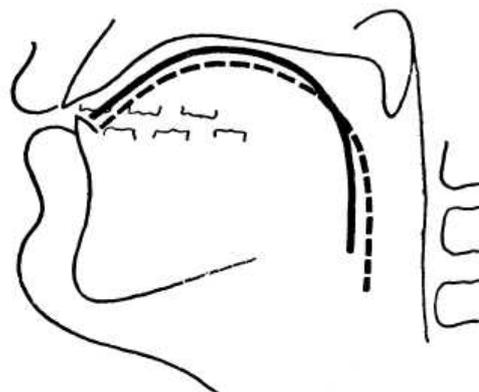
The English [J] is a long tense non-labialized front close vowel phoneme of the narrow variety.

The English [J] as well as the Ukrainian [I] is a non-labialized front vowel of high elevation. But its articulation differs from that of the Ukrainian [I].

1. The Ukrainian [I] contrary to the English [J] is equally close during the whole period of its articulation.

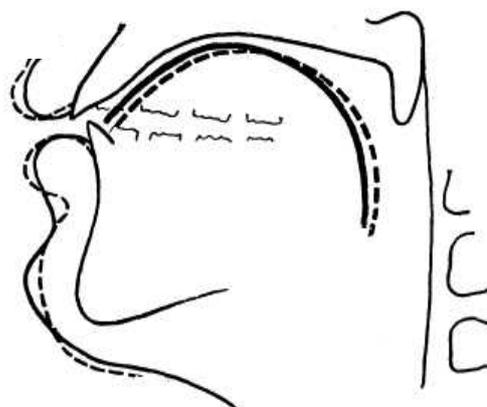
2. The Ukrainian [I] is nearer to the final position of the English [J], than to its beginning, however it is not so forward.

Fig. 2.4.
Tongue-position of English [J]:
the beginning of articulation —————
the end of articulation - - - - -



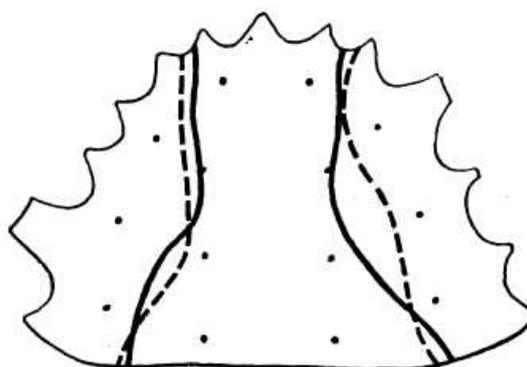
In producing the Ukrainian [I] the front of the tongue is lower than in that of the English [J], i.e. the Ukrainian [I] is more open than the English [J] (fig. 2.5).

Fig. 2.5.
Tongue-position:
English [i:] —————
Ukrainian [I] - - - - -



The difference in the articulation between the English [J] and the Ukrainian [I] is illustrated by the palatograms of these sounds (fig. 2.6).

Fig. 2.6.
Palatograms:
English [J] —————
Ukrainian [I] - - - - -



Comparing the palatograms it should be mentioned that they show the narrowest phase of articulation of the English [J] while the wider beginning of the sound is not reflected on the palatograms.

The English [J], only at the end of its pronouncing is a more close sound than the Ukrainian [И], at the beginning of its articulation it is somewhat wider than the Ukrainian [И].

At the beginning of the English [J] the tongue is approximately in the same position as in pronouncing the Ukrainian [И] in the words *лихо* [ЛІ́ХО], *тихо* [ТІ́ХО], *ми* [МИ].

3. The Ukrainian [И] contrary to the English [J] is a short vowel.

4. In pronouncing the English [J] the lips are usually spread or neutral. They are also neutral in the Ukrainian [И]. But the English neutral position of the lips does not allow protrusion, which is characteristic of the Ukrainian pronunciation.

A very near approach to the correct quality of the English [J] is obtained by starting from the Ukrainian [И] in such words as *ми*, *тихо*.



Fig. 2.7.

Lip-position of English [J]



Fig. 2.8.

Lip-position of Ukrainian [И]

The absence of palatalization of the consonant preceding [И] in Ukrainian helps the students to avoid palatalization of the preceding consonant in English. The articulation described above refers only to the beginning of the sound, and the tongue instantly takes a somewhat higher position.

The correct articulation of the English [J] can be acquired by raising the tongue still higher to the hard palate than in pronouncing the Ukrainian [И].

There must not be the slightest protrusion of the lips. Though the lips may be spread or neutral, the spread position of the lips is more desirable for the students, whose native language is Ukrainian.

Many students, whose native language is Ukrainian, have a tendency:

1. to palatalize the preceding consonant;

2. to make the beginning of the English [J] too close;
3. to make the English [J] short.

Palatalization of the preceding consonant and a too close beginning of the English [J] may be rectified by remembering that the sound to aim at resembles the Ukrainian [Й].

The English [J], as well as all the other English long vowels, is especially long at the end of a word, before sonants and voiced consonants.

Before voiceless consonants it is considerably shorter but still longer than the corresponding Ukrainian vowel.