

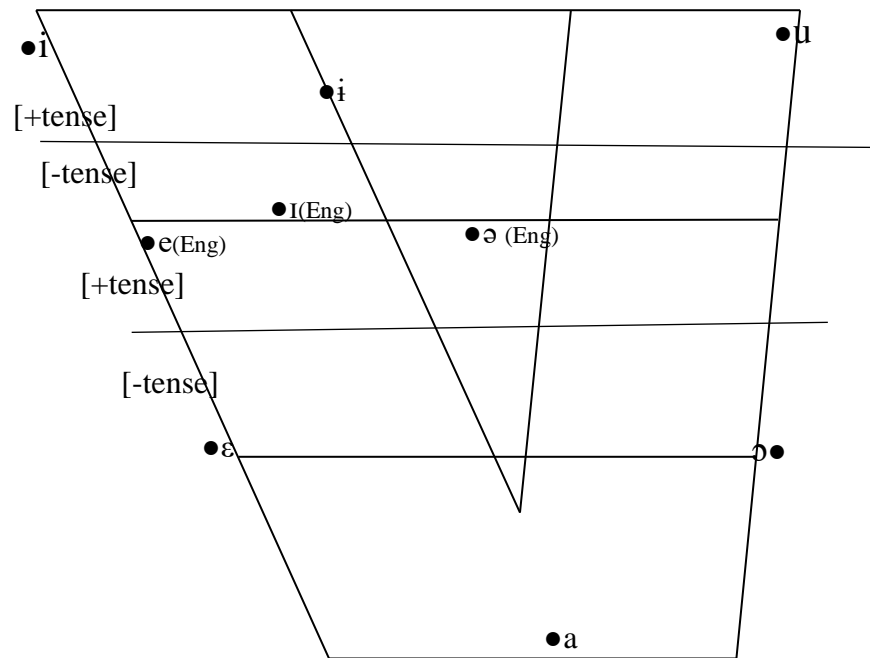
## DISTINCTIVE FEATURES: TWO ISSUES\_NOTES

### 1. THE FEATURE $[\pm\text{tense}]$

The feature  $[\pm\text{tense}]$  works well with high and mid vowels. It cuts the high vowel space into two: upper high and lower high, and, similarly, the mid vowels space is divided into upper mid and lower mid.

Upper high and upper mid vowels are  $[\text{+tense}]$  while lower high and lower mid vowels are  $[\text{-tense}]$ . Vowels that are  $[\text{-tense}]$  are called lax vowels.

Standard Polish vowels (Biedrzycki 1974: 28)



The feature  $[\pm\text{tense}]$  distinguishes, for example, Polish  $[i]$  from English  $[\text{ɪ}]$  and Polish  $[\varepsilon]$  from English  $[e]$ :

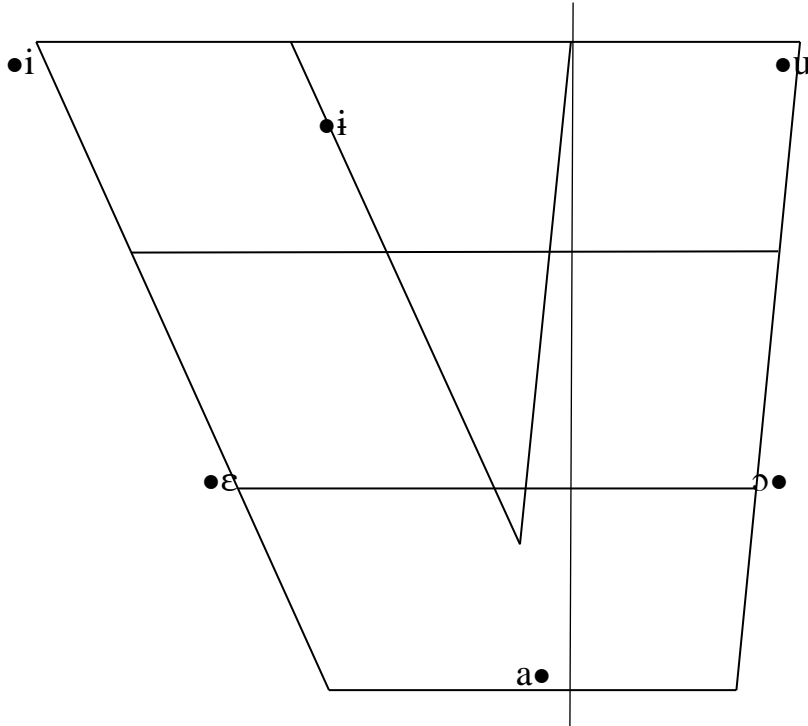
Polish  $[i]$  is  $[\text{+tense}]$  while English  $[\text{ɪ}]$  is  $[\text{-tense}]$

Polish  $[\varepsilon]$  is  $[\text{-tense}]$  while English  $[e]$  is  $[\text{+tense}]$ .

2. IS POLISH [i] CLASSIFIED AS [-back] OR [+back]?

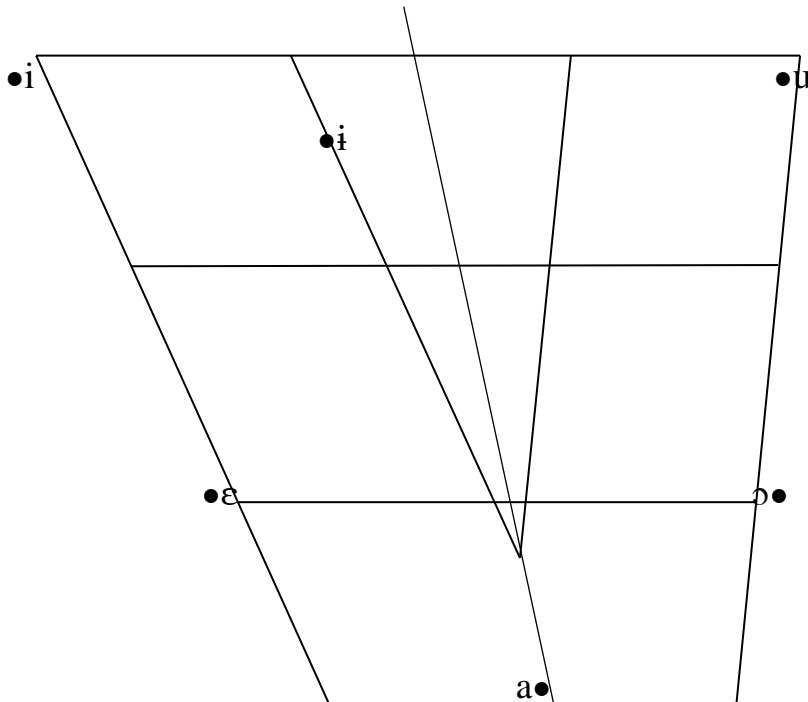
Standard Polish vowels (Biedrzycki 1974: 28)

(1)



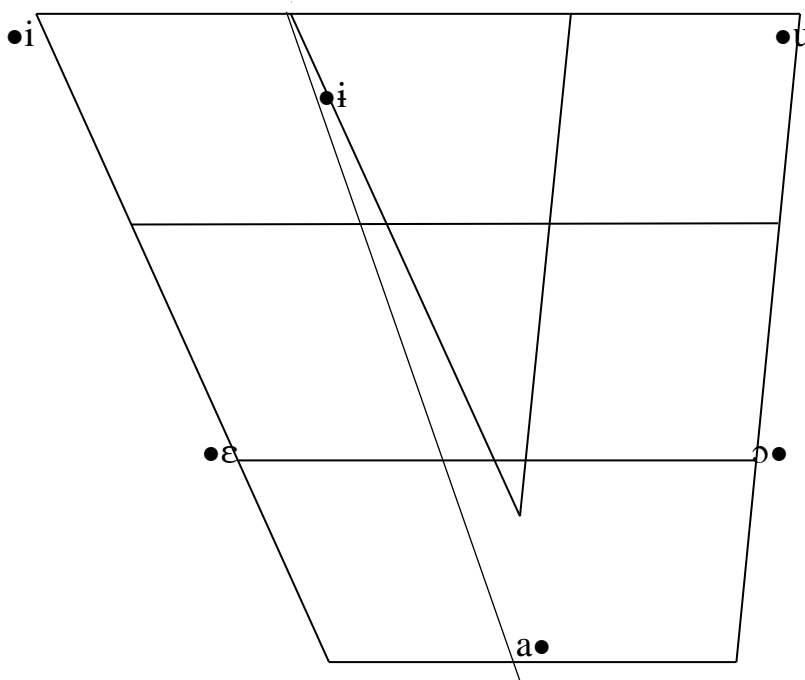
If this is true, then [i] and [a] are [-back].

(2)



If this is true, then [i] and [a] are [-back].

(3)



If this is true, then [ɨ] and [a] are [+back].

The choice is made by looking at the ‘phonological behaviour’ of //i// and //a//.

brud – brudzić //brud+i+ tɛ// → [brudzitɛ]

brud – brudz+ie (loc.sg.) //brud+ɛ// → [brudzɛ]

brud – brud+u (gen.sg.) //brud+u// = [brudu]

brud – bru+om (dat.pl.) //brud+ɔm// = [brudɔm]

brud+ami (instr.pl.) //brud+ami// → brudam’i]

brud – brud+y (nom.pl.) //brud+i// = [brudi]

What is the argument for deciding whether the central vowels //i// and //a// are [-back] or [+back]?

Central vowels must be [+back] because they ‘behave’ like back vowels in the sense that they do not cause Palatalization: there is no Palatalization before [u] and [ɔ] and these vowels are unquestionably [+back].

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