

The English Consonant [w]

In pronouncing the English [w] the lips are more or less protruded and rounded forming a small round or oval-shaped opening through which the air escapes.

At the same time the tongue is in the back part of the mouth cavity, its tip is retracted from the lower teeth. The back of the tongue is raised towards the soft palate forming the second back focus. The soft palate is raised. The vocal chords are in vibration.

From this initial position the tongue and the lips immediately glide into the positions for the following vowel.

The position of the lips in pronouncing the English [w] is somewhat influenced by the following sound. Before labialized vowels, especially before the English [H] the lips are rounded and pushed forward. The opening between the lips is round and very small. Before non-labialized vowels the lips are less protruded and rounded, the opening between the lips is bigger and oval-shaped.

The English [w] is a bilabial constrictive central sonant with a secondary back focus.

The articulation of the English [w] resembles the articulation of the Ukrainian bilabial [B].

1. In pronouncing the English [w] and the Ukrainian [B] the back part of the tongue is raised to the soft palate. But in forming the Ukrainian [B] the tongue is raised somewhat higher (fig. 3.10).

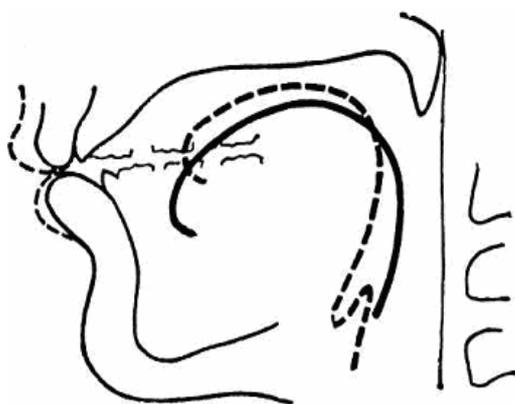


Fig. 3.10.

Tongue-position:

English [w] —————
Ukrainian [B] - - - - -

2. The position of the lips while pronouncing the English

[w] is similar to that of the Ukrainian bilabial [B]. In pronouncing the Ukrainian [B] the position of the lips is also changed under the influence of the following vowel. But in pronouncing the Ukrainian [B] the lips are less protruded, not so closely

rounded, and not so tense (fig. 3.11, 3.12).

The English [w] remains bilabial in all positions in the word, the Ukrainian bilabial [B] becomes labio-dental before the sounds [И], [Е].



Fig. 3.11.

Lip-position of English [w]



Fig. 3.12.

Lip-position of Ukrainian [B]

3. The English [w] occurs only before vowels at the beginning and in the middle of a word, the Ukrainian [B] occurs both before vowels and consonants in all positions in a word.

The correct pronunciation of the English [w] can be acquired by starting from the Ukrainian bilabial [B]. In this case one must articulate more energetically with the lips and the necessary position of the tongue must be observed.