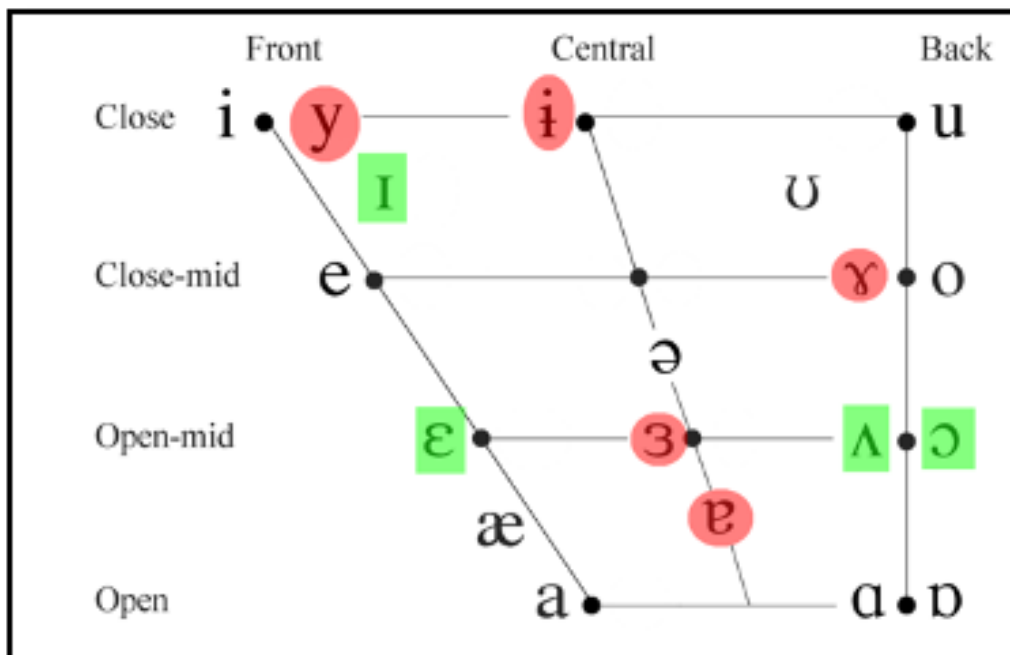


## OOOOOH... VET THE VOWELS!

Remember **Hack #1** where you did research on Google and Wikipedia to compare consonant sounds? Well, get those search engines ready, because you're going back in!

Continuing your research from **Hack #1**, start exploring and reviewing differences in vowel sounds between your accent and the target.

So, if you compare English and Mandarin Chinese, you'll notice that Mandarin does not have many of the vowels found in English...(see green highlights in accompanying vowel chart). For this example, let's focus on the short [ɪ] sound, as in *bit*. Mandarin doesn't have [ɪ] in its inventory, and so, the closest vowel to it would be [i]. Therefore, an English learner from mainland China might pronounce *bit* and *beat* in the same way. Focusing on the vowel [i] in *bit*—and contrasting it with the vowel [i] in *beat*—should be a helpful exercise in perfecting English for Mandarin speakers.



**BONUS TIP:**

Just like in Hack #1, minimal pairs work great here.

Try:

*beat vs. bit*  
*sheet vs. sh...*

Whoops! This might go to HR, so I won't finish that set!

Conversely, the vowel [y] is found in Mandarin but not English (as highlighted in red), so if an actor attempts to say a name or surname in an authentic-sounding Chinese accent, they should learn to articulate this vowel. Hint: It's saying the [i] sound, as in eat, while having round lips like in *oops*.

