

The English Vowel [A]

In pronouncing the English [A] the back of the tongue is raised towards the roof of the mouth. The resonance chamber is increased in the front part of the mouth. The tip of the tongue is retracted from the front lower teeth. The lips are neutral.

The English [A] is more advanced and narrow than the English [P]. In pronouncing the English [A] the lips are slightly spread without any trace of protrusion (fig. 2.42).

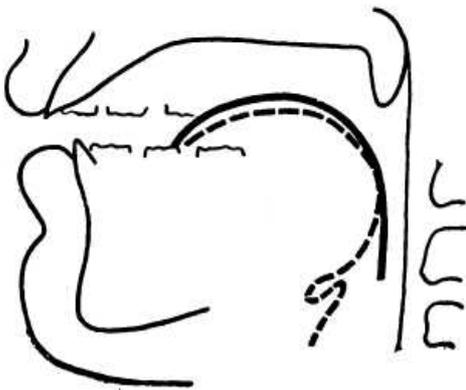


Fig. 2.40.

Tongue-position:

English [A] _____

English [P] - - - - -

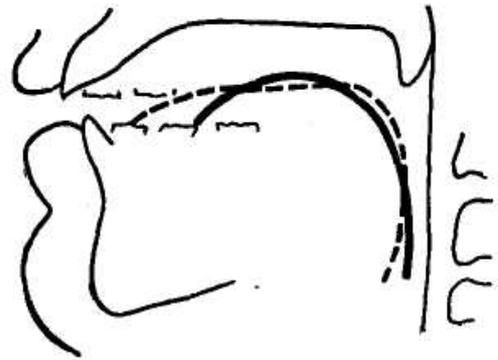


Fig. 2.41.

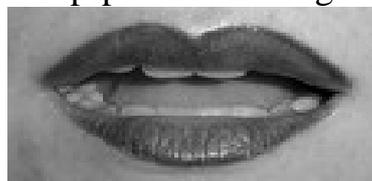
Tongue-position:

English [A] _____

English [R] - - - - -

Fig. 2.42.

Lip-position of English [A]



The English [A] is a short lax non-labialized back advanced half-open vowel phoneme of the wide variety.

The articulation of the English [A] resembles the articulation of the Ukrainian [O].

The English [A] differs from the Ukrainian [O] in the more advanced position of the tongue and the flat position of the lips. The Ukrainian [O] is labialized – the lips are rounded and protruded.

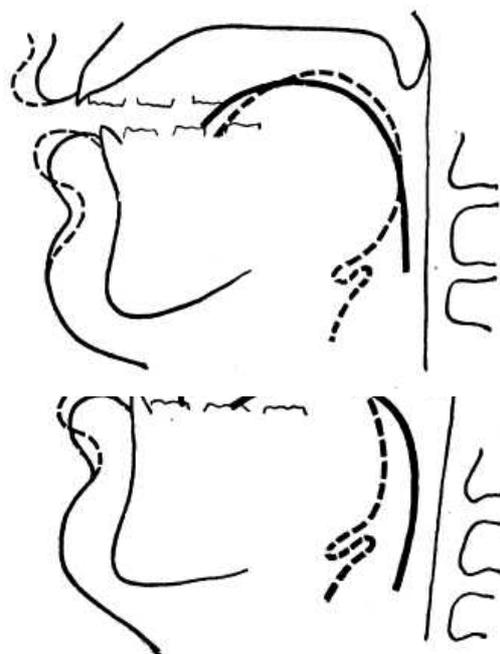
To make the English [A] sound genuine one should start from the articulation of the Ukrainian [O].

The tongue is to be moved a little forward. The English [A] is somewhat shorter than the Ukrainian [O].

The English [A] differs greatly from the Ukrainian [A] which is much more open and more advanced (fig. 2.44).

Fig. 2.43.
Tongue-position:
English [A] —————
Ukrainian [O] - - - - -

Fig. 2.44.
Tongue-position:
English [A] —————
Ukrainian [A] - - - - -



Many students whose native language is Ukrainian have a tendency:

1. to substitute the English [A] with a vowel which is more open and advanced than the English [A]; but this mispronunciation may be rectified by making the English [A] more advanced and less open than the Ukrainian [A];
2. to lengthen the vowel;
3. to replace the English [A] by the labialized vowel [P].

In this case the correct pronunciation of the English [A] may be obtained by starting from the position for the Ukrainian [A] but not [O].