

## The English Vowel [I]

In pronouncing the English [I], the tongue in comparison with its neutral position is moved forward and upward, but occupies a rather more backward and lower position than in pronouncing the English [J].

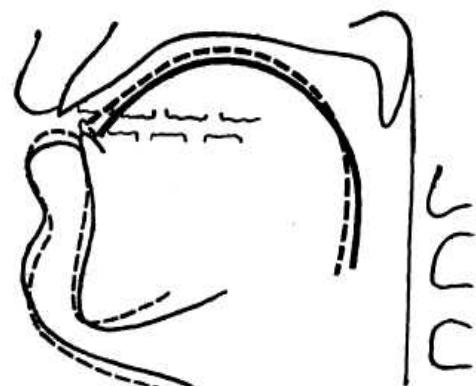
The blade and the front of the tongue are raised high towards the hard palate. The air passage between the tongue and the hard palate is narrow but a little wider than in the English [J]. The tip of the tongue is near the lower teeth.

A large resonance chamber is formed in the back part of the mouth cavity. The soft palate is raised and the air, exhaled from the lungs, passes through the mouth cavity (fig. 2.9).

The lips are spread or neutral, the jaw is lowered, the distance between the jaws being bigger than for [J].

The English [I] is short. It is always shorter than [J] in similar pronunciation positions, that is, when preceded and followed by the same sounds and pronounced with the same degree of stress.

Fig. 2.9.  
Tongue-position:  
English [I] \_\_\_\_\_  
English [J] - - - - -



Consequently, the English [I] is a short lax non-labialized front retracted close vowel phoneme of the wide variety.

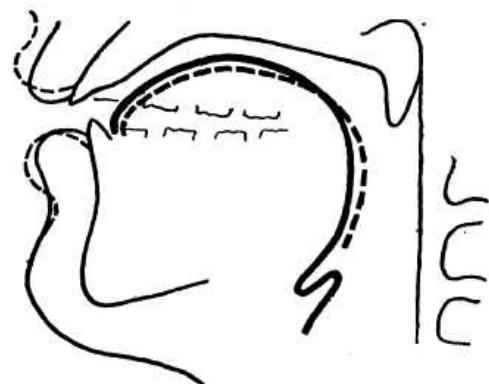
The English [I] has approximately the same quality as the Ukrainian [И] at the beginning of the word when under stress as for example in *muxo, ми*.

The Ukrainian [И], as well as the English [I], is a short lax non-labialized front retracted vowel of high elevation and wide variety. But it slightly differs from the English [I].

1. In articulating the English [I] the front of the tongue is raised higher in the direction of the hard palate than in articulating the Ukrainian [И], i.e. the English [I] is narrower.

2. The English [ɪ] is more front than the Ukrainian [И] (fig. 2.10).

Fig. 2.10.  
Tongue-position:  
English [ɪ] —————  
Ukrainian [И] - - - - -



3. In pronouncing the English [ɪ] the lips are spread and are not protruded as in pronouncing the Ukrainian [И] (fig. 2.11, 2.12).



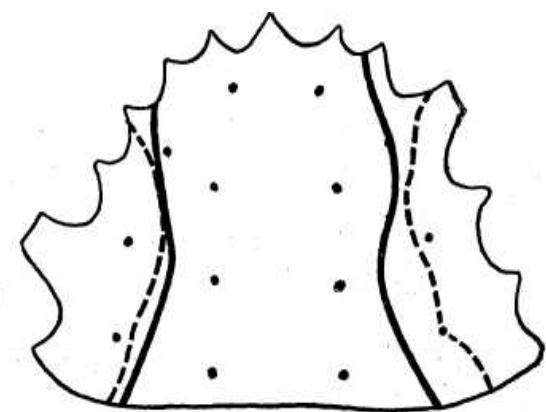
Fig. 2.11.  
Lip-position of English [ɪ]



Fig. 2.12.  
Lip-position of Ukrainian [И]

The palatograms of the English [ɪ] and Ukrainian [И] show clearly the difference between the articulation of the two vowels in the height of the tongue. It is also seen that in forming the English [ɪ] the front of the tongue is raised to a more front part of the palate (fig. 2.13).

Fig. 2.13.  
Palatograms:  
English [ɪ] —————  
Ukrainian [И] - - - - -



In pronouncing the English [ɪ] the resonance chamber in the front part of the mouth cavity is smaller than in pronouncing the corresponding Ukrainian vowel.

To pronounce the English [ɪ] correctly one should move the tongue rather more forward than in pronouncing the Ukrainian [И] and raise it a little higher. The tongue

takes the position intermediate between the Ukrainian [І] and [И].

The lips may be spread or neutral, but special attention should be paid to keep the lips flat without any trace of protrusion.

Students whose native language is Ukrainian have, as a rule, no difficulty in acquiring the proper pronunciation of the sound. The only mistake which is made is to replace the English [l] by a more close and front Ukrainian [І], but this mistake is rather rare.

Sometimes students are inclined to lengthen the English [l]. It should remain very short in all positions in a word.