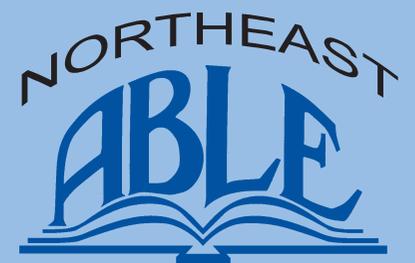


**ON SPEAKING TERMS**  
^  
**and CULTURAL**



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Euclid, Ohio

2006

# ON SPEAKING and CULTURAL TERMS

## *A Practical Guide To Culture and Language for ESOL Teachers*

**Gloria W. Gillette**, Project Director

**Ruth H. Tracy**, Project Coordinator

**Jennifer Anderson**, Project Assistant

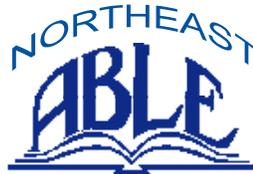
**Gabriela Tomorowitz**, Graphic Designer

### CONTRIBUTORS

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# TO THE TEACHER:

## *Book Design*

### *Section I - An Overview of Language*

Instead of technical terms and abstract theories, the principles are explained in commonly used language. Definitions for these ideas are written so that additional resources should not be necessary to obtain a basic understanding of the term.

We chose to err on the side of simplicity when selecting terms for use in the manual. Our purpose was not to reinvent the wheel, but rather to provide an overview of some of the practical pronunciation techniques we have found to be effective.

### *Section II - Individual Sounds of English*

Some sounds were combined, as they are so similar in pronunciation that a non-native speaker would not be able to discern the differences. Included for each sound are:

- common names (short a)**
- common spellings of the sound**
- a key word that contains the sound**

**Production** - Production describes the physical aspects of making the sound in non-technical terms. Sounds that are related, such as the voiced sound "d" and the voiceless sound "t," are compared when applicable.

**Words** - The words demonstrate the sound in the initial, final and medial position, starting from the least difficult to the most difficult position to produce. Several spelling variations for the sound were included when possible.

**Contrasting pairs** - This section provides a comparison of the target sound with sounds that might easily be confused by the student, or that may be substituted in error. For example, the voiceless "th" sound in the initial position might be heard or reproduced by the student as possibly a "d," "t" or "z" sound. By comparing these sounds, the student may be able to distinguish the target sound from similar sounds.

**Phrases** - The sound is repeated in a set of 10 phrases that are used in everyday English. The phrases were selected both for the repetition of the sound and for creating a basis for conversation. They are also rich vocabulary and idiom practice.

**Sentences** - This section extends the practice in context. Even if the sound is not difficult for all students, they will still benefit from the spelling review and vocabulary practice.

### ***Section III - Cultural and Linguistic Reference Points***

Cultural and linguistic background information is essential when addressing the language acquisition needs of the student. Teachers must be aware of the cultural and linguistic heritage each student brings to class. With this knowledge, the teacher can better prepare the class environment in which the student will acquire new language skills. If the teacher is aware of cultural differences, the comfort level of the student is increased and the likelihood of language acquisition is heightened. Likewise, the teacher must be knowledgeable about the grammatical, syntactic and pronunciation issues which are both similar and different in the first and second language. If these similarities and differences are known and addressed straightforwardly in class, students can focus on them and begin to perfect their skills.

### ***Section IV - Practice Sentences***

Language-specific exercises for each of the 27 targeted languages can be reproduced and given to the student for practice in both hearing and producing the sound. The sentences can be used quickly and easily so that the student has effective and individualized material to practice at home and in class. They can be referred to repeatedly as individual practice. Each student should have a language specific sheet to practice.

### ***Section V - Bibliography***

The books, selected readings and websites in this section give the teacher additional sources for further study of both culture and language.

**PLEASE NOTE: FEEL FREE TO COPY ANY SECTION OF THIS BOOK.**

# Quick Search

	CULTURE	LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION	SYNTAX & PRONUNCIATION	PRACTICE SENTENCES
ALBANIAN	III-3	III-4	III-5	IV-3
ARABIC	III-7	III-16	III-17	IV-4
CHINESE MANDARIN	III-19&21	III-22	III-23	IV-5
CHINESE CANTONESE	III-20	III-24	III-25	IV-6
CROATIAN	III-27	III-28	III-29	IV-7
CZECH	III-31	III-32	III-33	IV-8
FILIPINO	III-35	III-36	III-37	IV-9
FRENCH	III-39	III-40	III-41	IV-10
GERMAN	III-43	III-44	III-45	IV-11
HINDI	III-47	III-48	III-49	IV-12
HMONG	III-51	III-52	III-53	IV-13
HUNGARIAN	III-55	III-56	III-57	IV-14
JAPANESE	III-59	III-60	III-61	IV-15
KOREAN	III-63	III-64	III-65	IV-16
LAO	III-67	III-68	III-69	IV-17
PERSIAN	III-71	III-72	III-73	IV-18
POLISH	III-75	III-76	III-77	IV-19
PORTUGUESE	III-79	III-80	III-81	IV-20
RUSSIAN	III-83	III-84	III-85	IV-21
SERBIAN	III-87	III-88	III-89	IV-22
SOMALI	III-91	III-92	III-93	IV-23
SOMALI BANTU	III-91	III-94	III-95	IV-24
SPANISH	III-97	III-104	III-105	IV-25
THAI	III-107	III-108	III-109	IV-26
TURKISH	III-111	III-112	III-113	IV-27
UKRAINIAN	III-115	III-116	III-117	IV-28
VIETNAMESE	III-119	III-120	III-121	IV-29



# PRONUNCIATION

## *Introduction*

---

The purpose of this section of the book is to introduce key concepts and terms to ABLE/ESOL teachers.

Teaching ESOL is, first and foremost, foreign-language instruction. We are not English teachers, we are foreign-language teachers – a critical distinction. As English teachers we tend to focus on the structure of the language. As foreign-language teachers we focus on communication. In other words, if our students can't be understood when they speak, all the irregular verb practice and non-count noun discussions in the world won't help.

Many of us have a limited foreign-language background. This section is an overview of the study of language, what elements of language are important and a list of key terms.

## *Overview*

---

Linguistics is the study of language as a system of communication. Phonetics is the study of sounds. Linguists agree on this much (usually). They don't, however, agree on much more (or so it seems). There is great disagreement over how languages are learned or how they should be taught. There is even disagreement over how many sounds exist in the English language and what symbols should be used to represent them. Teaching pronunciation is complicated by students' native languages, their age and their ability to learn a language. As with math, some students have more difficulty than others; even their personality can affect their outcome. (For example, an outgoing person may take more risks and speak with strangers more easily.) Finally, practice is critical. Too often, students are surrounded by their families and friends and don't have opportunities to practice English.

# BACK TO BASICS

There are many approaches to teaching pronunciation and speaking skills. The ultimate goal is to improve communication through suprasegmentals (a group which continues over more than one sound using stress, intonation, etc.). To be understood, the student must be able to use the music of the language as well as the sounds. In order to teach pronunciation and communication skills, some basic understanding of language and English is needed.

## *Spelling and Pronunciation*

English is not a phonetic language (i.e., one letter does not always represent a specific sound). Some languages are phonetic and this can confuse students. Don't assume your students understand this fact. By explaining that English is not phonetic, you can allay a lot of confusion. In other words, explain that words like dough, tough, thought and bough exist in English. The language is crazy; the students aren't.

However, also explain that there are patterns of spelling. In fact over 80% of our words fit into these patterns. For example, the sound "ow" is consistently spelled either ow (cow) or ou (as in house). Phonics (the relationship between letters and sound) is very different from the linguistic term phonetic. So while students cannot look at a word and know automatically how to pronounce it, if they hear a sound they can learn the predictable ways to spell it.

## *Vowels and Consonants*

While consonants usually are consistent in sound, vowels are not. There are more vowel sounds than letters to represent them. (v = vowel, c = consonant)

Long vowels usually require two letters for the sound.

meat          or    meet          mee

vv                          vv                          vcv

Short vowels usually require only one letter.

met                  not

cvc                          cvc

Short vs. long vowels are the most difficult sounds for students to hear and reproduce. For example:

hat	vs.	hate
mat	vs.	mate
not	vs.	note

\*\* Spend time explaining the difference between long and short vowels. This helps their pronunciation and does wonders for their spelling. Explain in simple terms that a long vowel says the name of the letter (ex. eat). It usually takes two letters to make a long vowel sound. “The first (vowel) does the talking, the second does the walking” - i.e., the second vowel is silent. Short vowel sounds are usually spelled with only one letter. Short vowel sounds are hard for most students to hear and produce. They are the “ugly” sounds of English, the grunting sounds that sound so unfamiliar to many students.

## *Sounds and Production*

**Vowels** are sounds made with unrestricted flow (from teeth, lips etc.). All vowels are voiced (use vocal chords). There are front, middle and back vowels.

**Consonants** are sounds which are interrupted by teeth, lips, tongue or soft palate (top of the mouth). They may be voiced (use of vocal chords) or unvoiced (no use of vocal chords). They may stop (as in p , b , a , k , g , t) or they may continue, or flow (as in m , n , f , v, etc.)

**Voiced vs. unvoiced** - “B” and “P” are produced in exactly the same way. The difference is that one is voiced and one is unvoiced. Have students place their hands on their Adam’s apple (or over their ears) to feel the difference. Voiced sounds use vocal chords, unvoiced do not.

**Nasals** (m, n, ng) - Some sounds are made with air pressing through the nose, not the mouth. (Have students hold their noses shut to hear the differences.)

Use the descriptions of productions of sounds in Section II to help students use the right parts of their mouth to produce a sound. **Aural skills** (learning to hear a sound) and **oral skills** (learning to produce a sound) are an essential and significant, but small part, of communication.

Technical terms such as fricatives, glides and the precise pictures are available in any good pronunciation manual. Some teachers find them useful; many do not. A bibliography is attached if more information is needed.

## *Production in Context*

**Phonology** (the study of sound patterns) is the next step in pronunciation. Sounds are sometimes pronounced differently according to their position in a word or sentence. Students should be aware of these patterns. The “t” in toe is pronounced differently from the “t” in little.

**Aspiration** is the burst of air from some sounds (p, t, k). However, when (for example) an “s” comes before a “p,” the air stops and the sound is not aspirated. Try these words:

pot	spot
to	stew
pier	spear

Some sounds are aspirated more in other languages and students may need to practice this.

**Flapping** - when a “t” sound is placed between an accented and unaccented vowel, it often becomes a “d” sound. Examples are :

butter	(“budder”)	putting (“pudding”)
patio	(“padio”)	
got to go	(“godda go”)	

**R-Coloring** - The consonant R following a vowel can affect the pronunciation of that vowel. The vowel sound becomes obscured and is changed by the “r” influence. Examples are:

ear
beer
bear

**Digraphs** are two or more letters that join together to make a new sound. Digraphs include:

ch	choice
ng	ring
sh	shoe
th	thing
th	this

These may be new sounds for students and may require extra practice.

**Consonant Clusters** (blends) are common letter combinations such as spr, st, spl (initial) or nk, lk, nd (final). For a variety of reasons, these can cause great difficulty for students. Students may add a vowel (“street” becomes “estreet” to a native Spanish speaker) or they may delete a consonant (“green” becomes “geen” or “fast” becomes “fat”). These are language-specific problems.

**Stress** (more commonly known as accent) occurs in syllables, words and sentences. Each is important for pronunciation.

- Stressed vowels are longer and louder in English.  
(In many languages they are only louder.)
- Almost all unstressed vowels become the same reduced vowel sound.
- **[schwa (uh)]. This causes a great deal of trouble for students**, as many languages do not have reduced (or neutral) vowels. The unaccented vowel (whether it’s a, e, i, o or u) becomes an “uh” (reduced) sound in contextual spoken English. In other words, the word turnip when pronounced alone may be “turn-ip,” but in a sentence or phrase becomes “turn-up” as in “The turnip is large.”

Some examples are:

<u>a</u> ppeal	(uh-peal)	se <u>co</u> nd (sec-uhnd)
colle <u>g</u> e	(coll-uhge)	tulip (tul-uhp)

- syllable - stress on two syllable words is generally:

noun - first syllable
verb - second syllable

## English as a Stress-Timed Language

English is a stress-timed language, in which we stress content words not syllables. Many other languages such as French are syllable-timed in which speech forms a regular rhythm according to syllables. Content words include:

nouns	adjectives
main verbs	interrogatives
adverbs	interrogatives

Function words which are not usually stressed include:

articles
auxiliaries
pronouns
prepositions
conjunctions

This difference in stress pattern is very important. Speakers of Hindi, for example, may be very difficult to understand more because of the differences in their stress pattern than their “accent.”

**Intonation** is the music of the language, or the rise and fall of the pitch. Generally in English, pitch falls at the end of a sentence and rises at the end of a question. Example:

I'm going home.
Am I going home?

**Reduction** is the connecting of words or word groups together. Classic examples include:

wanna	(want to)
gonna	(going to)

Often in English we connect the last sound of a word to the beginning sound of the next word. So in this sentence, “The boy walks fast” becomes “The boy walk-sfast.” We don’t carefully pronounce every word or syllable in English. This makes it difficult for students to understand us and to reproduce our pronunciation patterns. Teaching some of the common production “tips” such as linking (wanna, whaddya etc.) can make a significant difference in students’ ability to understand and be understood. Besides, they love practicing them. Whaddya Say? by Weinstein is a good source.

## *Other Linguistic Terms*

**Syntax** is word order. The usual pattern in English is:

**Subject    Verb    Object = SVO**

This is not necessarily true of all languages. Understanding the basic English word patterns helps all facets of students language skills (i.e. reading writing, speaking and listening).

In a **declined language** the form (and spelling) of the word changes as its grammatical function changes. For example, in Russian the word book as a subject is **kniga**, but book as a direct object is **knigu**. Students need to know English is not a declined (inflected) language.

**Phoneme** means sound.  
**Grapheme** means letter.  
**Morpheme** means word.

One of the difficulties in linguistics is that while it is a science, it is also an art. Language is fluid and constantly changing and technical terms become overused and confused with laymen's terms. Accent, for example, has taken on many meanings other than stress; phonics, phonemics and phonetics are often interchanged and then there is the poetry of a language. How do you "explain" the beauty of Shakespeare or the genius of Dr. Seuss?

This section presents the science of the language. Help your students understand that a language is more than a collection of words. Help them understand the art as well as the science.

## *Connecting the Language Skills*

Research shows that language learning is enhanced by connecting the four skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. Integration of the skills is the ultimate goal of language learning. Some basic principals are important.

### **Receptive vs. Productive Skills**

Receptive skills precede productive skills. Listening and reading are receptive skills; speaking and writing are productive skills. Simply put, before a student can produce a sound, s/ he

must first be able to *receive* the sounds. Until a student can hear a sound, he/she will not be able to produce it. Sounds that are not native to the first language must be taught explicitly. Teachers need to identify the sounds, accentuate the sounds and teach students how to physically produce the sounds. Of course, students must be taught how to connect the sounds to the written language.

## **Bridging Pronunciation Skills to Reading**

The National Reading Panel has identified five key areas in reading:

- **Phonemic Awareness** - hearing and recognizing sounds
- **Phonics** - connecting sounds to letters
- **Fluency** - reading accurately
- **Vocabulary** - using words, both orally and written
- **Text Comprehension** - understanding

Instruction in pronunciation leads to phonemic awareness. Phonics increases understanding of the alphabetic principles of English and significantly improves spelling and fluency. Vocabulary is a key tool in language learning. By identifying and teaching sounds which are absent in our ESOL students' native languages, and tying them to English pronunciation and alphabet, we will be making large strides in the overall goal of English language acquisition.

# PRONUNCIATION TIPS

English has roughly 44 sounds (depending on their classification). All languages combined have hundreds of sounds. Children through the age of about adolescence maintain the ability to natively produce most sounds. Among all the other things that go haywire at puberty, the ability to distinguish non-native sounds diminishes. **If you can't distinguish a sound, you can't duplicate it.** Here are some basic tips

## Step #1 **Teach your students to hear the sounds of English (Section II).**

Students must hear the sounds before they can repeat them. Although some of the sounds exist in their language, some do not.

## Step #2 **Teach your students to produce the sound.**

Physically explain how the sound is made (put your teeth on your bottom lip, etc.). Use a mirror, exaggerate, compare and contrast. The production of each sound is explained in Section III. Practice the sound in all three positions (initial is easiest, medial the most difficult specific to learn).

## Step #3 **Identify difficult sounds for the student.**

Read through Section III on linguistic differences. Identify which sounds a Japanese student, for example, has trouble producing and explain those problem areas to the student. Highlight them, exaggerate them, make the student aware of them.

## Step #4 **Practice, Practice, Practice**

Once a student can physically hear and produce the sound, have him/her practice in context. Language, after all, does not come in isolated sounds. Use section IV (Language-specific sentences) over and over again. Tape-record the students if possible so they can hear themselves improving. Tape-record yourself so they can model stress and intonation. It's important, though, that students develop a sensitivity and awareness to the sounds and patterns they need to correct.

## Step #5 **Connect pronunciation to the other language skills.**

## *Elements of Pronunciation*

---

Age, language ability and desire will affect the students' progress. Few adults will completely reduce their accents. **(The goal should not be to eliminate the accent, but to help the student be more easily understood.)** Concentrate on the sounds and/or patterns of speech which interfere with them being understood.

More importantly, get your students to speak. Encourage discussion in your class where they feel "safe" making mistakes. Give them speaking assignments. Gently correct them in the course of discussion. Give them topics for discussion (next Tuesday we'll talk about favorite foods) so they can prepare and learn the vocabulary.

**(Be aware of ESOL teachers' greatest hazard - Don't talk too much.)**

## *A Final Note . . .*

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Humor is one of the highest levels of language, one of our most basic needs and one of the most neglected areas of study. Do what you can to integrate humor into your classroom. Tell jokes. Teach your students how to tell a joke. Share funny stories. Laugh out loud and encourage your students to do so. Humor can bridge a lot of oceans and make us all feel more comfortable and more easily understood.

## *A Very Final Note . . .*

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May my oversimplifications and/or deletions not disturb the eternal rest of my late, great linguistics professor, Dr. Bob Phillips.

# Introduction

In English, the 26 letters of our alphabet can create between 40 and 44 basic phonemes (sounds). English is not a phonemic language (one sound is represented by one symbol), unlike Russian or Spanish which follow the alphabetic principle quite closely. In English, **spelling is not pronunciation**. More words in English are not spelled phonetically than words that are.

Knowing some of the spelling/ phonetic inconsistencies can help students understand why they are having trouble in spelling or pronunciation. For example:

- A sound can be represented by more than one spelling, such as the / f / sound in *fan*, *photograph* and *rough*.
- The same letter can represent several different sounds, such as the / o / in *women*, *cone*, *got*, *love* and *cork*.
- Two letters may be combined to represent one sound, as in *watch*.
- “Silent” letters represent no sound at all, as in *bake*. The “silent” letters may influence the sound of other letters, such as the long “a” sound in *bake*.

Moreover, because English has borrowed so many of its words from other languages, a systematic method of spelling and pronunciation cannot be applied. There is also the problem of regional dialects, which introduce additional discrepancies between spelling and sound.

Section II is designed to be used as a workbook of speech drills for use by students at all levels. Each page begins with a key word that represents a “target” sound in English. Common spellings are also listed for each target sound. Then, examples of the sound in different positions follow. The part on contrasting pairs is set up to develop the students’ ability to discriminate the difference between the target sound and similar sounds. In this way, we begin to introduce the idea that sounds are not made in isolation but are part of a specific context. The phrases and complete sentences demonstrate how the sounds are used in common speech as well as giving students practice in sound production.

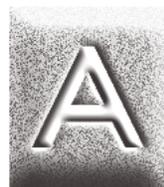
Teachers are encouraged to add their own words, phrases and sentences to the list. By no means is the material assembled here comprehensive. We hope to provide a firm base for additional exercises and practice.





Common Spellings	
a	man
au	laugh

**Short**



## *Production of Short A :*

The tongue is relaxed, flat and low behind the lower teeth. The bottom jaw drops and the sound is voiced (low position).

**Words:**

(INITIAL)	(MEDIAL)
as	fat
add	dad
attic	hat
answer	sad

**Contrasting Pairs:**

at/eat	mat/met	map/mop
at/ate	pan/pen	cat/cot
and/end	mass/mess	hat/hate

**Phrases:**

cat in the hat	answer the question
land on sand	ants in your pants
magic hat	Spanish class
hand in hand	adjectives and adverbs
fat cat	ham sandwich

**Sentences:**

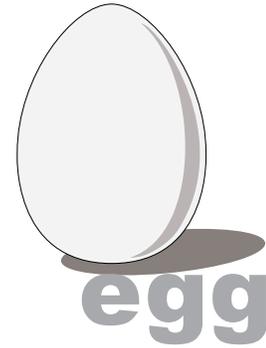
Fat Pat sat on the mat.
Ann and Max had candy.
Andy was sad because Cathy was mad.

## Short



### Common Spellings

e	egg
a	any
ue	guess
ai	said
ea	head



## Production of Short E:

The relaxed tongue is in the middle of the mouth. The jaw and face are also relaxed. Open the mouth and drop the lower jaw slightly making a voiced sound (mid position).

### Words:

(INITIAL)	(MEDIAL)
any	set
enter	men
energy	Wednesday
Emily	pet

### Contrasting Pairs:

end/and	bet/bat	pet/pit
ex/ax	set/sat	wet/wit
Ed/add	men/man	ten/tin

### Phrases:

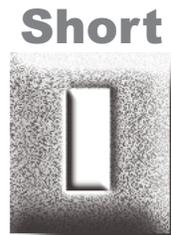
set the table	best friend
no energy left	bet your life
men's room	dead-end
guess again	Federal Express
ready, set, go	get ahead

### Sentences:

Emily entered the contest Wednesday.
Ed likes eggs every day.
November eleventh is Ellen's anniversary.



Common Spellings	
i	sit
hy	rhythm
y	cyst



## Production of Short I:

Raise the tongue high and to the front of the relaxed mouth. Open the mouth only slightly. Make a voiced sound (high position).

### Words:

INITIAL)	(MEDIAL)
it	sit
if	give
is	quick
interest	his

### Contrasting Pairs:

it/at	sick/seek	sit/set
it/eat	pick/peek	hid/had
is/ease	fill/feel	hit/hot

### Phrases:

bit my lip	skinny dip
knit mittens	hit-skip
pet the kitten	flip my lid
ship-shape	British English
inner belt	in the city

### Sentences:

<p>Is it difficult?            Bill lives in the middle of the city.            Phil will sit still and take his pill.</p>
--

## Short



### Common Spellings

o	hot
a	want
a (r)	garden



# hot

## *Production of Short O:*

The tongue is relaxed in a wide open mouth with the jaw dropped. The tongue is resting on the bottom of the mouth. The sound is voiced.

### Words:

INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
art	ma	hot
odd	pa	cop
October	spa	watt
occupation	ha ha	father

### Contrasting Pairs:

on/an	pot/pat	bomb/bum
are/ore	pot/putt	hot/hut
rot/rat	lock/luck	tot/taught

### Phrases:

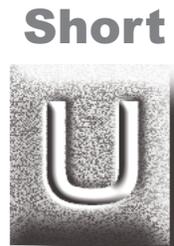
hop scotch	fox trot
hot shot	stop and shop
drop the mop	hot spot
odd jobs	50 watt bulb
crop-top	ma and pa

### Sentences:

Usually <b>O</b> ctober is not hot. <b>A</b> rtists are an <b>o</b> dd lot," said <b>A</b> rthur. <b>B</b> ob and his father shop at the garden center.
---



Common Spellings	
u	up
ou	trouble
o	honey



## *Production of Short U:*

The mouth is opened slightly and the tongue is relaxed. The sound is voiced.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(MEDIAL)
us	cut
ugly	ton
other	stuck
umbrella	mother

Contrasting Pairs:

putt/pot	bug/bag	buck/book
cut/cot	luck/lock	cuff/cough
cup/cap	tug/tag	cut/caught

Phrases:

under the sun	mud puddle
ugly duckling	a month ago
undone	funny bunny
enough is enough	cut the cake
some fun	honey bun

Sentences:

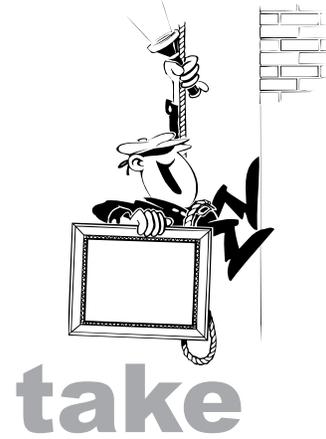
The **u**gly **u**tt jumped into the **u**d puddle.  
**u**gly **u**ns cost too much **u**ney.  
**u**g is as **u**g as a **u**g in a **u**g.

## Long



### Common Spellings

a - e	take
ai	daily
ay	may
ey	hey
ea	break



## *Production of Long A:*

The tongue is tense and in a middle position with the lips slightly parted in a tiny smile. The tongue tip touches the front bottom teeth.

### Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
ate	say	date
age	pay	paper
ape	may	break
eighteen	holiday	main

### Contrasting Pairs:

age/edge	bait/bat	ace/ice
late/let	mate/mat	pain/pin
pain/pen	wait/wet	raid/red

### Phrases:

pay day	shake and bake
baby face	make my day
main gate	stay away
take a break	wide awake
bake a cake	potato pancakes

### Sentences:

Jane placed her daisies in the gray vase. Nate played with Jay all day. Katie ate cake from a paper plate.
--



Common Spellings	
e - e	Pete
ei	either
ea	each
ee	seen
y	Mary



***Production of Long E:***

The tongue is high leaving only a tiny space with the mouth almost shut. The teeth are close together with a tense chin and mouth. The lips form a smile and the sound is voiced.

**Words:**

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
eat	flea	feet
equal	agree	meal
east	cookie	week
even	baby	peel

**Contrasting Pairs:**

eel/ill	weak/wick	beat/built
sheep/ship	feel/file	feel/fel
meat/mitt	seat/sit	meal/Mel

**Phrases:**

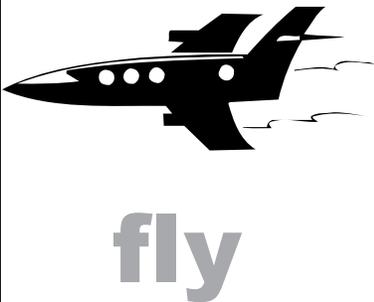
tea and cookies	keep the peace
peach tree	please be neat
be a sweetie	green beans
agree with me	lean on me
three times a week	breathe deep

**Sentences:**

**Jeannie and Mandy teach reading to people.**  
**“Bees can be mean and sting,” said Steve.**  
**Sleet falls every week of January.**



Common Spellings	
ei	height
i - e	mile
uy	guy
y	fly



***Production of Long I:***

The tongue is low in the mouth, then lightly touches the bottom front teeth with the tip. Lower the jaw and open lips wide. Raise jaw and make a voiced sound.

Words:	(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
	I	tie	diet
	eye	sky	file
	iris	shy	height
	island	reply	invite

Contrasting Pairs:		
I'll/oil	height/heat	bite/bit
tie/toil	might/meet	sight/sit
tie/tea	time/team	fight/fit

Phrases:		
pie in the sky	I cried and cried	
sty in my eye	I'm shy	
high and dry	fly by night	
might makes right	bye-bye	
don't fight	Friday, July 9th	

Sentences:	
	I'm five foot nine.
	I invited Iris for pie and ice cream.
	The fire was inviting on a cold night.



Common Spellings	
o	no
o - e	vote
oa	boat
oe	toe
ow	row
ew	sew
ough	dough



### *Production of Long O:*

Round lips and place tongue low in mouth. Raise the tongue toward the roof of the mouth. Make a voiced “oh” sound.

**Words:**

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
old	show	cold
own	mow	hold
ocean	dough	foam
over	sew	hope

**Contrasting Pairs:**

row/saw	low/law	tone/toe
so/saw	sewn/sun	show/shoe
phone/fawn	bone/bun	blow/blue

**Phrases:**

overcoat	row your boat
overdue books	mow the lawn
oh, no!	go slow
know the ropes	roller coaster
hold the phone	blow your nose

**Sentences:**

Tomorrow **J**oan will go to the **o**cean.  
**J**oe wrote home for **d**ough.  
 Does **F**lo know the way home?



Common Spellings	
u	uniform
u - e	cute
oo	boot
ew	few
ui	fruit
oe	shoe



**shoe**

***Production of Long U:***

Lips are rounded with tongue midway in the mouth. Make a long voiced sound.

**Words:**

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
unit	due	cool
United States	true	group
uniform	blue	boot
use	through	recruit

**Contrasting Pairs:**

cool/coal	flute/float	Luke/luck
tool/toll	crew/crow	soon/son
boot/boat	boot/but	shoe/should

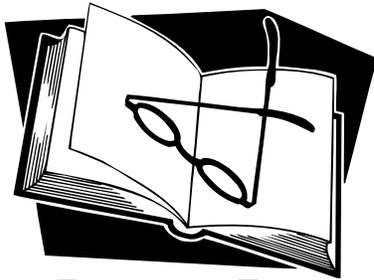
**Phrases:**

blue moon	new recruits
overdue	new shoes
true blue	boot camp
duty first	threw the ball
bluegrass music	cool school

**Sentences:**

Ruth wanted **new blue shoes** for school.  
 Luke and **Sue** had a **cool** drink.  
 The **bluebird** **flew** **due** south.

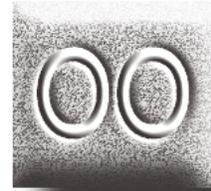
\* oo is sometimes classified separately from long u. cute (yoo) vs. boot (oo)



**book**

**Common Spellings**

oo	book
ou	should
u	sugar



***Production of OO:***

Lips are pushed out and slightly rounded. The tongue is midway. A short voiced sound is made.

**Words:**

(MEDIAL)
book
woman
could
crook

**Contrasting Pairs:**

could/coal	took/tool	cook/kook
could/cool	full/fool	foot/food
should/shoot	should/show	soot/suit

**Phrases:**

push a cart	cookbook
took a look	shook up
push and pull	took my book
look out	catch the crook
good looking	wool coat

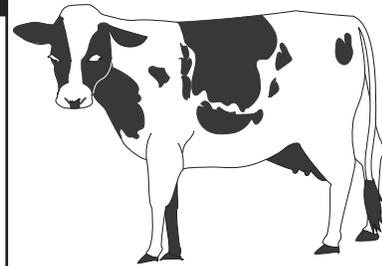
**Sentences:**

She **shook** her right **foot**.  
 You **should** use a **cookbook**.  
 The **woman** **took** a **good look** at the **crook**.



### Common Spellings

ow	how
ou	our



**COW**

## *Production of OW:*

The tongue is low and against the bottom teeth. The mouth is wide open, then closed, making a puckered shape. A voiced sound is made.

### Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
out	cow	pout
owl	now	house
hour	how	towel
ouch	allow	announce

### Contrasting Pairs:

out/oat	our/or	mouth/moth
how/hoe	down/done	bough/bought
now/no	pout/putt	town/ton

### Phrases:

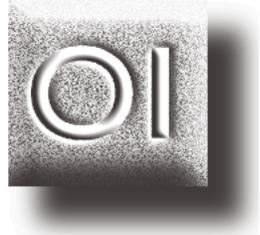
our cow	out and about
hour by hour	townhouse
no parking allowed	downtown
shower announcement	clown around
foul ball	ground round

### Sentences:

I **found flowers out** on the **ground**.  
 A **shout** is a **loud sound**.  
**How** did the **brown mouse** get into the **house**?



Common Spellings	
oi	oil
oy	toy



## *Production of OI:*

Start with /aw/ where the tongue is low and tense, the lips tight and the jaw dropped. Slide into /e/ by moving the tongue high and tensing the tongue and cheek muscles. The mouth pulls into a smile.

### Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
oil	toy	boil
oyster	boy	point
ointment	joy	voice
oink	Roy	appointment

### Contrasting Pairs:

boy/blow	voice/vow	toil/toll
choice/chess	joy/jaw	foil/foul
royal/roll	oil/earl	coil/call

### Phrases:

toys bring joy	foiled again
boiling point	boys will be boys
rubbing ointment	royal treatment
joyful noise	good choice
point it out	Detroit River

### Sentences:

The **toys** brought **joy** to the **boys**.  
 Bring **oil** only to the **boiling point**.  
 After cooking **oysters**, wrap them in **foil**.



### Common Spellings

ir	fir
er	mother
ur	urban
or	harbor
ear	learn
R - controlled vowels *	



mother

## Production of ER Stressed & Unstressed:

Cheek muscles are tightened and make a voiced “err” sound from the throat.

### Words:

INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
urban	doctor	injured
earth	harbor	curtain
early	father	work
urge	sister	surgery

### Contrasting Pairs:

stir/stay	burn/barn	turn/toil
work/weak	word/wired	further/father
first/fist	bird/beard	her/hair

### Phrases:

mother and father	higher and higher
pull the curtain	professional photographer
fur collar	November thirtieth
help your mother	early bird
sister and brother	first birthday

### Sentences:

Honor your father and mother.  
 Lower the curtain during the night.  
 Kurt's injured leg still hurts.

\* Depending on the source, this is considered between one and five sounds.  
 We have chosen to combine them.



# song

## Common Spellings

au	taught
ou	cough
aw	saw
o	song
al	all



## Production of AW:

The tongue is tense and low away from the teeth. The lips are tense. The bottom jaw drops as you make a voiced sound.

### Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
August	paw	call
awful	law	bought
autumn	draw	wrong
automatic	saw	thought

### Contrasting Pairs:

call/cole	saw/sew	paw/pow
hall/hole	taught/tot	gnaw/now
law/low	caught/cot	awed/odd

### Phrases:

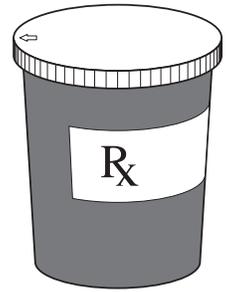
awful fall	bought a lot
lost cause	long fall
tall order	Santa Claus
daughter-in-law	wrong number
call for help	automatic withdrawal

### Sentences:

Paul took a **long walk** through the **mall**.  
**Auggie** cut the **lawn** twice in **August**.  
 He **thought** **Dawn** was an **awful** cook.



Common Spellings	
a	ago
e	open
i	medicine
o	opinion
u	upon



medicine

**Note:**

Vowels occurring in unstressed syllables often become the neutral vowel sound “uh”. This causes a great deal of confusion for students. In their native languages, vowels do not often change like this. By carefully pronouncing each vowel, they change both the rhythm and the sound, becoming even less understandable. Students will be much better understood if the accented syllable is stressed strongly and all remaining vowels are obscured.

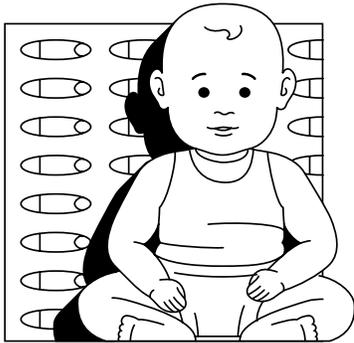
***Production of Schwa (uh):***

The lips are relaxed and open slightly and the tongue is in mid-position. The sound is voiced.

Words:	(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
	alone	sofa	spaghetti
	another	China	demon
	above	drama	moment
	occur	zebra	popular

Phrases:	
golden opportunity	fattening dessert
together again	porcelain china
professional photographer	telephone number
Christmas ornament	what’s happening

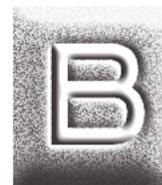
Sentences:
Sudden noises often frighten my dog.
Kevin slept on the second sofa.
The other set of plates is fine china.



**baby**

**Common Spellings**

b	baby
bb	rubber



***Production of B:***

Both lips are closed; the air is stopped at the lips, then the lips open. There should not be any puff of air. This will give a voiced sound. P is identical but voiceless.

**Words:**

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
beat	job	subject
bit	robe	member
bet	cab	maybe
but	cub	absent

**Contrasting Pairs:**

base/pace	lab/lap	swab/swap
bath/path	cob/cop	big/pig
beach/peach	pub/pup	amble/ample

**Phrases:**

by the bay	both of us
baby baboon	bread and butter
remember Bill	boring job
probably so	rubber band
big boy	burn your bridges

**Sentences:**

**Bob** will probably become a **Boy** Scout.  
**Barbara** buys fresh **bread** and **butter** from the **baker**.  
**Betty's** **baby** **boy** has **blond** hair and **blue** eyes.



### Common Spellings

ch	chin
tch	match
tu	future



match

## *Production of CH:*

This sound is a combination of the / t / and the / sh / sounds. The front of the tongue is raised firmly to the gum ridge for the /t/ sound. Lips protrude while the airstream is restricted there, the / sh / is added before releasing the / ch / sound. This gives a voiceless sound.

### Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
chair	each	picture
chance	rich	kitchen
change	catch	century
child	watch	nature

### Contrasting Pairs:

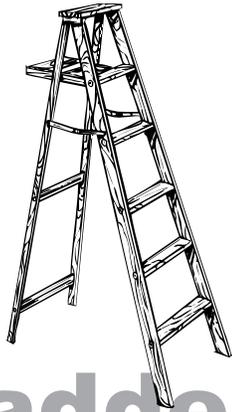
cheap/jeep	hunch/hunt	choke/joke
churn/turn	arch/art	batches/badges
chin/tin	etch/edge	cheat/sheet

### Phrases:

fat chance	turn of the century
loose change	chunk of cheese
made for each other	pitcher and catcher
rich and famous	cheapskate
watch out	catch forty winks

### Sentences:

A **child** can **choke** on a **chunk** of **cheese**.  
**Chuck** paid for the **church** picture by **check**.  
**Choose** the **chicken** sandwich for lunch.



**ladder**

Common Spellings	
d	did
dd	ladder



### *Production of D:*

The tip of the tongue is placed behind the upper front teeth on the front end of the gum ridge. The air is stopped briefly at the gum ridge and then released pushing the tongue away, which gives a voiced sound. T is identical but voiceless.

**Words:**

(MEDIAL)	(INITIAL)	(FINAL)
day	bed	leader
deep	road	president
does	wood	window
decide	need	modern

**Contrasting Pairs:**

dad/bad	pedal/pebble	drain/train
date/bait	bride/bright	ladle/label
dark/bark	nod/not	bad/bat

**Phrases:**

big deal	third degree
down in the dumps	laid an egg
past due	divide the donuts
don't know	good condition
daily dose	under the weather

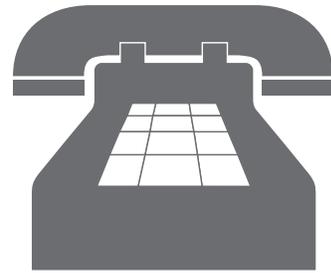
**Sentences:**

My wedding **dress** is old.  
 I heard a bird sing under my window today.  
 The old lady **decided** to **do** the laundry.



### Common Spellings

f	fan
ff	offer
gh	laugh
ph	telephone



telephone

## Production of F:

Hold the upper front teeth lightly against the bottom lip and push air out. F is voiceless. V is identical but voiced.

### Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
fear	giraffe	after
fall	cough	coffee
far	off	laughter
forget	half	careful

### Contrasting Pairs:

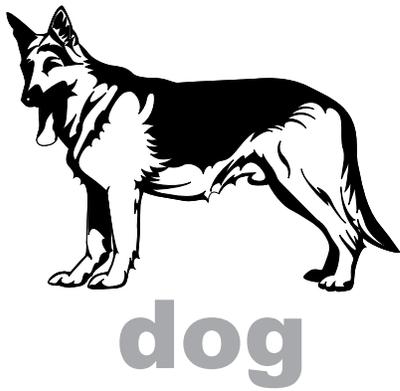
face/vase	safe/save	half/have
fuse/views	life/live	belief/believe
fail/veil	leaf/leave	fat/pat

### Phrases:

fame and fortune	flow freely
fifty-five feet	fair-weather friends
fat chance	fresh coffee
funny feeling	first place
forget it	photo finish

### Sentences:

**F**red coughed and sniffed.  
**F**rank fell off the front steps into the flower bed.  
 Professor **F**ranklin photographed the firefly.



Common Spellings	
g	go
gg	egg
Hard g (g followed by o, a, u)	



## Production of G:

The tongue is raised in order to touch the back of the mouth. Air is released quickly, breaking the contact, which produces a voiced sound. K is identical but voiceless.

### Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
got	big	sugar
gave	egg	alligator
guide	dog	muggy
give	bug	igloo

### Contrasting Pairs:

good/could	bag/back	grain/crane
goat/coat	dug/duck	glue/clue
guard/card	peg/peck	grow/crow

### Phrases:

guessing game	figure it out
go get it	green grass
good as gold	get along
give a gift	great suggestion
ground hog	go golfing

### Sentences:

The <b>g</b> reen <b>g</b> lass <b>g</b> rows in <b>g</b> August.
<b>g</b> reg <b>g</b> uides the <b>g</b> roup by the <b>g</b> olden <b>g</b> ate.
The <b>g</b> irl forgot to <b>g</b> et <b>g</b> sugar and <b>g</b> eggs for her <b>g</b> randmother.



### Common Spellings

h	hat
wh	who



# home

## *Production of H:*

Open the mouth and push out a puff of air without vibrating the vocal cords.

### Words:

(INITIAL)	(MEDIAL)
had	behind
head	ahead
him	doghouse
home	inhale

### Contrasting Pairs:

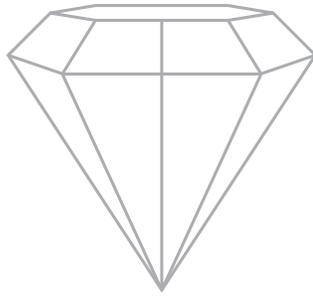
him/whim	hid/kid	head/fed
hail/whale	horse/course	her/fur
heel/wheel	hill/ill	hat/at

### Phrases:

ahead of her	high hopes
happy birthday	have a heart
hurry home	how are you
ho-ho-ho	in the doghouse
head over heels in love	over the hill

### Sentences:

Heather is **hopelessly head over heels** in love.  
 Harry **has** a **head of healthy hair**.  
 Have a **happy holiday**.



gem

### Common Spellings

j	joy
dge	bridge
di	soldier
gg	suggest
soft "g"	(after e, i, y)
gi	region
ge	gem
gy	gym



### Production of J:

The tip of the tongue touches behind the ridge behind the upper teeth. Lips are pushed out. The sound is voiced.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
general	age	major
joy	bridge	magic
job	edge	subject
giant	judge	danger

Contrasting Pairs:

Badge/bash	jet/yet	juice/use
jell/yell	jay/yeah	gin/chin
jest/zest	edge/etch	jeep/cheap

Phrases:

legal age	judge for yourself
general rule	dangerous journey
jump for joy	job hunting
orange juice	college subject
judge and jury	genuine gentleman

Sentences:

**George** enjoys jokes.  
 The **general** and his **soldiers** jumped off the bridge.  
**Julie's** jewelry is just **gorgeous**.



### Common Spellings

c	cat
k	kid
cc	account
ch	chaos
ck	pick



### *Production of K:*

Raise the back of the tongue to touch the soft part at the back of the roof of the mouth. The air is stopped there, then released quickly. K is voiceless. G is identical but voiced.

#### Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
king	sick	quickly
coat	music	mechanic
call	neck	doctor
can	book	discover

#### Contrasting Pairs:

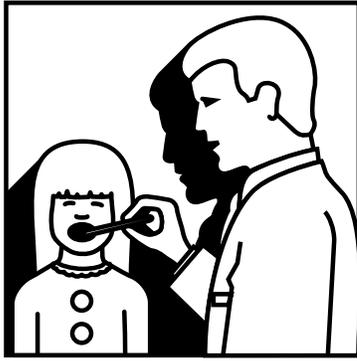
call/gall	back/bag	clean/glean
curl/girl	bicker/bigger	crow/grow
cold/gold	tucking/tugging	frock/frog

#### Phrases:

of course	practice makes perfect
call me	cash a check
crystal clear	squeaky clean
well known fact	Christmas card
coffee cake	cook book

#### Sentences:

Carrying **coal** is **back-breaking** work.  
 The **kitchen** **cook** **quickly** **cut** a piece of **chicken**.  
**Cathy** **carries** both **cash** and **credit** **cards**.

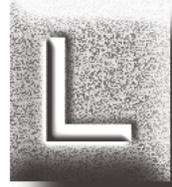


ill

## Common Spellings

l low

ll filling



## Production of L:

Before vowels, place the tip of the tongue on the upper gum ridge, just behind the teeth. The middle of the tongue is high. After vowels, the back of the tongue is high as the tip of the tongue touches the teeth. L is a voiced sound.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
let	ill	college
law	all	almost
leave	tell	realize
last	full	silver

Contrasting Pairs:

lock/rock	lay/ray	glass/grass
let/wet	light/right	collect/correct
line/wine	rolling/roaring	late/rate

Phrases:

leave me alone	last leg
silver lining	truly wonderful
wall to wall	beautiful smile
lots of luck	whole wide world
rolling in dough	live and let live

Sentences:

<p>“Lilies of the Field” is a classic film. Michelle has the most beautiful smile in the world. Laws don’t allow pets loose in public places.</p>
---



### Common Spellings

m	me
mb*	comb
mm	comma
mn*	Autumn



## Production of M:

Place lips together. The air is flowed into the nasal cavity and thus produces a voiced humming sound.

### Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
met	some	lemon
miss	came	damage
man	him	almost
must	them	example

### Contrasting Pairs:

men/when	might/bite	remind/rewind
met/wet	mat/bat	make/wake
mall/ball	more/bore	them/then

### Phrases:

wait a minute	M & M's
in the middle	keep it simple
most of all	met my match
make a mess	sometimes I wonder
second attempt	bad example

### Sentences:

<b>M</b> ary comes home on <b>M</b> onday <b>m</b> ornings.
<b>M</b> ike and <b>M</b> ark <b>m</b> ade their camp near the <b>m</b> ountain.
<b>M</b> y <b>m</b> other <b>m</b> akes delicious <b>m</b> eat balls and <b>l</b> emon <b>m</b> eringue pie.

\* common silent letters



Common Spellings	
n	no
nn	banner
gn*	sign
kn	knot
pn*	pneumonia



### *Production of N:*

The tip of the tongue is raised to the upper gum ridge; the air is pushed into the nasal cavity, sending out a voiced sound through the nose.

Words:	(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
	name	in	corner
	know	ten	evening
	new	sun	danger
	none	common	banana

Contrasting Pairs:	(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
	no/low	not/dot	dine/dime
	knit/lit	near/dear	snack/slack
	nice/mice	mine/mile	snow/slow

Phrases:	(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
	native country	do not enter	
	well-known	on the phone	
	wrong number	turn around	
	around the corner	not now	
	count on me	once in a while	

Sentences:	(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
	No news is good news.		
	Nick never wears new neckties.		
	Ned enjoys his New England chowder without any onions.		

\* common silent letters



### Common Spellings

ng	sing
nk*	ink



## *Production of NG:*

The back of the tongue moves toward the back part of the roof of the mouth and touches it firmly, which forces the air to flow into the nasal cavity. This results in a voiced sound.

### Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)
king	jungle
long	linger
among	angry
coming	tango

### Contrasting Pairs:

hung/hum	rung/rug	lung/luck
bang/bag	hang/ham	hang/hand
clang/clam	bang/bank	ring/Rig

### Phrases:

bring it along	single file
among old friends	king of the hill
hang up	long ago
everything looks great	jungle gym
think Spring	young and strong

### Sentences:

The **E**nglish language makes me **a**ngry.  
The **k**ing has a **s**ingle **r**ing on his **f**inger.  
The **s**inger **s**ang songs of **S**pring.

\* nk is often added as a variation of this sound.



# supper

## Common Spellings

p port

pp supper



## Production of P:

Both lips are closed, the air is stopped at the lips, then the lips open. There should be a puff of air that comes out. The sound is voiceless. B is identical but voiced.

### Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
paid	shape	upper
pick	lip	apple
part	top	napkin
pass	hope	deposit

### Contrasting Pairs:

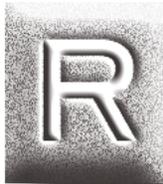
pale/bale	tap/tab	rapid/rabid
pat/bat	rope/robe	staple/stable
pit/bit	cap/cab	simple/symbol

### Phrases:

peace and prosperity	Step up
pay the price	except me
pick up the pace	purple plum
pass the peas	button your lip
piece of paper	powder puff

### Sentences:

<p>Pumpkin pie is <b>popular</b></p> <p>Peter forgot to <b>prepare</b> his report.</p> <p>Newspapers <b>print</b> <b>political</b> pictures.</p>
--



### Common Spellings

r	red
rr	merry
wr*	write
rh*	rhyme



## Production of R:

Before vowels, R is produced by raising the tip of the tongue toward the roof of the mouth. The tongue does not touch the roof and does not vibrate. After vowels, the back of the tongue is raised up but does not touch the roof. R is voiced.

### Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
red	bear	zero
real	clear	merry
write	car	several
roof	four	forward

### Contrasting Pairs:

rest/west	door/dough	bright/light
rinse/wince	bear/bell	fry/fly
rent/went	run/won	crowd/cloud

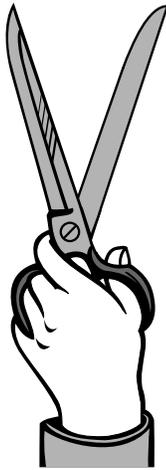
### Phrases:

turn of the century	rock and roll
run around	railroad crossing
every other	golden rule
charge card	right and wrong
tried and true	four-door car

### Sentences:

Knowing right from **w**rong is important  
 Gregory and his brother **r**eally like rock-and-roll music.  
 The three friends **r**an in the race on Thursday, November thirteenth.

\*common silent letters

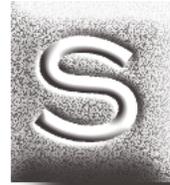


scissors

### Common Spellings

c	race
s	say
z	pretzel
ps*	psalm
sc*	scissors
ss	mass
st*	listen

Soft "c" sound  
ce ci cy



### Production of S:

The tip of the tongue is raised to the upper gum ridge constricting the airstream, producing a sharp "hissing" sound. This is voiceless S sound. Z is identical but voiced.

Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
set	yes	outside
city	pass	gasoline
sun	kiss	decide
sea	office	glossy

Contrasting Pairs:

some/thumb	tense/tens	loose/lose
sink/think	tense/tenth	lacy/lazy
sue/zoo	close/clothes	rice/rise

Phrases:

set the standards	first base
sit still	pass the test
sun rise, sun set	sweet sixteen
sail the seven seas	doctor's office
endless supply	slow dance

Sentences:

<p><b>Sam sails the seven seas.</b>  <b>Students recite an endless supply of silly sentences.</b>  <b>Stop dancing and listen to this song.</b></p>
---

\* common silent letters



### Common Spellings

c	oceanic
ch	Chicago
s	sugar
ci	special
sc	conscious
sh	shy
si	emulsion
su	sugar
ti	nation



sheep

### *Production of SH:*

Push out the lips. The tip of the tongue forms a groove close to the gum ridge but not touching it. Air is pushed out to make a voiceless sound.

#### Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
show	wish	action
she	fresh	issue
shop	wash	special
sure	finish	washing

#### Contrasting Pairs:

sheep/cheap	shell/sell	cash/catch
sheet/seat	fashion/fasten	marsh/march
ship/sip	shin/chin	dish/ditch

#### Phrases:

show off	fresh fish
get into shape	short shorts
shop around	cash and carry
ship shape	shine your shoes
shame on you	finish line

#### Sentences:

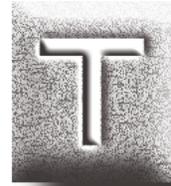
<p><b>She</b> bought a bushel of delicious apples. <b>Sharon</b> took a vacation on the ocean. The <b>shop</b> had a <b>special</b> on <b>fresh</b>-water <b>fish</b>ing gear.</p>
--



**mitt**

### Common Spellings

t	tea
ed	walked
bt*	debt
pt*	receipt
tt	mitt
th	Thomas



### *Production of T:*

The tip of the tongue is placed behind the upper front teeth. Air is stopped briefly at the gum ridge, then released. There should be a puff of air. This produces a voiceless sound. There should be a puff of air. D is identical but voiced.

#### Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
take	eat	continue
tell	night	enter
tie	late	until
two	visit	empty

#### Contrasting Pairs:

tank/thank	try/dry	tree/three
team/theme	debt/dead	true/threw
tick/thick	toot/tooth	right/ride

#### Phrases:

take turns	night light
don't tell	hot temper
too tight	it's important
stand tall	let's eat
tattle tale	twenty-two

#### Sentences:

Ted's hot temper got him into a fight.  
 Sometimes Tracy talks too much.  
 Our computer training material is terrific.

\* common silent letters



### Common Spellings

th                  think



## *Production of TH:*

Place the tip of the tongue firmly against the cutting edge of the upper front teeth and puff air out. While the air is pushed out, make a voiceless sound without making the vocal cords vibrate. (Hint: Have the student exaggerate by sticking the tongue out more than necessary.)

### Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
thin	earth	healthy
thank	both	birthday
thought	youth	toothbrush
third	mouth	anthem

### Contrasting Pairs:

thin/tin	death/deaf	three/free
through/true	moth/moss	thrill/frill
thirst/first	oath/oat	mouth/mouse

### Phrases:

think thin	happy birthday
thank goodness	both of us
well thought out	take a bath
three-thirty	through thick and thin
three in one	healthy diet

### Sentences:

I **think** **the** **thimbles** will fit my **thumb**.  
He **thanked** **both** of us for every**thing**.  
**Theo's** **birth**day party is on **Thurs**day, **the** **thirteenth**.



**bathe**

**Common Spellings**

th                  this



***Production of TH (voiced):***

The tip of the tongue is placed against the cutting edge of the upper front teeth. The air is pushed out, making the vocal cords vibrate (a voiced sound). Hint: Have the student exaggerate the sound by sticking the tongue out more than necessary. O is identical but voiceless.

**Words:**

**(INITIAL)**

**(FINAL)**

**(MEDIAL)**

there  
those  
this  
they

bathe  
breathe  
smooth  
soothe

neither  
another  
feather  
mother

**Contrasting Pairs:**

there/tear  
those/doze  
they/day

breathe/breath  
either/ether  
teethe/teeth

worthy/wordy  
other/udder  
clothing/closing

**Phrases:**

more than that  
breathe in deeply  
this-n-that  
mother and father  
worthy cause

another one  
one of these days  
those were the days  
all of these  
either one

**Sentences:**

**Neither** brother likes this **weather**.  
**The** father and mother would **rather** go together.  
**This** leather is better **than** **that** one.



## Common Spellings

f	of
v	very



# leave

## Production of V:

Place the upper front teeth on the bottom lip and push air out (voiced). (Hint: Having the student bite lightly down on the lower lip might help.) F is identical but voiceless.

### Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
visit	leave	divide
very	give	advance
voice	move	seventeen
view	above	movie

### Contrasting Pairs:

view/few	vote/boat	reviews/refuse
vat/bat	wave/waif	relieve/relief
very/berry	shovel/shuffle	leave/leaf

### Phrases:

good value	favorite flavor
brief visit	over and above
thank you very much	move over
voice your opinion	love of my life
divided evenly	old wives' tale

### Sentences:

Love me or leave me.
Every November eleventh is Veteran's Day.
Very careful drivers avoid swerving into curves.



### Common Spellings

w	way
u	persuade
ui	quiet
wh*	white



### Production of W:

Push the lips forward and blow out air to produce a voiced sound.

#### Words:

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
will	meow	always
way	ow	forward
were		sandwich
water		homework

#### Contrasting Pairs:

why/rye	west/vest	wine/vine
wet/vet	way/ray	wipe/ripe
wise/rise	wait/rate	wheel/veal*

#### Phrases:

will power	weeping willow
wash and wear	don't dwell on it
woodwork	within reasons
homework	one way
watch your step	in the whole wide world

#### Sentences:

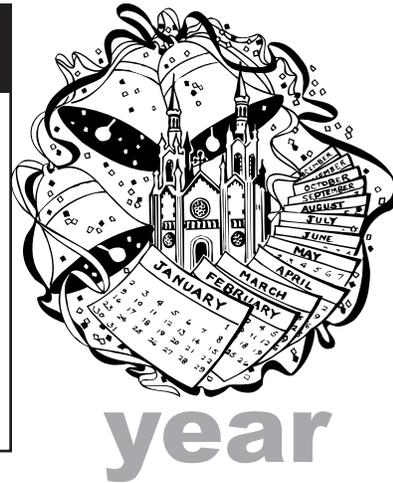
<p><b>W</b>ash and <b>w</b>ear is <b>w</b>onderful.  The <b>w</b>inter <b>w</b>ind blows from the <b>W</b>est.  <b>W</b>e won't <b>w</b>ait for <b>W</b>illy on <b>W</b>ednesday.</p>
---

\* Some people pronounce the wh sound with an "h" puff of air.  
"Which" and "witch" for example sound differently when spoken this way.



### Common Spellings

y	yes
ia	Italian
ni	opinion
io	million



## Production of Y:

The lips are spread. The front of the tongue is raised toward the roof of the mouth and the tip of the tongue is behind the lower teeth. This produces a voiced sound.

### Words:

(INITIAL)	(MEDIAL)
yes	onion
yard	canyon
young	million
year	opinion

### Contrasting Pairs:

yell/jell	yam/jam	you/chew
yolk/joke	you'll/jewel	yellow/jello
yard/jarred	yet/jet	yes/chess

### Phrases:

yard sale	beyond control
young and old	a million to one
year after year	yours truly
valued opinion	yellow yarn
not yet	pearl onion

### Sentences:

Yellow onions and yams are **yummy**.  
 The canyon is one **million** years old.  
**Union** soldiers were often **young**.



**zebra**

**Common Spellings**

z	zone
zz	buzz
s	was



**Production of Z:**

Raise the tip of the tongue to the upper gum ridge, then vibrate the vocal chords by making a buzzing voiced sound.

**Words:**

(INITIAL)	(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
zebra	twins	daisy
zipper	eyes	closed
zoo	rose	pleasing
zinc	please	razor
		fuzzy

**Contrasting Pairs:**

closed/close	rise/rice	razor/racer
plays/place	zoo/Sue	peas/peace
graze/grace	trays/trace	prize/price

**Phrases:**

zigzag	closed down
close your eyes	razor sharp
a dozen roses	fizzled out
grows like a weed	raisin bread
easy does it	fingers and toes

**Sentences:**

**Z**ebras are always grazing at the **z**oo.  
**R**oses and **d**aisies blow in the breeze.  
**Z**ak uses his razor on his fuzzy face.



### Common Spellings

si	vision
zi	glazier
su	pleasure
ge	beige



## Production of ZH:

Push out the lips. Raise the front of the tongue to the upper gum ridge making voiced buzzing sound. Sh is identical but voiceless.

### Words:

(FINAL)	(MEDIAL)
beige	vision
rouge	measure
garage	leisure
massage	usually

### Contrasting Pairs:

measure/mesher
----------------

### Phrases:

red rouge	clear vision
parking garage	beyond measure
beige color	at your leisure
usually right	business or pleasure
watching television	hidden treasure

### Sentences:

<p>We <b>usually</b> <b>treasure</b> <b>pleasur</b>able trips.          His <b>decis</b>ion <b>usu</b>ally causes <b>confus</b>ion.          Watching <b>televis</b>ion is a <b>leisur</b>e activity.</p>
---

## NOTABLE EXCEPTIONS, DELETIONS, AND SIMPLIFICATIONS

**w/wh** Some linguists classify these as two sounds.  
Some people pronounce which and witch differently.

**qu** Since "q" is always followed by a "u" in English, this becomes a "kw" combination.  
Practice these words:

quiet	queen
quick	quiver
quilt	quit

**X** "x" at the beginning of words is almost always pronounced as "z" in English.  
Some linguists classify medial "x" as a different sound. It is a combination of  
g/s or k/s. Practice these words:

extra (ks)	external (ks)	example (gs)
excited (ks)	excellent (ks)	exact (gs)
excuse (ks)	exhausted (gs)	

**ar** "A" combined with "r" is sometimes classified as a separate sound (a as in arm).  
It is very similar to a short o/r combination. Practice these words:

arm	artificial
army	artery
article	ark
art	party

**oo** is sometimes classified separately from the long u sound.

cute	vs.	boot
(yoo)		(oo)

# CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC REFERENCE POINTS

## *Introduction*

The purpose of Section III is to give the teacher cultural and linguistic information that will be helpful when addressing the language acquisition needs of the student. Just as students investigate the customs of the United States and often study some English before coming here, teachers as well should be aware of the cultural and linguistic heritage each student brings to class.

Section III is composed of 27 overviews of culture and language. Each includes:

- 1) a brief cultural sketch of a country; subjects addressed include holidays, gestures, family, education, personal space and courtesies;
- 2) a linguistic history and description of the language and dialects spoken in the country;
- 3) an outline of common syntax, grammar and pronunciation differences which can be used as reference points;
- 4) sources to augment the teacher's knowledge of the culture and language;
- 5) space for teachers to write personal notes about their observations in the classroom.

### **LANGUAGE DIFFERENCES AND PRONUNCIATION**

ESOL teachers are continually striving for understandable pronunciation from students. Teachers need to understand why Peter from Poland cannot say "th," or why John from Hungary is saying "v" when they are attempting to teach him "w." ESOL teachers do not need to speak the students' language. They can avoid much frustration if they are made aware of the basic linguistic differences that students bring from their native language. The differences are found in pronunciation, syntax (word order) and grammar. If teachers are aware of the linguistic differences, they can, in many cases, find ways to improve student pronunciation dramatically.

Pronunciation problems become most difficult when the English sound does not occur at all in the student's native language. Each language has its own sound inventory; each language uses a specific set of muscles in the mouth to create the sounds of the language. Students must learn to use new muscles to pronounce the sounds of English and be given the opportunity to strengthen those muscles. This can be accomplished by using specifically focused pronunciation drills or by including pronunciation practice in each class.

## CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC REFERENCE POINTS *continued*

An example of this occurs with the voiceless sound of “th.” Students from most of the language families represented in this book have difficulty with this sound because it may not exist in their language. When a teacher explains that every student needs to exercise his pronunciation muscles, a total community effort to master pronunciation activities can reduce the difficulty through humor and repetition. The production of voiceless “th” is both easy to see and to feel on one’s hand, which with daily practice of the date (4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, etc.) and sentences in Section IV should create clear speech.

Another example is in word placement for dates and addresses. In many languages, the date is given with the number first, the month second and the year last. Similarly, an address is given with the house number first followed by the name of the street, and the ZIP code followed by the city. Although this linguistic difference may be difficult to change, the awareness of it is helpful to the ESOL teacher as well as the student.

The following descriptions of some of the basic linguistic and cultural differences are an attempt to simplify the complicated job of the ESOL teacher.

**Việt Nam**

**Ceska republika**

**Україна**

# ALBANIA

**HOLIDAYS** - Albanians celebrate Independence and Liberation Day on November 29. Muslims and Christians in Albania celebrate their respective religious holidays. On Memorial Day in Albania, people place flowers on graves and honor the dead. The most popular holiday in Albania is New Year's Eve - celebrated with feasts, dancing and singing.

**GESTURES** - Albanians tend to maintain eye contact while conversing and often move their hands and heads to convey meaning. Shaking the head slowly from left to right indicates "yes." When saying "no," Albanians click their tongue while nodding the head down once. The "thumbs up" gesture is considered extremely rude.

Albanians show appreciation by placing the left hand over the chest while slightly moving the head downward. If an Albanian shows both hands, palms up, with open fingers, it means "our conversation is over."

**FAMILY** - In Albanian families, men are typically the head of the household. While both parents typically work, women are also responsible for the housework and taking care of the children. Unmarried adults and married children often live with their parents. Albanian men and women enjoy equal social rights. Children are expected to take care of their aging parents and grandparents.

**EDUCATION** - Education in Albania is free and compulsory for children beginning at age six. Children must attend school for ten years, and parents are found responsible and fined if they do not do so. Education plays a large role in Albanian society; after four years of secondary education, students can attend college at the state's expense.

**PERSONAL SPACE/COURTESIES** - Albanians are known to be courteous, courageous and hardy. To decline an offer of generosity from an Albanian is considered an insult. Gifts are not usually brought to the hostess if invited for a meal. Gifts, even for a birthday, are not opened in front of the person who gave the gift.

**ETHNIC GROUPS** - Albanian - 95 percent; Greek - 3 percent; other - 2 percent (Vlach, Roma, Serb, Macedonian, Bulgarian)

**RELIGION** - Muslim - 70 percent; Albanian - Orthodox - 20 percent;  
Roman Catholic - 20 percent



## ALBANIAN LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION

Albanian, referred to as Shqip, is spoken by nearly all those living in Albania and the majority of those in neighboring Kosovo and Macedonia. Other ethnic groups in Albania use their ancestral languages as well as Albanian.

Modern Albanian is derived from the ancient, extinct Illyrian language with modifications and additions made during early periods of contact with Italians, Greeks, Turks and Slavs. During Ottoman rule, Albanian was forbidden in written form and only Greek and Turkish were used in schools. Émigré Albanians helped to keep the written language alive. Albanians living in Turkish-dominated areas maintained the language but only in verbal forms of personal communication, ballads and folktales.

By the early 20th century, more than a dozen alphabets were used by Albanians to write their language. In 1908, a standardized form of a Latin-based alphabet of thirty-six letters was adopted and made official in 1924.

Albanian consists of two main dialects, Gheg and Tosk. Although there are great differences between the two, most Albanians generally understand each other. The dialects are geographically divided in Albania by the Shkumbin River, with Gheg being spoken to the north of the river and Tosk to the south. Although the Tosk dialect is spoken by one third of the population, it became the official language of Albania and is spoken by immigrant groups in the United States. Gheg is spoken by two thirds of the Albanians and by Albanians of Serbia and Montenegro, the UN protectorate of Kosovo, as well as those in the Republic of Macedonia.

## A. SYNTAX AND GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. The Albanian **alphabet** has 36 letters, 25 of which are simple letters (a, b, d, e, f, g, h, i, j, k, l, m, n, o, p, q, r, s, t, u, v, x, y, z), nine diagraphs (dh, gj, ll, nj, rr, sh, th, xh, zh) which are produced as a single phonetic sound and two letters with diacritical marks (ë and ç).
2. **Word order** is generally free, but the most common form is **SVO**.
3. **Nouns** have suffixes added to show definite or indefinite meaning.
4. **Noun plurals** are often irregular or have the same form as in the singular.
5. When a **definite noun** or noun that is already known is the direct object of a sentence, a pronoun in the objective case that repeats this information must be inserted in the verb phrase e.g.,  
“Him it I gave the book to him” > “ I gave the book to him.”
6. **Adjectives**, with the exception of numerals, follow the nouns they modify.

## B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. In Albanian, “**c**” is sometimes pronounced as *ts* in “curtsy” or *ch* as in “church.”
2. The vowel “**i**” is pronounced as *i* in “machine.”
3. “**j**” is pronounced as *y* in “year.”
4. “**q**” is pronounced as *ch* in “chair.”
5. “**rr**” is pronounced as a highly trilled rr.
6. “**u**” is pronounced as *oo* in “loom.”

### Factoid

The Albanians are generally recognized as the most ancient people in Southeastern Europe and are descendants of the Illyrians. Illyria is the setting for Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night*.

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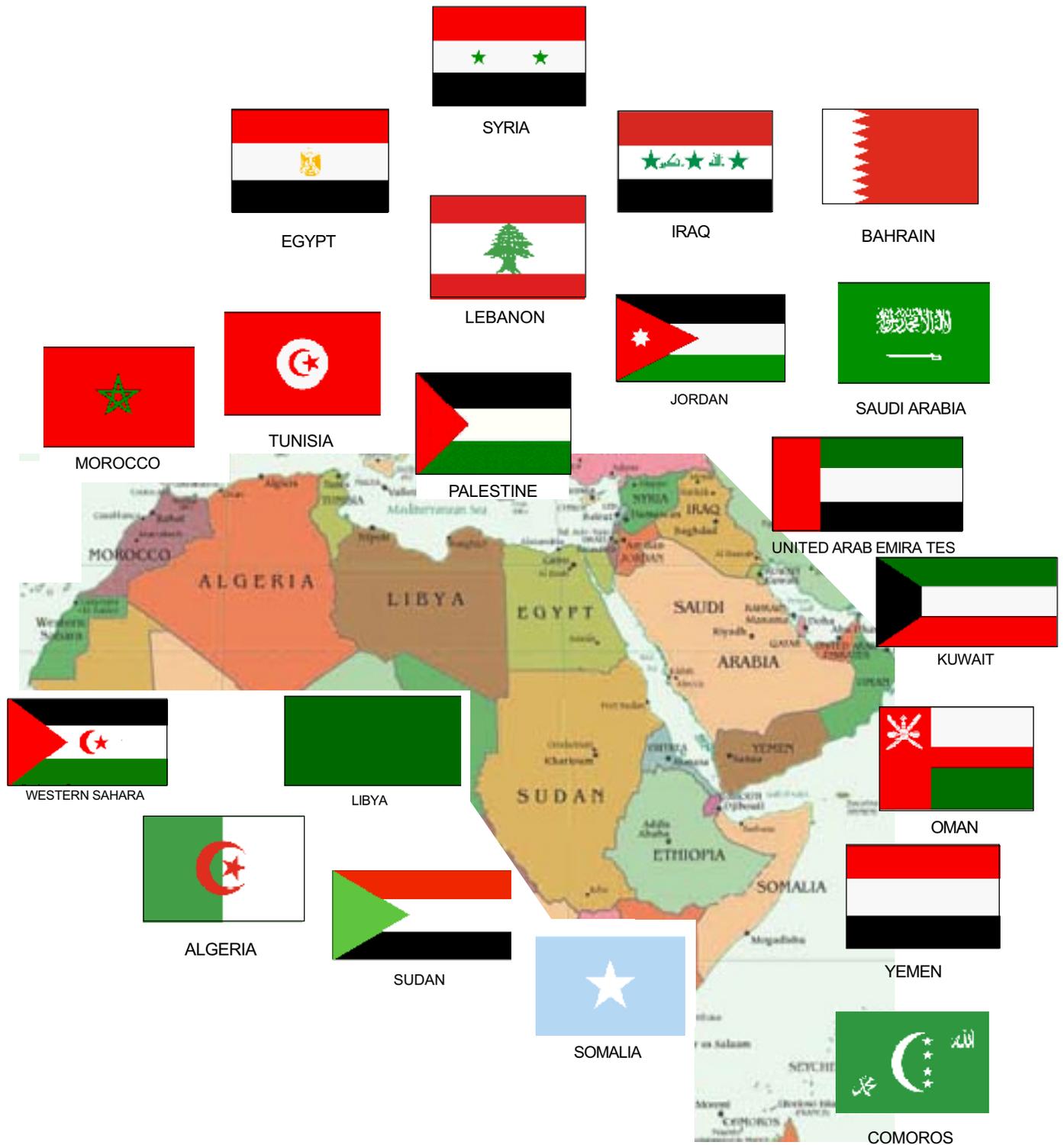
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*My Notes . . .*

# ARABIC SPEAKING WORLD



# THE ARABIC SPEAKING WORLD

## INTRODUCTION

What is the "Arab world"? Who are the Arabs? We hope to answer these questions in the following limited cultural overview. Teachers are encouraged to read these descriptions and do further independent study in their areas of interest or about the specific countries from which their students have come.

**"Arab" refers largely to a language and culture.** One can say that those who live in the Arab world share a common heritage and language and in many cases, but not always, the same religion, Islam. "Arab" does not refer to the populations in Turkey and Iran; however, there is an Arabic-speaking minority in parts of Iran as there is in Israel.

Although the Turkish language was written in Arabic characters during the Ottoman Empire (it was changed to the Roman alphabet by Attaturk early in the 20th century), Turkish is of the Ural-Altai linguistic family. Persian or Farsi, the language of Iran, is an Aryan language. Although it is not derived from the same origins as Arabic, it is written in Arabic characters with the addition of four letters in its alphabet.

## LOCATION

If we look at the map, **the Arab countries range from Morocco in the West to Iraq in the East, from Syria and Iraq in the North, to Yemen, Sudan and Somalia in the South.** Thus, the Arabic speaking world consists of 21 countries and two territories located in:

- **North Africa** – Morocco, Western Sahara, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya and Egypt;
- **the Levant** along the Eastern Mediterranean – Syria, Lebanon, Palestine and Jordan, which also composes what we know of as the **Fertile Crescent** and extends through Iraq;
- the **Arabian Peninsula** - Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Kuwait, Oman and Yemen;
- **East Africa** – Sudan, Somalia and the Comoros.

Bahrain, off the coast of Saudi Arabia and the Comoros in Southeastern Africa, off the coast of Mozambique, are island countries. The two territories are Western Sahara, which is partially governed by Morocco, and Palestine, administered by the Palestinian Authority and composed of the West Bank, an area west of the Jordan River, and Gaza, on the Mediterranean Sea.

## LANGUAGE

**Although the official language in all these countries is Arabic, other languages are spoken as well.** These languages often are remnants of a colonial past, the languages of indigenous ethnic or minority groups, or of expatriate communities. Therefore, it is not unusual for students from the Arab world to be fluent in two languages. For example, in **Lebanon, Tunisia and Algeria**, *French* is widely spoken, especially in urban areas and in business; *English* is also commonly used in business and banking. Expatriates who come to work in the Arab world bring not only their work and business skills with them, but also languages such as *Hindi, Urdu, Persian (Farsi) and Tagalog*. The **United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain and Saudi Arabia** have great numbers of workers from abroad and often their foreign expressions creep into Arabic. In **Lebanon, Syria and Jordan**, *Armenian* is spoken by a small minority. In **Syria**, *Kurdish, Aramaic and Circassian* are spoken by substantial numbers in these ethnic groups. In **Algeria and Morocco**, *Tamazight*, an indigenous language of the Berber people who lived in the area before the arrival of the Arabs, is recognized as an official language where the

indigenous Amazigh maintain their linguistic heritage and customs. In the **Comoros Islands**, besides *Arabic and French* which are official, some natives speak *Shikomoro* (a blend of Swahili and Arabic). On the other hand, in **Somalia**, *Somali* is the official language, but *Arabic, Italian and English* are spoken as well.

**Why is this important? Only for us to be aware that many students from the Arab world have been exposed to linguistic diversity before arriving in our classes and probably have the skills to attack a new language. Conversely, some students may not have been so widely exposed or perhaps even be literate in their own language. Therefore, one cannot assume, but rather, teachers must find out more about each student's personal linguistic history.**

## **RELIGION**

**Although the majority of inhabitants in the Arab world are Muslim, the majority of Muslims are not Arab. Other religions are practiced in some, but not all, Arab countries. Christians, Jews, Druze, Bah'ai, Alawites and the followers of the religions of guest workers such as Hindus are represented.**

Within the Arab world, there are over 14 million **Christian Arabs** associated with the Eastern Rite churches which are **the Assyrian Church of the East, the Coptic Orthodox Church of Egypt and the Syrian Orthodox Church**. These are the monophysite churches which believe that Jesus was "divine" in nature, while the **Roman Catholic and Eastern or Greek Orthodox** theologies espouse both the divine and human aspects of Christ's nature. In addition, there are over a million Lebanese **Maronite** Catholics in the Middle East. The **Coptic Church** is represented by 10 percent of the Egyptian population. **Protestant** Episcopalians and Presbyterians have long been found in Lebanon, Jordan, Palestine and Egypt.

There are tiny communities of **Jews** still living in Damascus and Aleppo, Syria and larger communities in Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria and Yemen. These communities have dwindled from historically large numbers of citizens who were, for example in the case of Lebanon, bankers, physicians, merchants, craftsmen, and soldiers, to small minorities. During the Lebanese civil war, Jews, like many other Lebanese, emigrated to Europe and South America.

The **Druze** are found in Israel, Syria and Lebanon. In the Middle Ages, they broke away from mainstream Islam, but still consider themselves to be Muslims. Their traditions, religious practices and tenets are passed from generation to generation and not shared with outsiders. The Druze usually practice the same customs as the community in which they happen to live.

**It is also important to remember that just as all Arabs are not Muslims, not all Muslims are Arabs.** We have already mentioned Turks and Iranians, but Islam is practiced in non-Arab countries throughout Asia and Africa and to a lesser degree in Europe and the Americas.

**For the most part, Muslims** are divided theologically and politically into two groups, **Sunni and Shi'a**. Both believe in the Five Pillars of Islam but disagree on the historical development of the leadership of the faith. The Shiites believe that the Prophet's successor should have been Ali, his son-in-law and cousin, while the Sunnis believe that it was correct to have chosen Abu Bakr, the Prophet's closest companion.

Ninety percent of the world's Muslims are Sunni, but large populations of Shi'a live in Lebanon, Syria, Bahrain, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Iran. Although in some countries the two have their own communities and mosques, it is common in other countries and in the United States for Sunni and Shi'a to worship together. **Ibadi**, another branch of Islam founded 50

years after the death of Mohammed, is the dominant form of Islam practiced in Oman. In Syria, the **Alawites**, a sect of Shi'a, are a minority branch of the Islamic community which, as a group, currently governs the country.

## **RELIGION AND DAILY LIFE**

**In the Middle East, one's religion is the paramount consideration which shapes daily life.** The practice of one's religion is highly respected by other Arabs; however, there is as much diversity on this subject as there are Arabs. **For example, there are seventeen religious groups recognized in Lebanon, while there is only one religion, Islam, recognized in Saudi Arabia, the home of Islam.**

For a devout **Muslim**, the tenets of Islam permeate personal behavior in the form of five daily prayers, dietary considerations of no alcohol or pork, modest dress, moral conduct, formulaic expressions invoking the protection or praise of God and adhering to what is commonly known as the **Five Pillars of Islam**. **Those foundations of Islam are 1) to profess that there is only one God and Mohammed is his prophet, 2) to pray five times a day, 3) to give 2.5 percent of one's income to the poor (known as *zakat*), 4) to observe the fast during the month of Ramadan, and 5) to make a pilgrimage to Makkah once in one's lifetime if able.**

The word Islam means submission to God's will, and a Muslim is one who submits. *Allah* is the word for God in the Arabic language (as "*Dieu*" is the translation into French) and thus the name *Allah* is also used by all Arabic-speaking Christians.

## **CALENDAR, WORK WEEK, AND HOLIDAYS**

Six years after the death of Mohammed, in 638 AD, Islam's second caliph (the successor or leader of the Muslim Nation) Omar decided the Muslim community should have a calendar of its own and that the Islamic epoch would begin on the day of Mohammed's emigration (*Hijrah*) from Makkah to Medina. The caliph created a lunar calendar because the Qur'an (Koran) states that measuring time should be reckoned by the moon. The date of the *Hijrah* corresponds to July 16, 622 A.D. on the Gregorian calendar, familiar to most Westerners. The twelve months correspond to the time it takes the moon to make a complete revolution around the earth. **Therefore, the length of a lunar year measured in this way is eleven days shorter than the western solar calendar and is not synchronized with the seasons.** Thus the year 2006 spans both 1426 and 1427 *hijri*. **This is important because Ramadan, the holy month of fasting from dawn to dusk, always comes 10/11 days earlier each year. Teachers should be aware that attendance may plummet as Muslims may skip class and may not be in a studious mood because of fasting.**

**Many Arab countries use both the Gregorian and Hijri calendars.** The Gregorian calendar is used for business and the Islamic calendar for all Islamic religious holidays. Thus, when an Arab student is asked about his birthday, if he has recently arrived in the States, he may hesitate and have to calculate from the Hijri calendar into the Gregorian calendar.

**The work week in Arab countries varies.** In many countries, people work from Saturday through Wednesday or Thursday, with Friday being the day of rest. In other countries, those with closer European connections, people work from Monday through Friday with time off for Friday prayers. Sometimes, as in Lebanon, working a partial day on Saturday is common. In Israel, state law requires that all workers have one day of rest; Druze take Thursday, Muslims take Friday, Jews take Saturday and Christians take Sunday.

**Business hours also vary from country to country and often depend on the weather.** For example, in the hottest time of the summer in Morocco, work hours are from 7 to 1 p.m. Businesses reopen later in the afternoon and remain open until 8 p.m.

In Saudi Arabia, shops and businesses close for the five daily prayer times, which last about 15 minutes, and reopen shortly thereafter. During Ramadan, the month of fasting from dawn to dusk, most countries curtail business and school hours during the day, but stay open in the evening.

**All Arab countries celebrate the two major Islamic holidays.** The first is Eid Al-Adha, the Feast of Sacrifice, which signals the end of Hajj (the pilgrimage to Makkah) and commemorates the willingness of Abraham to sacrifice his son to God. The second, Eid Al-Fitr, signifies the end of Ramadan and is celebrated for three days. The Prophet's Birthday and Islamic New Year are celebrated by some but not all Muslims. Ashura, the 10 days of atonement, is a major religious observation in the Shi'ite community.

Most Arab countries, but not all, celebrate their independence on their national days; they recognize Labor Day (May 1) and international New Year's Day as well. Christians celebrate Christmas and Easter in Palestine, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon, and Christmas was made a national holiday for the Coptic Christian minority in Egypt in 2003.

## ***FAMILY AND WOMEN***

**The family is the cornerstone of Arab society. One's identity, security and general wellbeing are indelibly linked to one's immediate and extended family in ways that are rarely understood by Westerners.** "Family" includes not just the immediate family, but grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins on both sides of the family and extended to several degrees.

**Loyalty to family is both an honor and obligation which transcends responsibilities to friends, work or other social institutions.** Family members can be counted on to assist others when asked, whether with emotional or financial support, or in any other way.

A commonly held belief is that the most trustworthy people are family members. This accounts for the large numbers of relatives employed in family owned businesses. A prevalent proverb illustrates this value: "My brother and I against my cousin, my cousin and I against the stranger."

**The good name of the family must be protected by all members, regardless of how distant the relationship.** The idea that strong families create strong communities is held, for the most part, throughout the Arab world. Therefore, it is important to understand that a family obligation will always take precedence over work or school responsibilities.

**Traditionally, the husband or eldest son is the head of the immediate family with the wife usually taking a subservient position while in public view. In private, however, the mother has always been the center of the family and her desires and opinions are highly respected.** When the Prophet Mohammed was asked by one of his companions, "To whom should I be dutiful?" he replied, "Your mother." And when asked, "and then whom?" he replied, "Your mother". He answered in the same fashion four times until he finally answered, "Your father". The Prophet was also quoted as saying, "The best among you are those who are best to their womenfolk."

**Until recently, Arabs have lived in large extended families.** As life styles have been gradually changing and more people are living in urban centers, the nuclear family is becoming more

common. The number of children per family in urban settings has decreased somewhat. In the Gulf States, North Africa and the Levant, smaller nuclear families today have been attributed to new life styles, rising standards of living, better protection for newborns, an increase in family planning and delayed marriage. Both men and women are marrying later so as to finish their university education and fulfill their career aspirations. Even though there has been a significant rise in nuclear families, the attachment to the extended family members has remained strong as evidenced by regular visits and continued familial support.

**The family continues to provide care and emotional support for those who are elderly or alone.** Parents and grandparents in their later years are usually cared for by the eldest son. The idea of elderly parents going to a nursing home is almost unheard of. However, in some countries where social change is happening at a rapid rate, social institutions and the state are becoming more active in care of the elderly.

**An unmarried daughter usually continues to live with her parents or, in their absence, her brother's family until she marries.** Should a woman divorce, she traditionally returns to her family and stays with them until she remarries. **A woman living alone is still taboo in most countries in the Arab world. Even so, recent trends in the Arab world have seen husbands seeking work abroad or in the Gulf States and leaving wives as the head of the household.**

### **POLYGAMY**

**Much is made in the West of polygamy amongst Muslims, but many would say the view is blown out of proportion compared to the reality.** Under Islamic law, a man can have four wives at one time, but he must provide for them equally; financially, emotionally and physically. In the past, such multiple marriages often created familial alliances or protected a family member's widow. Today, treating four wives equally is thought to be nearly impossible; therefore, polygamy is rarely practiced. Approximately two percent of marriages in the Arab world are polygamous.

### **WOMEN: EDUCATION AND WORK**

**Education for women has increased faster in the Arab world than in any other region, such that today's younger generation in many, but not all, countries is almost totally literate. Literacy rates for both men and women are 60 percent and under for Sudan, Egypt, Morocco, Northern Yemen and Iraq.** Recent widespread female education has brought about an increase in women in the work force. As of 2004, 21 percent of the work force was supplied by women in Arab countries. Lebanon has the highest portion with 28 percent, while Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Algeria are the lowest with 11 percent and 12 percent, respectively. Women hold a variety of positions including those in government offices, ministries, parliaments and in the diplomatic corps. Algeria's Supreme Court is one fifth female; in Tunisia 15 percent of the judicial positions is female. A growing professional class of lawyers, teachers, social workers and doctors as well as female entrepreneurs and newscasters can be found in increasing numbers in Arab countries.

**In Saudi Arabia, the sexes are still separated in education and the work place.** Preschool boys and girls are educated together, but from the first grade on, male and female students attend gender specific schools, colleges and universities. Professions appropriate for Saudi women are broadening, but most become teachers, pediatricians, female bankers in "women only" banks, or engage in occupations where they will not be in contact with men. Women in occupations in which they must deal with men, such as journalists and financial consultants, are rare, but now they do not raise as many eyebrows as in the past.

## **VOTING**

**Women have been granted the right to vote in the recent past, beginning with Iraq in 1948 and more recently in Kuwait in 2005.** Only Saudi Arabia and the UAE continue to forbid women to vote. This is perhaps somewhat less surprising in view of the fact that men in Saudi Arabia have only received the right to vote in the past year or so.

## **MODESTY AND PERSONAL APPEARANCE**

As in all things associated with the Arab world, a generalized statement about women's dress and personal appearance is nearly impossible. To understand the variety, it is important to acknowledge the issue of modesty and how it contributes to a woman's reputation and that of her family. To begin with, the Qur'anic scripture says, "Tell your wives and your daughters and the women of the believers to draw your cloaks closely around them (when they go out of the house). That will be better so they will be recognized and not annoyed." (33:59) Historically, upper and middle class women veiled as protection "from annoyance".

**The range of covering for women, from conservative to modern, is a matter of local custom rather religious law.** Tunisia has forbidden the veil since 1957 in government offices and schools. It is not as common for women in Lebanon and Syria to cover their heads as it would be in Algeria, Kuwait and northern Yemen where it is the norm. In the most conservative instance, a woman might cover her face with a veil, her head and body with a long black cloak and wear black gloves and long black stockings. At the other end of the continuum, a woman might just cover her head with an attractive head scarf and wear modest clothes.

**These days, modest Islamic dress has become an Islamic feminist statement, for example in Egypt, as some women have chosen to wear the head covering and/ or *hijab* because of an "inner religious conviction".** In addition, they are able to join the work force where they must interface with men, attend a co-educational university, mix with friends in public and know that their family trusts them. Women are respected if they wear Islamic dress; therefore, both their reputation and that of the family remains in tact while enjoying a certain freedom of movement. It should be noted that Arab women, both Muslim and non- Muslim, are as interested in style and color as are women in any part of the world.

An interesting note to cultural diversity in the U.S., is that a county parks and recreation commission in Michigan instituted what might be the first swimwear policy in the country to acknowledge the needs of those who cannot wear traditional swimwear because of religious reasons. In the traditionally conservative Islamic dress code, a woman should be covered from her neck to her ankles and her head covered as well; a man must be covered from his waist to his knees. Because such covering was not allowed in public pools, some Muslim immigrants were not making use of community facilities. Therefore, the policy which was record breaking in its attempt at accommodation was changed to allow Muslim citizens the ability to enjoy public pools.

### **Some other modesty issues to consider:**

Traditional women will look down in the presence of men; traditional men will avoid eye contact with women they are not related to.

Public displays of affection are not approved of.

### **Personal Appearance for men**

Men dress in a variety of clothing from shirts and pants in urban settings in most countries to long light robes that reach the ankles in Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and the Emirates. Often the head is

covered with a cloth headdress (gutra). A long untrimmed beard may indicate religious faith, but not a fashionably trimmed beard, mustache or goatee. In Islam, wearing silk and gold is forbidden for men and is reserved for women. Men will usually wear a silver wedding band.

## ***SOCIAL CUSTOMS***

**Hospitality and generosity are highly valued in the Arab world.** A hospitable host will greet you in his home, office or shop with the words, "Welcome", "Ahlan wa Sahlan" and truly mean it. Coffee, juice or tea is usually offered, without exception. A guest is often treated like royalty! "My house is your house." is a truism of Arab hospitality.

**Respect is accorded older people, regardless of social status.** The older one becomes, the more respect is accorded. This includes an elderly widowed mother who may achieve almost matriarchal status.

Before getting down to business, one must engage in drinking coffee and a having a congenial conversation. To forgo this is considered impolite.

**If one gives their word, it is honored.** In business, a handshake is often as good as a signature.

**If you admire something, the owner may present it to you as a gift.**

**Men may walk hand in hand as women do in the West.** There is no meaning attached to this other than friendship.

**Physical distance between members of the same sex is closer than in Western countries and distance between members of the opposite sex is much farther apart.**

## ***GREETINGS***

"As -salaam alaikum", "Peace be unto you", may have become a familiar expression in the West in recent times. The answer is "Wa alaikum as-salaam", "And on you be peace". This greeting is used between individuals and when one enters a crowded room.

There are various physical ways that men greet each other in different countries, from shaking hands with someone who is not familiar, to brushing cheeks in an air kiss, touching noses, or kissing the hand or shoulder of those he knows well. Women usually kiss both cheeks, either once or three times for good luck. It is important to remember that one should only greet the opposite sex verbally without touching unless the woman, usually in a sophisticated urban setting, offers her hand.

It is usually impolite to address another by their first name unless there is a close relationship or one is an age mate or from the same social class. **Titles of respect are used with those who are not close such as "Mr., Dr., or Professor". This accounts for why some students may refer to you as "Teacher" and have a hard time calling you by your first name or will address you as "Teacher Smith". "Uncle or Auntie" is used for those who are not related.**

**Titles of respect are used with older people such as Abu (father of) followed by his eldest son's name or Um (mother of) followed by the eldest son's first name.**

## ***GESTURES***

**In conversation, Arabs use many gestures, tend to be enthusiastic about the topic, often speak louder and stand closer in proximity to one another than Americans.**

Placing the palm of the right hand over the heart indicates appreciation or thanks.

Holding the finger tips together with the thumb with the palm up and moving the hand up and down slightly indicates "asking for patience".

"No" is often expressed simply by tilting the head backwards slightly or raising the eyebrows and making a "tsk" sound.

Holding the right hand outward with the palm down and then quickly twisting the hand to show the palm upward with fingers splayed means, "What?" or "Why?"

## ***TABOOS***

It is impolite to use the index finger to point directly at someone.

Pass only with the right or both hands. The left hand is used for hygiene.

Avoid shaking hands with the opposite sex or touching in any way.

In some situations, making eye contact with someone of the opposite sex who is not related is not acceptable.

Pointing the bottom of one's foot is an insult; the sole of one's shoe must not face another person. Arabs do not sit with their feet on a table or desk,

In some traditional societies, when asking about the family, do so in general rather than in a specific way; do not ask directly about the wife.

When discussing illness, some Arabs will usually use the term "tired" rather than sick. It is not customary to discuss illnesses. The word "cancer" is rarely uttered out loud for fear that the power of the word will bring cancer to the person uttering the word.

## ***CONCLUSION***

**The Arab world is vast and diversified in all facets of life.** Again, one can not assume that what is true in one Arab country or group is the same in another. There are, however, two critical threads which bind most Arab societies to one another: the Arabic language and Islam. It is also important to understand the manner in which these strong foundations differ in each Arab country. Teachers are encouraged to do further inquiry into the various cultures of their Arabic-speaking students and enjoy the outcome!

## ARABIC - LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION

Arabic is written and spoken by more than 300 million people in the Arab world and is the official language of 22 countries. It is also one of the official languages of the United Nations. As the language of the Qur'an, the Holy Book of Islam, it is therefore used by over a billion Muslims worldwide. The reason for this is because Muslims believe the Koran was revealed in Arabic and is the language spoken in paradise, thus the reverence for the Arabic language.

The Arabic script is used by one-seventh of the world's population; many countries in Africa and Asia, such as Iran and Pakistan, use Arabic script to write their languages as do those in Muslim areas of the Philippines, China and in the Central Asian countries of the former Soviet Union

Arabic belongs to the Semitic family of languages, of which Hebrew is also a member. Both derive from Aramaic, the language spoken in Palestine at the time of Christ, and are similar in syntax, grammar, vocabulary and sounds.

Standard Arabic, known as *fus-ha*, is spoken and written by educated Arabs today and is the same language used by the companions of Mohammed when the revelations were recorded in the Qur'an in the early 600s C.E. Arabic speakers can understand Modern Standard Arabic spoken by people from other parts of the world but often have a very difficult time understanding local dialects of other Arab speakers.

Arabic script reads from right to left and its alphabet contains 28 characters, the first two of which are *aleph* and *bet*. There are no capital letters. There is only one form of Arabic script so children do not have to learn to print and then use manuscript. Each letter has a slightly different shape depending on where it occurs, whether at the beginning, middle or end of a word.

In Arabic, the long vowels of A, U and I are written, but the short vowels are omitted and written in a kind of short hand. Instead of writing the short vowels, they are indicated by short dashes and curves written above and below the consonants. They are not usually used in everyday writing but are used in the Qur'an, newspapers, magazines and other formal writing.

Arabic is a very phonetic language. If you can pronounce a word, you would be able to write it. There is a direct correspondence between the letters and sounds of the language.

## A. SYNTAX AND GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. Arabic uses a **non- Roman alphabet**. It is read from **right to left**.
2. Arabic may be **VSO** in written form and **SVO** in oral speech.  
Ex. *Planned the journalist to travel to Cairo.*
3. There is no form of the verb **to be** in the **present tense**.  
Ex. *She professor. He thin.*
4. There is **no indefinite article** in Arabic.  
Ex. *He teacher.*
5. The **definite article** in the form of *al* is used before the days of the week, some months of the Muslim calendar, and before names of countries, cities and towns  
Ex. *He works on the Saturday. She lived in the Germany.*
6. **Adjectives** agree with their noun in gender and number and follow the noun.  
Ex. *She woman intelligent. They women intelligents.*
7. **Phrasal verbs** do not exist in Arabic.  
Ex. *He looking his wallet. (He is looking for his wallet.)*

## B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. The **R** is formed in the front of the mouth and is trilled or rolled.
2. The aspirated **P** as in “put” does not exist. The sound will resemble a **B** sound.  
**paper > baber**
3. The **TH** sound does not exist in Arabic.
  - a. Voiceless initial **TH** will be replaced with **S**. **thin > sin**
  - b. Voiced initial **TH** will be replaced with **Z** or **D**  
**that > zat or dat**
4. The aspirated **T** will sound more like **D**. **too > doo**
5. **CH** does not exist. It is replaced by **SH**. **cheep > sheep**
6. The **G** is soft as in “gentle” except in Egyptian Arabic where the G is hard.
7. **Short vowels** may cause problems. Short **E** and **I** may be confused.  
**bit > bet.**

### Loan Words

algebra  
cotton  
zero  
sherbet  
orange  
sugar

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*My Notes . . .*

# CHINA



**HOLIDAYS** – The most important holiday in China is the Chinese New Year, (Spring Festival) celebrated in January or February for three days. Carnivals, fireworks, dragon dances and family gatherings all make this holiday China’s largest celebration. School children have an extended vacation during the New Year. In the fall, the Chinese celebrate The Moon Festival, which is a special time to give thanks.

**GESTURES** – When Chinese people greet one another, they usually nod or bow their head slightly. However, the custom of shaking hands is becoming more popular within the Chinese culture, especially in formal situations. The open hand is used to point, rather than the index finger alone. To summon someone, the Chinese move the fingers back and forth in unison with the palm facing downward.

**EDUCATION** – Only about 70 percent of children finish elementary school in China – a result of parents needing additional help at home. Students attend class six days a week for several hours a day. In order to increase adult literacy, language and reading instruction are offered over Chinese radio and on TV.

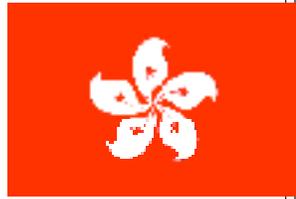
**FAMILY** – The Chinese believe the family is more important than the individual. If one family member is successful, the entire family is praised. The Chinese elderly are highly regarded and children are responsible for taking care of aging family members. Parents do not praise their children’s accomplishments often; excellence is expected. The average Chinese family has one child.

**PERSONAL SPACE/COURTESIES** – In general, the Chinese are a low contact society. Thus, touching or any extended type of body contact is considered inappropriate by many Chinese. Hugs and kisses are rare among the Chinese. However, personal space is somewhat limited in China. Therefore when conversing, the Chinese stand very close to one another. Because it is considered an act of hygiene, spitting in public is fairly common among the Chinese. Always ask permission before taking photographs of a Chinese person.

**ETHNIC GROUPS** - Han Chinese - 91.9 percent  
Zhuang, Uyghur, Hui, Yi, Tibetan, Miao, Manchu, Mongol, Buyi, Korean - 8.1 percent

**RELIGION** - Officially atheist. Daoist (Taoist), Buddhist, Muslim - 1 - 2 percent;  
Christian - 2 - 3 percent

# HONG KONG



**HOLIDAYS** – Holidays in Hong Kong are based on both the Western and lunar calendars. Hong Kong's most important holiday is the Chinese New Year, which is celebrated with parades, parties and visits. Festivals honoring the dead are also celebrated. Easter and Christmas are the most popular Western holidays.

**GESTURES** – Sucking air in quickly and loudly is a sign of disapproval. A handshake with a slight bow is the customary greeting in Hong Kong. Due to dense population, people in Hong Kong stand close together while conversing. Winking is considered impolite, and pointing is done with an open hand. Continuous eye blinking while conversing suggests disrespect and boredom. To summon someone in Hong Kong, extend the arm with the palm facing downward and make a scratching motion.

**FAMILY** – Families in Hong Kong are held together by a strong sense of loyalty and respect. The average family has two children, and a household often consists of the immediate and extended family. Households are often conflicted with the distinct differences between traditional values and more modern, Western customs. Gender roles are clearly defined; men are head of the household and the primary breadwinner, and women are responsible for housework.

**EDUCATION** – Education is highly valued in Hong Kong. Mandatory, free education lasts nine years. The school year lasts nine months, and students attend class from six to eight hours a day. Entrance to a university requires completion of a competitive examination.

**PERSONAL SPACE/COURTESIES** – In Hong Kong, talking loudly is considered rude. Touching another person's head is extremely inappropriate. Traditionally, it is impolite to cross one's legs.

**ETHNIC GROUPS** – Chinese - 95 percent; other - 5 percent

**RELIGION** – Taoism, Confucianism, Buddhism - 90 percent; Christian - 10 percent, representing most of the major denominations

# TAIWAN

## (Republic of China)



**HOLIDAYS** – Official Taiwanese holidays include Founding Day, celebrated January 1, and Constitution Day, celebrated December 25. In Taiwan, Buddhist holidays are set according to the Chinese lunar calendar. The Taiwanese New Year is celebrated with feasts, parades and fireworks. The Dragon Boat

Festival, which takes place during the summer, is one of Taiwan's most important celebrations.

**GESTURES** – When summoning someone, one moves all fingers back and forth with the palm facing down. Taiwanese never point with the index finger alone; one uses an open hand to point. When explaining something, Taiwanese frequently "write" characters in the air. Shaking the hand from side to side with the palm facing outward signifies "no." Objects are passed with both hands. When referring to oneself, the Taiwanese point to the nose.

**FAMILY** – The average Taiwanese family consists of less than three children. Commonly, elderly parents will share a home with their children. Family members are not openly affectionate. The Taiwanese value family unity and loyalty.

**EDUCATION** – Education is very important in Taiwan. Schooling is free and compulsory for nine years (to age 15). Students may take national exams to gain access to high school, enroll in a senior vocational school, or enter the workforce. Entrance to universities is determined by exams given each July. Students work hard to prepare for these tests, sometimes studying sixteen hours a day, seven days a week, for an entire year. Many students travel abroad for higher education. The literacy rate approaches 100 percent for young people.

**PERSONAL SPACE/COURTESIES** – Young female friends often hold hands in public. Putting one's arm around the shoulder of another usually is inappropriate. However, individuals converse within touching distance and may touch each other's arm or shoulder while talking. People do not use their feet to move objects such as chairs or doors. While sitting, one places one's hands in the lap.

**ETHNIC GROUPS** – Taiwanese (including Hakka) - 84 percent;  
Mainland Chinese - 14 percent; Aborigine - 2 percent

## CHINESE - MANDARIN LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION

Chinese is spoken by about one fifth of the world in one form or another. Standard Mandarin is **the official language of mainland China and Taiwan**. It is one of the four languages spoken in Singapore and is spoken by large numbers of people in Malaysia, Indonesia, Russia, the United States, Mongolia, Vietnam, Brunei, South Africa, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and Hong Kong. In addition, it is one of the six official languages of the United Nations.

In linguistics, Mandarin is considered to be a large and diverse group of dialects spoken across northern and southwestern China. In common usage, the term “Mandarin” has come to mean “Standard Mandarin,” the dialect spoken in Beijing and which is now the national language or *Putonghua*, meaning “ordinary speech.” China has encouraged regional ethnic groups to speak their native dialects. Therefore, Standard Mandarin is taught as a second language across China in all schools, and after the third grade, it is the language of instruction. Often when asked what language they are speaking, Chinese will identify the form of Mandarin, or regional dialect, such as *Sichuan* or Northeast China dialect.

Even though there are many variants of Mandarin, the writing system is common to all Chinese. Mandarin is written in a system of traditional Chinese characters, or pictographs, in which there is little connection between the spoken word and the written language. Speakers of variant dialects, regardless of their ability to communicate with each other, can read and understand the same Chinese text. There are various styles of writing and reading in Chinese. The old traditional style is written and read in vertical columns, top to bottom, right to left. The front of the book is on the left. The new style is written and read horizontally from left to right. *Pinyin*, a system of writing Chinese with Roman letters, has been used in the People’s Republic of China in foreign language publications since 1979. It has a closer resemblance to English than some other attempts at Romanization of Chinese.

Mandarin, like all Chinese dialects, is a tonal language in which the tones, like consonants and vowels, are used to distinguish one word from another. Unlike other similar languages, Mandarin has only four tones—level, rising, falling and high-rising. It is also mostly monosyllabic but has a good number of polysyllabic words. Only a few words end with a consonant.

# CHINESE- Mandarin

## A. SYNTAX AND GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. Chinese **word order** is generally **SOV**. The **adjective** precedes the noun it modifies; the **adverb** precedes the verb, adjective, or adverb it modifies.
2. Chinese sentences do not change their words order in a **question**. An interrogative pronoun, adjective, or adverb is used or the particle “ma” is added at the end of a declarative sentence.
3. There are no **articles** in Chinese.
4. **Punctuation** is similar to English except that quotation marks are usually represented by brackets, personal names are underlined and place names are indicated by double underling.
5. In Chinese, **cardinal numbers denote the day**. Ex.: August fifteen.
6. Plurality is rarely expressed in Chinese, thus **-s** tends to be dropped when speaking English.
7. Chinese tends to drop **pronouns** when they are understood.  
Ex: *I bought the book before left shop.*

## B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. Consonant clusters, both initial or final, are rare in Chinese. Since English has many, this can create pronunciation problems for the student.
2. The **TH** sound does not exist.
  - a. Voiceless **TH** will be replaced by **T** or **F**. **think** > **tink** or **fink**.
  - b. Voiced **TH** will be replaced by **D** or **V** **that** > **dat** or **vat**
3. The **L** and **R** sounds are difficult to pronounce since students cannot distinguish the difference between the two sounds. Some will always use “**R**” for both sounds, while others will use “**L**”.  
**glass** > **grass** or **grass** > **glass**    **blew** > **brew** or **brew** > **blew**
4. In initial position, a sound resembling **L** will usually replace an **R**.  
**road** > **load**.
5. Chinese has no **Z** sound. It is replaced with **SH** or **S**.  
**zip** > **ship** or **sip**

### Loan Words

ketchup

gung- ho

silk

tea

tycoon

## CHINESE - CANTONESE LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION

Cantonese, also known as *Yue*, is one of the major dialects of the Chinese language family. It is spoken in the **southeastern part of Mainland China, Hong Kong, Macau**, by minorities in Southeast Asia and by 70 million Cantonese all over the world. Cantonese, or "*Guangdong speech*," the name given to the language spoken in Guangdong Province, is derived from "Canton," the English name of the port city and provincial capital now known as Guangzhou.

As in Mandarin, there are a number of dialects in Cantonese; therefore, the language is often referred to as a group of Cantonese dialects and not just Cantonese. The dialects are so different that communication between some speakers of the various Cantonese dialects is almost impossible. There are four district dialects based on linguistic characteristics and geographic distribution; they are *Yuehai*, *Siyi*, *Gaoyang* and *Guinan*. Cantonese speakers, when asked what language they speak, may describe their language in one of these terms.

Written standard Chinese (Mandarin) is the same as written Cantonese because speakers of all Chinese dialects or languages cannot read the symbols that do not represent the spoken language but rather the idea expressed. However, many written characters have been created to represent spoken Cantonese. These are not used in formal writing but sometimes are used for stylistic purposes which can be confusing, as Chinese characters usually represent meaning rather than sound. There have been several attempts to Romanize spoken Cantonese. The most widely used system is the Yale Cantonese Romanization, but it is not officially accepted as is the *pinyin* system for Mandarin. Other systems of Cantonese Romanization exist and are under development as well.

Cantonese, like Mandarin, is a tonal language, but it is more complex in that it has nine tones rather than just four as in Mandarin. In Cantonese, consonants can end words and words are monosyllabic rather than frequently polysyllabic as in Mandarin. Compared to Mandarin, the frequency of borrowed words in Cantonese is far greater.

歡迎

# CHINESE- Cantonese

## A. SYNTAX AND GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. Cantonese nouns are generally not marked for **singular or plural**. The context will indicate whether one or more is intended.
2. Chinese grammar does not require **subject-verb agreement**.
3. Cantonese has one pronoun for “he”, “she” and “it”. Whether an object is male or female, human, animal or object, the same **pronoun** is used. The only way to determine what is intended is by context. In Cantonese, a pronoun does not change form depending on whether it is used as a subject or object as in English. Pronouns stay the same. Therefore, students may have difficulty mastering English pronoun use.
4. **Verbs** are not conjugated to show tense, but time words are used instead. Students may have difficulty because of a lack of experience with this grammatical concept.

## B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. There are more **vowel** contrasts in English than in Chinese, so English vowels are closer to each other in terms of position of articulation than Chinese vowels. More effort is required to distinguish them. Students will have difficulty distinguishing between the following vowel sounds:  
*eat and it , bean and bin, fool and full, Luke and look*
2. **V** is absent in most Chinese dialects; sometimes it is pronounced as **W** or **F**.  
*invite > inwite live > lif*
3. Many Chinese dialects do not have **N**. They may have difficulty distinguishing  
*“night” for “light”*
4. **Final consonants** in general cause problems as there are few final consonants in Chinese. Learners either tends to add an extra vowel at the end or drop the consonants and produce a slight glottal or released stop.

### Loan Words

chow mein

chop suey

ketchup

kumquat

yen

wok

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*My Notes . . .*

# CROATIA

**HOLIDAYS** – Easter and Christmas are considered national holidays in Croatia. The Day of Croatian Statehood is celebrated on May 30 and June 22 marks the Day of the Antifascist Struggle. Orthodox Christians celebrate Christmas on January 7.

**GESTURES** – Croatians commonly utilize a great deal of hand movement while conversing. Rubbing the thumb and index finger together signifies “money.” The index finger is used to summon someone. In Croatia, whistling signifies disapproval. Bending the middle and ring fingers while the index and pinkie fingers are extended indicates anger.



**FAMILY** – Croatian families tend to be large, with many generations living together under the same roof. Traditionally, the father or grandfather is the head of the household. Both husband and wife work outside the home. Children are expected to care for their elderly parents. Croatia has a relatively low divorce rate.

**EDUCATION** – Students begin eight years of mandatory schooling at age seven. Secondary schooling is optional and lasts four years. All Croatian citizens have access to free education at any level. There are four universities in Croatia, all available at no cost.

**PERSONAL SPACE/COURTESIES** – Croatians value their personal space; people usually stand more than an arm’s length from each other while conversing. Croatians consider yawning in public to be extremely rude. Not maintaining eye contact while listening to someone speak is regarded as impolite.

**ETHNIC GROUPS** – Croat - 89.6 percent  
Serb - 4.5 percent  
Bosniak, Hungarian, Slovene, Czech, Roma, Albanian, Montenegrin and other s - 5.9 percent

**RELIGION** – Roman Catholic - 90 percent; Orthodox Christian - 4.5 percent; Muslim, Jewish and Protestant - 10 percent

## CROATIAN -LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION

Croatian is a South Slavonic language spoken by approximately 6 million people. It is the official language of the Republic of Croatia and is one of the three official languages of Bosnia and Herzegovina. There are nearly 200,000 Croatian speakers in the United States and Canada and smaller communities in Austria, Hungary, Germany, Australia and Chile.

Croatian is based on the Stokavian dialect, one of the three major dialects of Serbo-Croatian, the language widely spoken in the former Yugoslavia. The three dialects, Chakavian, Kajkavian and Stokavian, were named for the different ways these dialects said "what" - "ca", "kaj" and "sto". Stokavian has three variants as well, the most widely spoken of which are Ijekavian, which forms the basis for Croatian and Ekavian, which forms the basis for Serbian.

The original alphabet used by the Croats was Glagolitic which was created in the 9<sup>th</sup> century by monks Cyril and Methodius as the written language of Old Church Slavonic. By the 11<sup>th</sup> century, medieval texts were written in Latin, Glagolitic and Cyrillic. In the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the Latin alphabet began to be used along the Dalmatian coast and later spread until it was widely used by the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Eventually, Latin script replaced the Glagolitic alphabet. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Latin alphabet was revised to correspond on a one-to-one basis with Cyrillic sounds and symbols used by Serbs. Today, the official language of Croatia is written in Roman script with diacritical marks to distinguish between some consonants, while the official language of Serbian is written in Cyrillic script.

Though some linguists say the differences between spoken Croatian and Serbian are similar to the differences between Canadian and American English, native speakers perceive the differences as being two distinct languages. Croatian speakers have a deeply held connection to their language and will insist on a clear linguistic distinction between Serbian and Croatian when discussing the "Serbo-Croatian" language. Because Croatian was infused with Russian neologisms (new words) after World War II and was actively suppressed under Communist control, Croatian scholars and linguists have intentionally tried to rid the language of foreign loan words and have coined new words based on Croatian roots for words whose origin was from Serbian or Russian.

# Hrvatska

## **A. SYNTAX AND GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES**

1. There are three grammatical **genders** in Croatian, masculine, feminine and neuter.
2. Word order can vary, but is usually **SVO**.
3. Croatian has tried to preserve more Slavic words and has fewer loan words from western European languages.
4. **Nouns, pronouns and adjectives** must agree in gender and number.
5. Verb endings are used in place of **pronouns**.
6. There are no **articles**.
7. In Croatian, **months** have Slavic names.

## **B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES**

1. In two-syllable words, **stress** usually falls on the first syllable; in words of three or more syllables, stress may fall on any syllable except the last.
2. **C** sounds like “**TS**” as in “bats.”
3. Voiced and voiceless **TH** do not exist. Students will tend to pronounce these sounds as **D** or **T**. both > bod or bot ; these > dese or tese
4. The **short English vowels** sounds are very difficult. Generally, the student tends to hear a slight variation in these sounds.
5. The letter **R** is rolled.
6. **J** is pronounced as **Y** in “yes.”
7. **V** is pronounced as a weak **W** as in “war.”

### **Factoid**

Since the late 1980s, Croatian words which had been considered politically incorrect in Yugoslavia, have been reintroduced. Since Croatian independence in 1992, hundreds more Croatian words have been returned to common usage.

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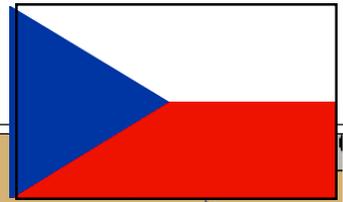
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*My Notes . . .*

# CZECH REPUBLIC



**HOLIDAYS** - Czechs consider a person's "name day" to be an extremely important holiday. This is a day of observance for the patron saint after whom a person is named. Also, each village celebrates a day for its patron saint. In the Czech Republic, Christmas Eve is considered the most important part of Christmas. On New Year's, candies in the shape of pigs are given out for good luck. Czechs commemorate the end of World War II on May 8. Czechs also celebrate their nation's date of entry into NATO on March 12.

**GESTURES** - Czechs are known to gesture openly during conversation in order to emphasize meaning. It is not uncommon for Czechs to stare at strangers. It is considered rude not to maintain eye contact while conversing, and Czechs beckon using the index finger. Czechs signal something is "crazy" by stiffening the forefinger and "screwing" it into the temple of the head.

**FAMILY** - Family closeness is an important part of Czech culture. Generally, both men and women work outside the home. In the Czech Republic, new mothers receive several months of paid maternity leave and a subsidy for each child. Child care services are also provided when the mother returns to work. Traditionally, grandparents are involved in helping with child care, and parents and children often share large, expensive items, such as cars or homes. Pets are considered important members of most Czech families.

**EDUCATION** - Czech children begin free, compulsory education at age six. Public education is available at no cost. After completing five years of grade school, children begin eight years of secondary school in one of three areas: academic, technical or teaching. University education is available tuition free.

**PERSONAL SPACE/COURTESIES** - Czechs are not considered "touchers." Speaking loudly is considered impolite. Applauding after any type of ceremony taking place in a church is considered extremely rude in Czech culture.

**ETHNIC GROUPS** - Czech - 81.2 percent  
Moravian -13.2 percent  
Slovak - 3.1 percent  
Polish, German, Silesian, Romany, Hungarian and others - 2.5 percent

**RELIGION** - Roman Catholic - 26.8 percent; Protestant - 2.1 percent and other 3.3 percent

## CZECH LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION

Czech is the official language of the Czech Republic and is spoken by 12 million people around the world. Large groups of Czech speakers live in the United States, Canada, Australia and Ukraine, while smaller groups can be found in Poland, Austria, Croatia and Israel. The largest groups of Czech speakers outside the Czech Republic reside in the United States in New York, Chicago and Cleveland and in a number of rural communities in Texas, Wisconsin, Minnesota and Nebraska.

In the former Czechoslovakia, Czech was spoken in the districts of Bohemia, Moravia and Silesia. After the breakup of Czechoslovakia in 1993, the two national components of the Czech Republic and Slovakia identified their official languages as Czech and Slovak respectively. Modern Czech is descended from "Middle Czech" which was spoken in the 15th and 16th century and which came from "Old Czech" which dates back to the 11th century. Although Czech and Slovak are very closely related and are mutually intelligible, they are thought of as two distinct languages. There is a strong German influence on Czech, which can be found in loan words, due to Austrian control of Bohemia and Moravia. On the other hand, Hungarian influenced Slovak due to political control by the Hungarian Empire. Today, Czechs and Slovaks can usually understand one another because of years of exposure to these languages on national T.V. and radio before the "velvet divorce" when the states split into national entities. They continue to share professional terminology necessary for trade and governmental relations.

There are four regional Czech dialects: Bohemian, Central Moravian, Eastern Moravian and Silesian. Standard or Literary Czech is based on the Prague dialect of Central Bohemia as is Common Czech, the spoken or colloquial form. All dialects in Czech are mutually intelligible.

Czech uses the Roman alphabet that has been adapted to the Czech language. Jan Hus, (1369 - 1415) a religious reformer and well-known writer of his time, created the system by adding accents and diacritical marks to letters so one letter represents a specific sound of the Czech language. He is credited with creating the system which makes spelling easy and understandable.

# Ceska republika

## A. SYNTAX AND GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. **Nouns** as well as adjectives have gender (masculine, feminine and neuter).
2. The **endings** on the words signify the gender, the person and the tense.
3. **Articles** are not used.

## B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. **Stress** is always on the first syllable in Czech.
2. There is no **W** in Czech; it may be replaced with a **V** sound.  
**want > vant**
3. **Y**, when used as a vowel, and **I** have a long "E" sound.  
**symbol > seembol      ship > sheep**
4. **J** is a **Y** sound.  
**January > Yanuary**
5. The **TH** sound does not exist.
  - a. Voiceless initial **TH** become **T**.  
**think > tink**
  - b. Voiced initial **TH** becomes **D**.  
**these > dese**
  - c. Voiceless final **TH** becomes **T**.  
**with > wit**
  - d. Voiced middle **TH** becomes **D**.  
**mother > modder**
6. **C** is pronounced **TS** as in "it's."
7. **C** with a diacritical above it is pronounced **CH** as in "chili."
8. Final **G** is replaced by **K**.  
**pig > pik**
9. Final **D** is replaced by **T**.

### Loanwords

howitzer  
pistol  
polka  
robot

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*My Notes . . .*

# PHILIPPINES



**HOLIDAYS** - Christmas is the most celebrated holiday in the Philippines; some begin decorating in early September. On Christmas Eve, fireworks are lit and gifts exchanged. National Heroes Day is celebrated May 6 and June 12 commemorates Filipino independence.

**GESTURES** - Filipinos beckon someone by waving all fingers with the palm facing downward. Hand movement and gestures are not utilized much during conversation. Filipinos raise their eyebrows to say "yes" or "hello," and point by puckering the lips. Filipinos indicate they don't understand by opening the mouth widely. A quick head nod signifies "I don't know."

**FAMILY** - The extended family plays an important role in Filipino culture. The average family has four children and many Filipinos work overseas in order to support their family. Filipino women hold government and business positions and are responsible for managing the family finances at home.

**EDUCATION** - Children begin six years of elementary school education at age six. Upon completion, children attend four years of high school - including one year of military training. Women have the same access to education as men and the vast majority of Filipino children speak English. Literacy rate: Male: 92.5 percent Female: 92.7 percent

**PERSONAL SPACE/COURTESIES** - Public displays of affection are considered inappropriate. Younger people place the hand of an older person on their forehead to show respect. Speaking loudly and staring at someone are both considered extremely rude in the Philippines. Always request permission before photographing a Filipino.

**ETHNIC GROUPS** - Christian Malay - 91.5 percent; Muslim Malay - 4 percent; Chinese - 1.5 percent; Other - 3 percent

**RELIGION** - Roman Catholic Church - 83 percent; Philippine Independent Church - 6 percent; various other Christian churches - 3 percent; Buddhist and Muslim - over 5 percent

## FILIPINO/TAGALOG - LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION

The Philippines is an archipelago of 7,107 islands with a diverse population which is estimated by linguists to speak anywhere from 75 to 150 native languages. Filipino is one of the two official national languages, the other of which is English. Filipino is derived from the many major languages of the Filipino people, including primarily Tagalog, along with Sanskrit, Arabic, Spanish, English and Chinese.

Tagalog is the language of the Tagalog people who have lived predominately in central and southern Luzon, the home of the Philippines' capital city, Manila. In the early history of the islands, Luzon was an important trade and cultural center, so its language spread to the other islands and became the *lingua franca* of the area. The name is thought to have come from "taga - ilog" which means "people who live by the river."

The official language has changed often through Filipino history. First it was Tagalog of the native Tagalog people, used among the islands as the *lingua franca*. Then Spanish came into contact with the area in the time of Magellan and later when Roman Catholic missions were established. For more than three centuries, Spain ruled the Philippines and for some time Spanish was the official language. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the United States acquired the Philippines, along with Guam and Puerto Rico, for \$20,000,000 after the Spanish - American War. English was taught in schools and joined Spanish as a second official language. In 1946, when the Philippines became independent, Tagalog became the official national language. In 1961, during a time of nationalism, the language was referred to as "Pilipino" rather than Tagalog, and finally, in 1989, the official language became referred to as Filipino. As the official language has changed both in name and content, loan words were incorporated. Currently, English is becoming more prevalent because of the growth of the country's industry, commerce, science and technology.

It is important to note that body language, tone of voice and facial expressions are as critical to Filipinos as content. Also, Filipinos are known as a people who value harmony and "getting along"; they prefer indirect rather than direct negotiations. "Saving face" is of prime consideration for Filipinos as losing face reflects on the entire family or group.

# Pilipinas

# FILIPINO / TAGALOG

## A. SYNTAX and GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. Spanish control for 300 years had an effect on the language. It is written and read horizontally from left to right, and it uses the **Roman alphabet**.
2. The **sentence structure** resembles English.
3. Filipino uses three tenses - present, past and future.
4. ESOL students may be able to pronounce English well and quickly, even though their comprehension may still be poor.

## B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. The letter **V** has a **B** sound.  
**vest > best; vat > bat**
2. The letter **J** has a **Y** sound.  
**jam > yam**
3. **S** and **Z** have the **S** sound.  
**zip > sip; zebra > sebra**
4. All words ending in **TAIN** have the same sound as the ending of the word "maintain."  
**fountain > founTAIN**
5. The **TH** sound is difficult.
  - a. Voiceless initial **TH** sounds like **T**.  
**think > tink**
  - b. Voiced initial **TH** sounds like **D**.  
**these > dese**
  - c. Final **TH** sounds like **T**.  
**tooth > toot**
6. The letter **F** has a **P** sound.  
**fan > pan**

### Loanwords

boondocks  
manila paper  
yo-yo

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*My Notes . . .*

# FRANCE



**HOLIDAYS** - Bastille Day, celebrated July 14, commemorates the attack on the Bastille prison during the French Revolution. On Christmas Eve, French children leave their shoes near the fireplace for Santa ("Pere Noel") to fill with small gifts.

**GESTURES** - The French gesture "OK" by making the "thumbs up" sign. The American "OK" sign means "zero" in France. Slapping an open palm over a closed fist is

considered extremely offensive to the French. In France, an aggressive, pumping handshake is considered impolite and uncultured; the French handshake is a light grip and a single shake. Commonly, the French will offer their elbow to shake if their hands are dirty or wet.

**FAMILY** - The extended family is extremely important to the French; aunts, uncles, cousins and grandparents are all a large part of everyday life. The average family has two children, and the majority of families live in apartments. In France, pets outnumber children and receive special treatment.

**EDUCATION** - Schooling is free and mandatory in France from age 6 to 16. Catholic schools are partly subsidized by the state. Secondary education lasts around seven years, where students gain the equivalent of an Associate's Degree in the U.S. After completing secondary education, students have the option of continuing their education at one of France's 60 universities - all of which are practically free.

**PERSONAL SPACE/COURTESIES** - Using a toothpick or comb in public is considered extremely rude to the French. Sneezing or blowing the nose in public should also be avoided; the French are discreet and careful with their personal habits. It is uncommon for the French to smile at strangers.

**ETHNIC GROUPS** - Celtic and Latin with Teutonic, Slavic, North African, Indochinese and Basque minorities

**RELIGION** - Roman Catholic 83-88 percent; Protestant - 2 percent; Jewish - 1 percent; Muslim - 5-10 percent; unaffiliated - 4 percent.

## FRENCH LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION

French, a Romance language closely related to Italian, Spanish and Portuguese, is spoken by approximately 98 million speakers, who live mostly in France, Belgium, Switzerland, Canada and 20 African countries. It is the official language of France as well as 25 other countries which may have multiple official languages. French is one of the official languages of a number of international administrative bodies and organizations such as the United Nations, the European Union, NATO, the World Health Organization and the International Red Cross and Red Crescent.

Even though the Parisian dialect of French is the official language of France, there are as many as 75 other regional languages which exist and which have strong regional support for their continued use. Some of these are “cross-border” languages which reflect the language of the neighboring countries such as Basque, Catalan and Flemish. These languages are sometimes referred to as *patois*, meaning dialect, which, to native speakers of those languages, is considered disrespectful. Although not formally recognizing them with official status, the French government had recognized these languages to some extent by offering French as a second language classes and hiring bilingual teachers to teach in the areas where the regional language is dominant.

French dialects outside of France have their own distinct differences from the language of origin, but for the most part they are mutually intelligible. For example, there are some differences between standard Belgian and Canadian French and the standard French of France, but the differences are so slight it would be similar to the differences between British and American English. The differences between Swiss French and French French are mostly in vocabulary, while in Haitian Creole, the differences are due mainly to influences from West African languages. Creole is the official language in Haiti, although many people are bilingual and speak both Creole and French. Before the 1980s, it had a lower status than French, but since then, educators, writers and activists have proudly promoted written Creole. Other French based Creole languages are spoken in Mauritius, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Guyana, Dominica, Reunion and St. Lucia.

# France

## A. SYNTAX and GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. The **rhythm** in French is different from English, because the **stress** on words falls near or on the last syllable. English tends to stress the front syllables in connected speech patterns.
2. All **nouns** in French are masculine or feminine. Since “pencil” is masculine, its corresponding pronoun is “he.” Since the noun “pen” is feminine, its corresponding pronoun is “she.”
3. **Adjectives** and **articles** agree in gender and number with the noun they modify. Generally, **descriptive adjectives** follow the noun.

## B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. The **TH** sound does not occur in French.
  - a. Voiceless initial **TH** becomes **S**.  
**think** > **sink**
  - b. Voiced initial **TH** becomes **Z**.  
**them** > **zem**
2. The **CH** sound does not occur in French. It is replaced with **SH**.  
**cheek** > **sheek**
3. The sound of **J** as in “jeep” does not occur in French. It has the sound of “rouge”.
4. The **R** sound is difficult. Many French speakers substitute the R made at the back of the throat - a “growled” sound. Some will substitute the trilled R.
5. **ING** as in “ring” does not occur. Ring may become rin.
6. Final **S** is not pronounced and final **T** after a vowel is also not pronounced.
7. **P, T** and **K** are not aspirated. They sound more like **B, D** and **G** respectively.  
**cap** > **cab**; **bat** > **bad**; **back** > **bag**

### Loanwords

beef  
castle  
court  
dinner  
garden  
place

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*My Notes . . .*

# GERMANY



**HOLIDAYS** – German Unification day is celebrated on October 3. Germans exchange gifts on Christmas Eve, leaving Christmas day to relax and spend time with family. December 26 is also considered a legal holiday in Germany.

**GESTURES** – The German signal for quiet is made by placing the index finger over the lips, with the fingernail facing outward. Germans signal “good luck” by making two fists with thumbs tucked inside the other fingers, followed by a pounding motion. The American “O.K.” signal is considered extremely rude in Germany. Pointing the index finger to one’s own head is also considered an insult.

**FAMILY** – Large families are uncommon in Germany. Both parents often work, and most families live in apartments. Traditionally, the father is the head of the household.

**EDUCATION** – Education in Germany is free and coeducational. Almost all elementary and secondary schools and about 95 percent of higher education institutions are public. In Germany, school attendance is mandatory for a minimum of nine years, beginning at age six. At about age fifteen, students have the option of continuing their education by attending their choice of a vocational, technical, or academic school.

**PERSONAL SPACE** – During greetings, cheek-kissing is rare. A firm handshake is customary among men and women. Chewing gum while conversing is considered extremely impolite. Also, never place feet on furniture and always knock before opening any closed door. Punctuality is a virtue.

**ETHNIC GROUPS** – German - 91.5 percent; Turkish - 2.4 percent; Greek, Italian, Polish, Russian, Serbo-Croatian, Spanish - 6.1 percent

**RELIGION** – Roman Catholic Church – 33 percent; Lutheran Church – 33 percent; Muslim – 4 percent; no affiliation – 28 percent

## GERMAN LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION

German is spoken by 100 million people predominately in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Liechtenstein and Luxembourg, and by smaller groups in France, Italy, Denmark, Belgium, Holland, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Romania. It is one of the official languages of the European Union. Outside Europe, large numbers of German speakers are found in the United States and Brazil as well as in Namibia, a former German colony, in Canada and in South America.

Modern Standard German (Hochdeutsch) is used today in media, written works and in education. It is generally understood in all areas where German is spoken even though regional populations maintain their dialects. Dialects are so varied that German speakers can be thought of as being bilingual if they speak fluent Standard German and their own dialect.

Numerous varieties of German dialects exist within Germany itself and in its surrounding neighbors, as well as in former German colonies and areas abroad where Germans émigrés have settled. Speakers in neighboring areas who speak different dialects can usually understand each other, but for those who live in distant areas, but on the same dialectical continuum, it may be difficult to understand one another

Within Europe, there are three distinct German dialect areas known as Low German, Middle German or High German. The area where Low German is spoken extends from eastern Belgium and the Netherlands across the northern third of Germany into Denmark and to Gdansk, Poland. Low German dialects are Frisian and Low Saxon. The areas of Middle German stretch from Luxemburg and Cologne, towards the south and into the north and east of the Czech Republic and parts of Poland. Middle German dialects include Luxembourgish, Lower Silesian, Upper Saxon and Franconian. Upper German begins in southern Germany and extends down to include most of Austria and Switzerland. Upper German dialects include Alemannic, Bavarian and Swabian.

# Deutschland

## A. SYNTAX and GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. The **rhythm** and **word stress** in German are similar to English.
2. **Word order** can be very different from English, especially in a complex sentence where inverted word order occurs. An English sentence like “I will go downtown tomorrow.” will become “Tomorrow will I downtown go.”, in German.
3. **Nouns, articles** and **possessive adjectives** are declined.

## B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. The **TH** sound does not occur in German.
  - a. Voiceless initial **TH** will usually be replaced by **S**.  
**think > sink**
  - b. Voiced initial **TH** will usually be replaced by **Z**.  
**that > zat**
2. **W** has the sound of **V** in German.  
**want > vant**
3. The letter **S** is difficult for Germans.
  - a. **S** before a vowel becomes **Z**.  
**so > zo**
  - b. **S** followed by **P, T, or L** becomes **SH**.  
**spell > shpell; step > shtep; sleep > shleep**
4. When **B, D, or G** occur at the end of an English word, the ESOL student will usually use **P, T, or K** respectively.  
**cab > cap; bad > bat; bag > back**
5. The **R** sound can be difficult. In German, the R is made at the back of the throat and has a “growled” sound.

### Loanwords

**aspirin**  
**delicatessen**  
**diesel**  
**Levi's**  
**hamster**  
**glitz**

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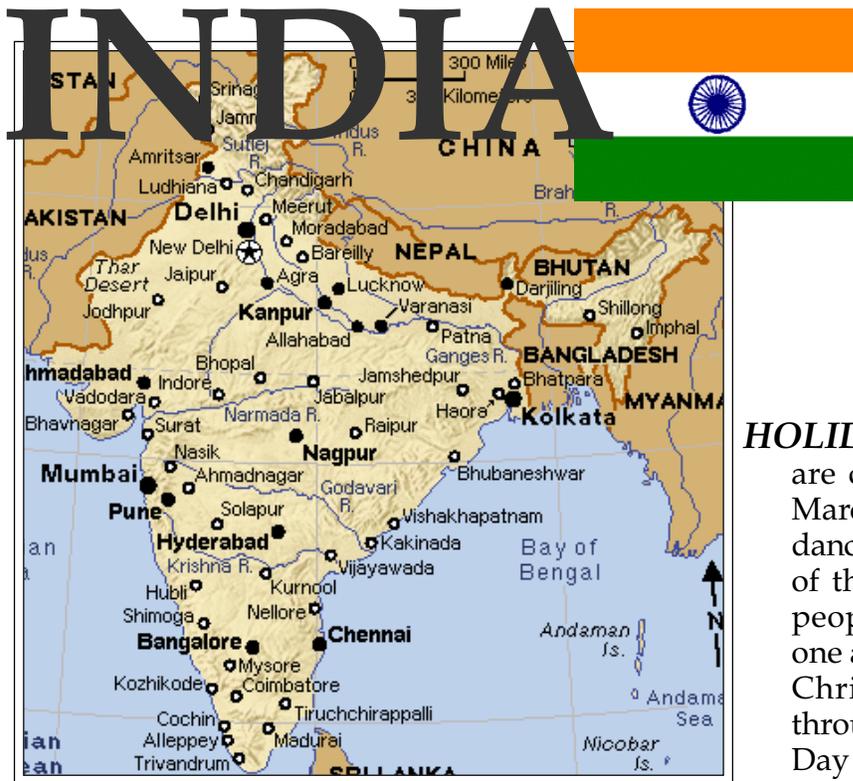
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*My Notes . . .*



**HOLIDAYS** – In India, harvest festivals are common between January and March, celebrated with parties and dancing. Holi, which signifies the end of the cold season, is celebrated by people dumping colored water on one another. Numerous Muslim and Christian holidays are celebrated throughout the year. Independence Day is celebrated August 15.

**GESTURES** – People in India greet one another by placing both hands together followed by a slight bow. In India, one points with the chin, thumb, or whole hand. Extreme hand gestures are considered impolite. Waving the hand side-to-side, as in the Western “hello,” is interpreted by Indians as meaning “no.” Grasping the earlobes signifies sincerity to an Indian. Objects are passed with both hands.

**FAMILY** – In India, the family unit is thought to be more important than the individual. The extended family plays an important role in Indian society; many generations often live together in a single home. The father is the patriarch and provides for his children until their education is completed. Few Indian women work outside the home, although in urban areas women in the work force are more common.

**EDUCATION** – Schooling is free and compulsory in India from ages six to fourteen. However, many facilities are inadequate. Only 20 percent of school age children complete secondary school. Less than 10 percent attend a university. There are more than 250 universities and 3,000 colleges in India.

**PERSONAL SPACE/COURTESIES** – Indians value personal space; generally, people stand an arm’s length apart when conversing. Public displays of affection are considered impolite. The head is considered sensitive in India and should never be touched by another person. Whistling and pointing footwear at people are both considered rude in India.

**TIME** – Indians generally are not strict on punctuality; many arrive 15 to 30 minutes late for meetings.

**ETHNIC GROUPS** – Indo-Aryan – 72 percent; Dravidian – 25 percent; Mongoloid and other – 3 percent

**RELIGION** – Hindu – 80 percent; Muslim – 12 percent; Sikh – 2 percent; Buddhist and Jains – 1 percent each; Christian – 3 percent

# HINDI LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION

Hindi is the official language of India, although English and some 18 other languages are officially recognized by the Indian Constitution. About 180 million people in India regard Hindi as their mother tongue, while 300 million use it as their second language. Hindi is also spoken by large émigré groups in the United States, England, Mauritius, South Africa, Yemen, Uganda, New Zealand and Germany.

When considering the languages of India, spoken Hindi and Urdu must be considered. These languages sound very much the same and have similar grammars. They are, however, written in different scripts and have striking differences in vocabulary. Hindi is written in Devanagari script, from left to right, and its vocabulary is mostly derived from Sanskrit; Urdu is written in Arabic-Persian script, from right to left, and draws on Persian and Arabic words for its vocabulary. Standard Hindi and Urdu, in their most formal forms, can be thought of as separate languages as they can be mutually unintelligible. The dialect of the Delhi region, Khadiboli, is the official standard Hindi used in education, government, public addresses, radio and on T. V. Standard Urdu is spoken in India's northern districts of Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar and is the official language of Pakistan.

The everyday spoken language of the majority of Indians, however, is "Hindustani", which is the combination of Hindi and Urdu with many English loanwords. The emergence and popularity of "Bollywood" is a perfect example of the use of Hindustani. Films using Hindustani sound as much like Urdu as Hindi. The film industry in Bollywood has successfully developed its own film dialect which is appealing to the entire Indian population, regardless of region.

There are a great number of English loan words in Hindi but often the original meaning has been changed to accommodate cultural differences or the pronunciation has taken on a local accent. For example, *hotal*, is not just a hotel, but also refers to a café or restaurant. Regarding prominence of the local accent, the months of the year are all borrowed from English, but the pronunciation has been changed: *favari* for February, *a'prail* for April, *a'gast* for August, *ak'toober* for October, etc.

## A. SYNTAX AND GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. Hindi uses a **non-Roman** script alphabet.
2. Hindi is written and read **left to right**.
3. Sentences are written with the **subject first**, sentences parts in the middle and **verb last**.
4. **Helping verbs** such as “to be” and “do” are not usually used in Hindi.
5. There are no **articles** in Hindi.
6. **Negatives** corresponding to “no” or “not” are placed before the verb.  
“You no like curry?”
7. A common tag question used in Hindi corresponds to “isn’t it?”

## B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. Various letters/sounds in the Hindi alphabet have no equivalent in English.
2. Voiced and voiceless **TH** becomes **T**.  
**three > tree; think > tink**
3. The sound **P** is replaced with **B**  
**pig > big**
4. The sound **CH** becomes **SH**.  
**cheep > sheep**
5. The sound **W** becomes **V**.  
**want > vant**
6. Final consonants are often omitted, especially the **G** from **NG**.  
**doing > doin**
7. Short vowel sounds cause much difficulty, since the student may not hear the slight variations.
8. The consonants **F, Q, V, X** and **Z** do not exist as separate characters in the Hindi alphabet.
9. Word stress, rhythm and intonation patterns are all different in Hindi and will create communication challenges.

### Loanwords

**bangle**  
**bungalow**  
**cushy**  
**dungaree**  
**khaki**  
**pajamas**  
**verandah**

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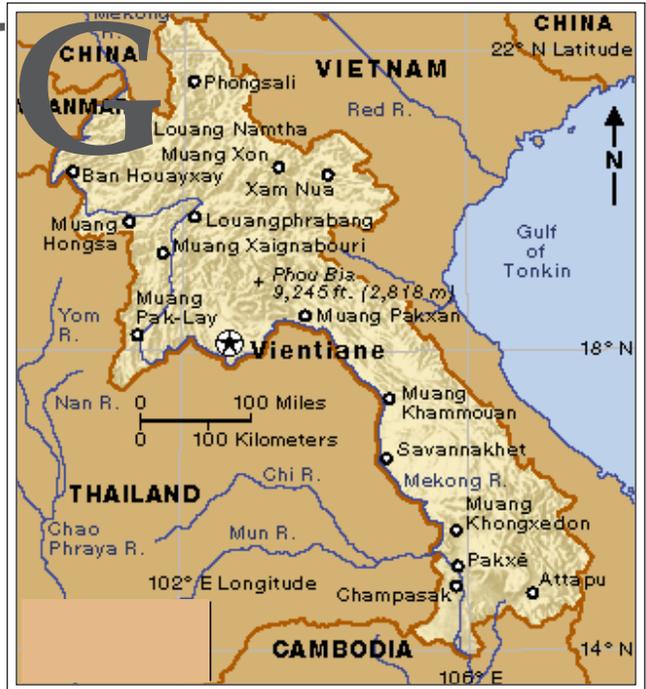
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*My Notes . . .*

# HMONG

During the 1960s, many Hmong in Laos were recruited by U.S. forces to defend Laos against the North Vietnamese Army. In the end, over 30,000 people – more than 10 percent of the Hmong population – were killed as a result of this conflict. Those Hmong who assisted U.S. forces found themselves unwelcome in Laos. Subsequently, an estimated 300,000 Hmong fled to refugee camps in Thailand. However, mounting political pressure in the 1970s and 1990s resulted in a major resettlement of the Hmong. Many left refugee camps and came to the United States.

In fact, more than 270,000 Hmong live in the United States today. The majority of Hmong in the United States live in California, Minnesota and Wisconsin. The first Hmong refugees arrived in the U.S. in 1976, mainly from Thai refugee camps. The final year a large wave of Hmong refugees entered the United States was 1997. In addition, large numbers of Hmong still live outside the United States. Currently, several million Hmong live in southwestern China. Around 500,000 live in Vietnam, and 120,000 still reside in Thailand.



**HOLIDAYS** – The most important holiday to the Hmong is the New Year celebration. The Hmong New Year is extremely similar to Chinese and Vietnamese New Year celebrations. Festivities include feasts, parties, parades and traditional clothing.

**GESTURES** – Direct eye contact is considered rude. Sitting back with arms folded and legs crossed is considered arrogant.

**FAMILY** - Family plays an extremely important role in Hmong culture. All Hmong belong to a clan and their first identity is to the clan. The interests of the group always come before the individual. Hmong families are close knit and are culturally obligated to help one another. Employers of Hmong must take into consideration the obligations to the clan.

**EDUCATION** - While academic achievement is the highest it has ever been among the Hmong, the high school dropout rate still remains disproportionately high. In fact, only 40 percent of all Hmong above 24 years old have ever graduated from high school. Only about seven percent of Hmong have a bachelors degree or higher. In addition, almost 40 percent of all Hmong families in the United States are below the poverty level.

**PERSONAL SPACE/COURTESIES** – It is considered bad manners for a man to touch a woman other than his wife. Women will not shake hands with a man. Men enjoy closer personal space with one another than do Westerners; however, Hmong men do not hug. Touching the head is disrespectful.

**RELIGION** – In the U.S., the Hmong are approximately 50 percent Christian. Others practice animism and ancestor worship. The shaman, a person with extraordinary spiritual connection to the spirit world, is often consulted in matters of illness or misfortune. The naming ceremony, marriage and funeral are three major rites of passage which are marked by ceremonies which can be elaborate and last for days, as in the case of a death.

## HMONG - LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION

Hmong is spoken by the Hmong people in Laos, Thailand, Burma, Vietnam and the United States, as well as by the Miao minority in southern China. It is a monosyllabic tonal language, which is divided into two major dialects, White Hmong (*Hmong Der*) and Green/Blue Hmong (*Mong Leng*). The names represent the colors used in traditional women's costumes by different Hmong cultural groups from distinct regions of China from which they migrated in the early 1800s. Before the recent war in Laos, speakers of the two dialects lived in different villages, had little contact and had difficulty understanding one another. Since the war, relocation and a mutual need for survival have brought the two groups closer together, thus Hmong Der and Mong Leng speakers can communicate well with one another.

The Hmong have been called a "preliterate" people, meaning they have not had, until recently, an alphabet or basic literacy skills. Hmong legends, however, recount that the Hmong in China ruled their own lands, had their own armies and alphabet. During ongoing wars with the Chinese, the "book" of Hmong alphabetic symbols fell into the Yellow River, or in two other stories, was eaten by horses or was eaten by the starving Hmong themselves. This is evidence that the Hmong in past history had a high regard for literacy and the written word.

In Laos, where thousands of Hmong refugees from China had settled, the rural minority Hmong were not provided access to public education under the French colonialists or later, after independence, under the Royal Lao Government. It was not until the 1960s when the Hmong supported the United States' secret war in Laos, that they had sufficient leverage to demand more educational opportunities for their people. USAID built hundreds of schools plus a teacher training center, and student enrollment rose dramatically. Hmong students were taught to read and write in Lao and followed the Lao curriculum of history, government and ethics.

There have been as many as 14 attempts to create a writing system for the Hmong language in the past 100 years. In the 1950s, Christian missionaries created the Romanized Popular Alphabet (RPA) which was used to translate religious material. The Hmong learned to read and write their own language in Bible classes and other religious settings. In Hmong refugee camps in Thailand, the RPA was used extensively in literacy classes and has become the writing system of Hmong in the United States, China and elsewhere.

# Thaibteb



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*My Notes . . .*

# HUNGARY



**HOLIDAYS** – An extremely important day in a Hungarian person’s life is his or her “name day,” the day of observance for the patron saint after whom the person is named. To Hungarians, this holiday is often more significant than a birthday. During Easter, young boys often sprinkle girls with water – symbolizing that the girl is a flower he does not want to wither. War of Freedom Day is celebrated every March 15, to commemorate the 1848 rebellion.

**GESTURES** – Hungarians consider shaking one’s fist at someone or giving a thumbs-down both to be vulgar gestures. To wish someone a happy birthday, Hungarians sometimes gently pull the person’s earlobe. If one’s hand is dirty, one may offer a wrist or elbow in place of a handshake.

**EDUCATION** – In Hungary, schooling is free and compulsory for children from age six to fourteen. Foreign language courses are offered to Hungarian children in elementary school. Hungary has five academic, four medical and nine technical universities – all of which are extremely competitive. As of 1994, students are required to pay tuition for higher education.

**FAMILY** – The average Hungarian family consists of three people, and both parents typically work outside the home. In fact, almost 80 percent of all Hungarian women hold a job outside the home. It is common for adult children to live with their family until married. Hungarian parents do not emphasize building their children’s self esteem, but rather push competitiveness and a strong will.

**PERSONAL SPACE/COURTESIES** – Hungarians are a reasonably high-contact culture society, especially when it comes to close personal relationships. Customarily, men walk to the left of women. Embracing when greeting is uncommon among Hungarians, and kisses are only exchanged between female relatives and close friends. A handshake is the customary greeting gesture among Hungarians. Hungarians often wait to be introduced, rather than introducing themselves first. When listening to a conversation or instructions, Hungarians are expected to avert their eyes as a sign of attention and respect.

**ETHNIC GROUPS** – Hungarian - 89.9 percent; Romany (Gypsy) – 4 percent; German, Serb, Slovak, Romanian – 6 percent

**RELIGION** - Roman Catholic – 52 percent; Calvinist - 16 percent; Lutheran - 3 percent; Greek Catholic - 2.6 percent; other Christian - 1 percent; other and unaffiliated - 25.6 percent.

## HUNGARIAN LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION

Hungarian, or *Magyar* as it is referred to in Hungarian, is the official language of Hungary and is spoken by 98 per cent of the population. Minority groups in Hungary, such as Germans, Romanians, Croats, Slovaks, Slovenes and some Gypsies speak their own languages at home and in their communities, but because Hungarian is the language of education and government, minorities tend to speak Hungarian as well. There are large populations of Hungarian speakers in the neighboring countries of Romania, the Czech and Slovak Republics, the former Yugoslavia, Ukraine and Austria as well as abroad in Israel, the United States and Canada.

Regional dialects exist in Hungary but the differences between them are minimal. A noticeable distinction in language does exist, however, between rural and urban Hungarians. The Hungarian spoken in urban settings is the dialect of Budapest. Hungarian is a Finno – Ugric Uralic language and has borrowed from Iranian and Turkic languages as well as from German, Italian, French and English.

Hungarian is pronounced the way it is written. It has a Latin alphabet with additional letters to accommodate the special sounds of Hungarian. These include letters with acute accents or umlauts as well as consonant combinations such as CS, DZ, DZS, GY, LY, NY, SZ, TY and ZS.

Eastern name order, using the last name first and then first name, is typical in the Hungarian language, except when speaking about foreign names. Thus, the Hungarian composer Franz Liszt would be referred to as Liszt, Franz, but the American composer would be referred to as Aaron Copland. Students may refer to themselves with last name first.

Magyar

Köztársaság)

# HUNGARIAN

## A. SYNTAX and GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. The sentence **word order** is basically the same as in English.
2. The **Roman alphabet** is used.

## B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. Some Hungarian vowel sounds have no English equivalents.
2. There is no sound for **W** in Hungarian. It is replaced with a **V** sound.  
**want > vant**
3. The letter **J** has a **Y** sound.  
**January > Yanuary**
4. The **TH** sound causes difficulty in Hungarian.
  - a. Voiceless initial **TH** becomes **S** or **T**.  
**think > sink or tink**
  - b. Voiced initial **TH** becomes **Z** or **D**.  
**that > zat or dat**
5. The letter **R** is trilled or rolled.

### Loanwords

**goulash**

**paprika**

**saber**

**coach**

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*My Notes . . .*

# JAPAN



**HOLIDAYS** – Japan’s three major holidays are the New Year, Golden Week and Bon Festival. During the New Year, all government offices and businesses close, and the Japanese take an extended holiday. During this time, the Japanese spend time visiting with friends and family. Bon Festival, celebrated August 15, is a time for people to vacation and visit their ancestral homes.

**GESTURES** – A Japanese person summons by placing the arm out, palm down and making a scratching motion. The Japanese point with the entire hand rather than the index finger. A bow is the traditional greeting for the Japanese. The “O.K.” gesture signals “money” to the Japanese. Expansive arm and hand movements or dramatic gestures are often avoided; even the smallest gesture may have meaning to the Japanese. To say “no,” a Japanese person shakes the hand from side to side with the palm facing outward. Japanese people refer to themselves by pointing at the nose.

**FAMILY** – Family is considered the foundation of Japanese society. Often, an individual’s actions reflect on the entire family. The Japanese value moderation in the expression of emotions. Women comprise nearly 40 percent of the Japanese workforce. Divorce is rare in Japan, and the average family has three or less children.

**EDUCATION** – In Japan, education is free and compulsory from ages six to fifteen. Tuition must be paid for education beyond that point. Japanese curriculum focuses heavily on math and science. Students attend school Monday through Saturday. University entrance exams are extremely difficult, and a great deal of competition exists. Graduation from a top Japanese university often guarantees a high-paying job.

**PERSONAL SPACE/COURTESIES** – It is polite to take one’s shoes off when entering a home or a restaurant. The Japanese consider yawning in public to be rude. When crossing the legs, it is considered improper to place the ankle over the knee. Showing an open mouth is considered impolite in Japan; the Japanese cover the mouth when laughing, yawning, or using a toothpick. Chewing gum and standing with hands in pockets is considered rude to the Japanese.

**ETHNIC GROUPS** – Japanese – 99 percent; Korean, Chinese, Brazilian, Filipino – 1 percent

**RELIGION** - Both Shinto and Buddhist observed - 84%; other and Christian - 16 percent

# JAPANESE LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION

Japan's official standard language, known as *Nihongo*, is the dialect of Tokyo. Japanese has three regional dialectal groups which fall into further linguistic divisions referred to as Eastern, Western and Southern dialects. Due to the mountainous nature of Japan, areas where specific dialects are spoken were historically isolated from the rest of the country and flourished. Such language forms can be so different from one another that they are mutually unintelligible. Today, because of a sophisticated transportation system and nationwide T.V. and radio which broadcast in standard Japanese, all speakers are able to speak standard Japanese and their regional dialect.

Japanese is not related linguistically to Chinese although it does have a high percentage of words of Chinese origin. It has, as well, incorporated many loan words from Korean, English, Portuguese, Dutch and Spanish. Some words entered the language from early times when Japan came into contact with missionaries and merchants from European countries.

Modern Japanese is written in a combination of three main scripts: *kanji*, which are Chinese characters used to represent Chinese loanwords into Japanese and some Japanese morphemes; and two phonetic sets of characters called *hiragana* and *katakana*. Hiragana is a system of characters developed from kanji representing 48 syllables in which there is one to one correspondence between the characters and the spoken sound. These characters are used to write words not usually written in kanji, such as adverbs, some nouns and adjectives. Hiragana is more rounded in form than kanji. Katakana is a system in which a grapheme, again developed from kanji, represents a spoken syllable, usually composed of a consonant and vowel pair. The set consists of 75 graphemes plus 3 more, which, when combined with a third sound, produces 36 more forms. Katakana is used to write foreign words, such as *television*, *coffee* and *jumbo jet*, but not words of Chinese origin.

Traditionally, Japanese characters are written in columns from top to bottom and read from right to left. Today's modern form of writing is read horizontally from left to right similar to European languages.

A distinctive and remarkable characteristic of the Japanese language is the hierarchical honorific system, which acknowledges respect or humility through a complex system of nouns and verbs. Japanese students may find it difficult to use the term *you* or address a teacher by name because they feel it does not convey proper respect. Japanese also have a higher regard for the atmosphere and relationship of a conversation than for complex or flowery speech. Japanese will also avoid disappointing by saying "no". Long pauses to consider a correct answer and avoid embarrassment are common.

## A. SYNTAX and GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. Japanese uses **three writing systems**. Two sets of characters are used for most written material and are written in vertical columns read from right to left. The third system is written horizontally and read from left to right. It is phonetic and is used for adding foreign words to the language.
2. In Japanese, the subject is generally followed by other sentence parts, and the verb is last (**SOV**).

## B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. The letter **C** may be pronounced as **SH**.  
**cent > shent**
2. The sound **W** is replaced by **V**.  
**want > vant**
3. Initial **V** becomes **B**.  
**vine > bine**
4. The **TH** sound does not occur in Japanese.
  - a. Initial voiceless **TH** becomes **S**.  
**think > sink**
  - b. Initial voiced **TH** becomes **D**.  
**these > dese**
  - c. Final **TH** becomes **S**.  
**with > wis**
5. The **L** sound is usually replaced by an **R** type sound.  
**led > red**

### Loanwords

**bonsai**  
**haiku**  
**hibachi**  
**futon**  
**ramen**  
**skosh**

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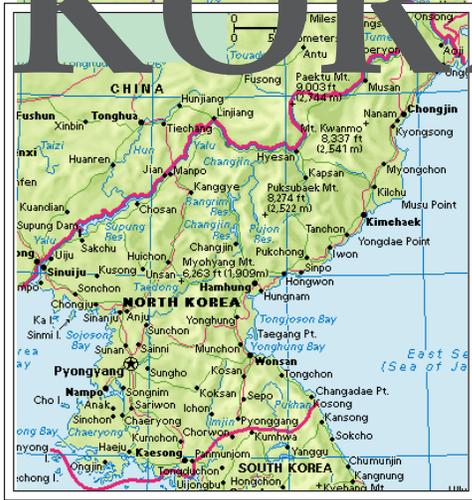
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*My Notes . . .*

# KOREA



## NORTH KOREA

**HOLIDAYS** – Citizens of North Korea celebrate the birthdays of Kim Il Sung and Kim Jong Il on April 15 and February 16, respectively. Liberation Day is celebrated on August 15. Kim Il Sung’s birthday is considered North Korea’s most important holiday.

**GESTURES** – Koreans generally do not use hand gestures during conversation. All objects are passed using both hands.

**FAMILY** – While the immediate family remains an important part of North Korean culture, the government encourages citizens to look upon the nation’s ruler as a paternal figure – to also consider the state as family. Current economic conditions in North Korea often force both parents to work. Most workplaces provide childcare centers on site.

**EDUCATION** – Education in North Korea is compulsory and free for 11 years. However, famine keeps many children from attending. Competition is intense for entry into one of North Korea’s 200 universities. Children are raised to value the best education possible. The North Korean educational system has a socialist and nationalist focus; uniformity is encouraged throughout student’s educational careers.

**PERSONAL SPACE/COURTESIES** – Touching between strangers and those of the opposite sex is considered extremely inappropriate in North Korea. Good posture is a sign of respect; it is insulting to sit in a relaxed manner. Korean men are often seen holding hands in public. It is considered extremely rude to point the bottoms of the feet at another person. Looking an elder in the eye is a sign of defiance and disrespect.

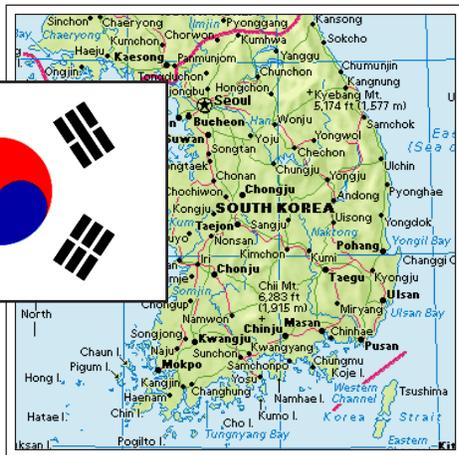
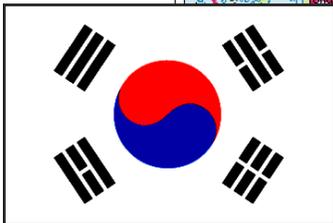
**ETHNIC GROUPS** – Racially homogeneous; however, there is a small Chinese community and a few ethnic Japanese.

**RELIGION** – Government-sponsored religious groups give the impression of freedom of religion, however, the veneration of the first leader, Kim Il Sung, and his son, Kim Jong Il, is practically a religion unto itself. *Ch’ondogyo*, a combination of Buddhist, Confucian and Christian ideals, was founded in 1860; it has a political party and is supported by the government. Small groups of Christians are allowed to exist; shamanism has a following in rural areas.

## SOUTH KOREA

**HOLIDAYS** – South Koreans celebrate the New Year with traditional clothing, feasts, parades and gifts. In the fall, Harvest Moon Festival is celebrated. During this time, Koreans visit ancestral gravesites and leave food offerings to honor the dead. South Koreans honor Buddha’s Birthday in May. Korean Language Day is recognized on October 9.

**GESTURES** – Facial expressions are used more frequently than hand gestures to convey meaning in conversation. Objects are passed using both hands, and beckoning someone with the index finger is considered rude. Koreans say “no” by tipping the head backwards and audibly sucking air in through the teeth. Laughter is often used to disguise fear or anger.



**FAMILY** – Family is considered an extremely important part of South Korean culture. The father and the oldest son are considered head of the household. The oldest son receives the best educational opportunities. Women comprise over half of the labor force, but still have a lower social status than men. Sons are responsible for taking care of aging parents. Family hierarchies are recognized through detailed family genealogies that date back many centuries.

**EDUCATION** – South Koreans view education as the key to success. Children are raised to value the best education possible. Six years of compulsory schooling begins at age six. Korean children then have the option of attending secondary school. In order to enter a university, students must pass an extremely competitive exam. Political demonstrations are common on university campuses.

**PERSONAL SPACE/COURTESIES** – It is considered disrespectful for a younger person to make eye contact with an older person. Koreans view showing the inside of the mouth impolite. Loud talking or laughing is avoided, and it is considered improper to cross the legs in public. South Korean men are often seen holding hands in public. Good posture is a sign of respect; it is insulting to sit in a relaxed manner. Koreans find touching older people or members of the opposite sex inappropriate.

**ETHNIC GROUPS** – Homogeneous, except for about 20,000 Chinese.

**RELIGION** – No affiliation - 46 percent; Buddhist - 26 percent; Christian - 26 percent; Shamanism - 1 percent. Confucianism, a philosophy rather than a religion, is the traditional foundation which still permeates Korean society. It is clearly seen in respect given to those of higher status, parents and elders.

## KOREAN LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION

Korean, referred to as *Kugo*, is the official language of North and South Korea. The Korean Peninsula is practically all monolingual as there are no language minority groups there of any size. Korean speakers live in the Chinese provinces bordering North Korea, as well as large groups in Japan, Russia, the United States, Canada, Australia, Singapore, Thailand, Guam, Brazil and Paraguay.

Korean has historically incorporated loan words mostly from Chinese, a smaller amount from English and some colloquial expressions from Japanese. In both North and South Korea, an effort has been made by linguists and scholars to use words with Korean roots and not use words with foreign origins.

A major part of the Korean language is the honorific system of respect and self-effacement which is full of terminology to convey respect for status based on a person's position or age and provides a form for addressing persons of superior, inferior or equal rank. In addition, there are also levels of speech which are used in determining the degree of formality one employs when speaking to an audience. Nouns, pronouns and verbs change depending on about whom and to whom one is speaking

Most Koreans will proudly tell the story of the origin of the Korean alphabet known as *Hangeul*. In the fifteenth century, King Sejong the Great, a loving and compassionate ruler, was concerned that the common people did not know the complicated system of Chinese characters used by the intelligentsia and therefore could not read or write. He also knew the Chinese script did not adequately express Korean thoughts and spoken language; therefore the common man had no way to express complaints to authority or officially record Korean cultural history and experience. Understanding how problematic this was, King Sejong commissioned an official group of scholars with the task of creating an alphabet with letters associated with Korean phonemes which was easy to learn in order to promote a literate populous. The new alphabet was originally called Hunminjeongeum, which means "the correct sounds for the instruction of the people". Except for the time when Japan dominated Korea (1910 to 1945) and the alphabet and Korean language were forbidden by law, *Hangeul* has been the root of Korean culture. *Hangeul* is easy to learn and most young children can master the alphabet before school age. As a result, Korea is practically 100% literate.

## A. SYNTAX AND GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. Traditionally Korean, with a unique non - Roman alphabet called Hangeul, was written and read vertically and right to left; modern style is horizontal and read left to right. It is written with spaces between the words; **punctuation** marks are almost identical to Western ones.
2. In a Korean sentence, the order is generally **subject**, other sentence parts and the **verb last**.
3. In general, Koreans avoid using the **second person singular pronoun** and when using honorific forms will either use the person's name, kinship term, or title.
4. Using "you" in English may prove difficult for newly arrived Korean students. They may use "teacher" as a polite term.

## B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. The **TH** sound does not occur in Korean.
  - a. Initial **TH** becomes **D**.  
**think > dink; that > dat**
  - b. Final voiceless **TH** is replaced with **S**.  
**with > wis**
  - c. Final voiced **TH** becomes **D**.  
**smooth > smood**
2. The sound **L** is usually replaced with an **R** sound.  
**led > red**
3. The sound **B** becomes **V**.  
**bat > vat**
4. The **J** sound becomes a **Z** sound.  
**jeep > zeep**
5. The **H** or **WH** sounds become an **F** sound.  
**held > feld; white > fight**

### Loanwords

kimchi

tae kwondo

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*My Notes . . .*

# LAOS



**HOLIDAYS** - The Lao celebrate Pi Mai, the three-day Lao New Year in the spring. In November, *Bun That Luang* is celebrated. During this week-long festival, the Lao gather at temples that house Buddha, and pray and feast. Traditionally, the Lao celebrate holidays by holding a *basi* ceremony, complete with offerings, religious chanting and food. In a *basi* ceremony, it is customary to wish others good luck by tying a string on the wrist.

**GESTURES** - To summon someone, the Lao wave all fingers with the palm facing downward. When conversing with a superior, the Lao will cross hands, rather than keep them near the side of the body.

**FAMILY** - To the Lao, the family is the basic social unit; a typical household consists of an extended family made up of numerous generations. Because family is so important, the Lao consider it a social disgrace to be without children. The eldest male is the patriarch of the family, and the women are responsible for caring for the children and outdoor labor.

**EDUCATION** - Education is free in Laos until age seventeen. Beginning at age six, children are required to attend five years of primary school. Upon completion, children have the option of attending secondary school for another six years. However, most Lao children do not attend secondary school, because they are needed at home.

**PERSONAL SPACE/COURTESIES** - As in many Asian cultures, the head is considered an extremely sacred part of the body. Therefore, never touch a person's head without first asking. The Lao consider it insulting to show the bottoms of feet. Lao men and women do not show affection in public.

**ETHNIC GROUPS** - Lao Loum (lowland) - 68 percent; Lao Theung (upland) - 22 percent; Lao Soung (highland) including the Hmong and the Yao - 9 percent; ethnic Vietnamese/Chinese - 1 percent

**RELIGION**- Buddhist - 60 percent; animist - 30 percent; Christian - 2 percent; Muslim - 1 percent

## LAO (LAOTIAN) - LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION

Standard Lao (*Phasa Lao*) is the official language of the Lao People's Democratic Republic. It is a monosyllabic tonal language which is closely related to Thai spoken in Thailand.

There are four distinct regional dialects which differ in tone and vocabulary, representing the north, central, south and northwest. The central area around the capital city Vientiane is where the official dialect is spoken. It is used on the radio and TV, in publications and has become the dialect of those involved in high level work or study. The regional dialects are further divided into local dialects. In addition, as many as 50 ethnic groups use their own dialects in daily private life, but know and speak standard Lao. They have been provided Lao as a Second Language classes by the government and are therefore able switch into Lao when in school or encountering public officials. The numerous ethnic groups are known and described in three categories: the *Lao Loum* (Lao landers), the *Lao Theung* (lower mountain dwellers) and the *Lao Soung* (highlanders).

Even before the Pathet Lao took control of the government in 1975, it had begun providing Lao language instruction in the schools under its control in the late 1950s and a Laotian curriculum was beginning to be developed in the late 1960s. Prior to independence, during the colonial period, the French had established an education system much like that in France with French as the language of instruction. Even though education was extended to the rural areas, a French education was of little use to the agrarian population. Urban centers, however, produced an educated elite. The national language has been influenced by French in that words borrowed from European languages have a French pronunciation. Loan words from Chinese and English are also common.

Buddhists monks were the main source of education prior to the French colonial period and today Buddhism remains an integral part of daily life in Laos. Buddhist temples are not only important places of worship, but they also provide many opportunities for social gatherings. It is still common for young men to spend time studying and working with Buddhist monks before marrying.

Laos has a 66percent literacy rate.

# LAO (Laotian)

## A. SYNTAX AND GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. The Lao writing system, with its non-Roman alphabet, evolved from Sanskrit and is read from **left to right**. There are no spaces between words; instead, spaces indicate the end of a sentence or clause.
2. Lao is a **tonal language** with 5 / 6 tones.
3. Most basic words in Lao have **one syllable**.
4. **Nouns** in Lao do not have singular and plural endings; a word can be singular or plural; meaning is determined from the context.
5. **Adjectives** in Lao do not occur with the verb "to be". "To be" is automatically part of the adjective.
6. **Adjectives** follow nouns in Lao.
7. In Lao, **verbs** do not have different forms for different tenses such as "is and was" in English. Tense is understood from time words and context.
8. Laotian uses **SVO** word order.

## B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. All Lao words either have a long vowel length, in which the pronunciation is drawn out, or a short vowel length, which is pronounced quickly. Students may pronounce English in this manner.
2. In Lao, each letter represents a phonetic sound. Students may pronounce **silent letters** in English.
3. The "A" sound in Lao is pronounced like 'AH' as in "father."
4. "PH" is pronounced "P."  
**telephone > telepone**
5. Final "TH" is pronounced as "T."  
**path > pat**
6. The letter "V" has a "W" sound.  
**visit > wisit**
7. The "O" sound is usually pronounced as a long "O" in Lao.  
**not > note**
8. Lao "P" and "D" have a hard sound in Lao unlike the "P" and "D" in English.

### Factoid

The Laotian writing system is called Tua –Lao. It is almost like Thai script, but it is not derived from Thai.

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*My Notes . . .*

# IRAN



**HOLIDAYS** – In Iran, religious holidays are set according to the lunar calendar. Official public holidays are set according to the solar calendar. The New Year is celebrated at the end of March with parties, feasts and gifts. This celebration lasts four days. Revolution Day is celebrated February 11, and the first of April marks Islamic Republic Day. Religious holidays are celebrated on different days each year, including days marking the Prophet Muhammad's birth and death.

**GESTURES** – A light-grip handshake is the customary form of greeting in Iran. Iranians summon someone by putting the hand out, palm down and curling the fingers in a scratching motion. Iranians signal "no" by sharply tilting the head up and back; dipping the head downward with a slight twist means "yes." Twisting the head means "what?" In Iran, the thumbs-up gesture is considered extremely vulgar.

**FAMILY** – The Iranian family unit provides its members with a sense of identity. The father is always the head of the household, and large families with many male children are favored. In Iran, men can legally have up to four wives. The elderly are always cared for by the extended family, and children remain in their parents household until they marry.

**EDUCATION** – In Iran, schooling is compulsory for five years, beginning at age seven. Many children then go on to the secondary level of schooling, which lasts six years. Upon completion of high school, students have the option of beginning a trade career, or completing a seventh year of school called "pre-university." Islamic studies are stressed at most education levels, and many universities offer higher education. Iranian boys and girls always attend separate classes. Since 1979, the Iranian government has made education a high priority; new programs include adult education and literacy, new school construction and the development of higher education institutes.

**PERSONAL SPACE/COURTESIES** – When passing objects, Iranians never use the left hand. Pointing the soles of feet at others is considered offensive. Iranians find crossing the legs unacceptable. Men and women do not make eye contact during conversation. Public displays of affection, even between married couples, are considered inappropriate.

**ETHNIC GROUPS** – Persian - percent; Azeri - 24 percent; Gilaki and Mazandarani - 8 percent; Kurd - 7 percent; Arab, Lur, Baloch, Turkmen and other - 10 percent

**RELIGION** – Shi-Muslim - 89 percent; Sunni Muslim - 9 percent; Zoroastrian, Jewish, Christian and Baha I - 2 percent

## PERSIAN/FARSI LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION

There is a current debate as to which term, "Persian" or "Farsi", is appropriate to use. "Persian" is the English term or international equivalent used to describe the native term *Parsi*. Some native speakers and linguists say it is inappropriate for English speakers to use "Farsi" because it is the same as saying, when speaking about French, "I speak Francais" when one should say "I speak French." In this description, "Persian" will be used.

Persian is spoken today by approximately 23 million speakers in Iran and Afghanistan, but historically it had been spoken in the area spreading from the Middle East to as far as India. It is the official language of Iran and is the first language of 50 percent of the Iranian population. The remainder of the population speaks Arabic, New Aramaic, Armenian, Georgian, Romany and Turkic languages, representing the ethnic groups in Iran. Currently, there are large communities of Persian speakers in Bahrain, Iraq, Oman, Yemen, the United Arab Emirates and the United States.

Persian has three distinct dialects: *Farsi, Dari and Tajik*. *Farsi* is spoken by about 22 million people in central and south central Iran. *Dari*, which is quite similar to *Farsi*, is spoken by about 7 million mainly in Afghanistan and Pakistan. It is one of the two official languages of Afghanistan, the other being Pashto. *Tajik* is spoken by about 4 million in Tajikistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

The Persian language is written in a variation of Arabic script called Perso-Arabic. It is different from Arabic in that it has four additional letters to represent four Persian sounds not present in Arabic. It is important to note that although Persian and Arabic share a similar script, they are quite separate languages from different linguistic families, with different phonology and grammar.

Persian has many loan words which come from Arabic, English, French and Turkic.

# PERSIAN / FARSI

## ***A. SYNTAX and GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES***

1. The **alphabet** is made up of script which resembles Arabic.
2. **Reading** and **writing** are from right to left.
3. **Nouns** are followed by adjectives.
4. **Nouns** and **pronouns** have no gender. The word for he and she are the same.

## ***B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES***

1. Persian lacks some of the letters/sounds that occur in the English alphabet. They include **O, Q, U, W** and **X**. This can cause much difficulty in pronunciation.
2. Initial voiceless **TH** becomes **T** or **S**.  
**think > tink or sink**
3. The sound **W** is replaced by **V**.  
**want > vant**
4. Final **D** becomes **T**.  
**bad > bat**
5. Initial **G** may be replaced by **C**.  
**goat > coat**
6. **Short vowels** will be difficult.

### **Loanwords**

cameo

carafe

caravan

chess

jasmine

taffeta

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*My Notes . . .*

# POLAND



**HOLIDAYS** – An extremely important day in a Polish person’s life is his or her “name day,” the day of observance for the patron saint after whom the person is named. Easter Monday is known as “Wet Monday,” because it is a day for children to dump or squirt water on each other. Andrzejki, or Eve of St. Andrew’s Day, occurs every November 29. This is a special night for young Polish girls who desire a husband. On this night, fortunes are told through a series of games

**GESTURES** – To wish others good luck, Poles hold up both thumbs in closed fists. To signify a joke, Poles often place an index finger next to the nose. Poles invite others to have a drink by flicking two fingers against the neck. However, this gesture is only used among close friends.

**FAMILY** – In Poland, children are given considerable responsibility from an early age. Women still bear the majority of the responsibility at home. Often, the elderly live with their adult children and provide help with the grandchildren.

**EDUCATION** – Polish children receive free education until the age of 18. Upon completion of a three year high school program or a two-year vocational school, students have the option of attending college. A university degree takes around six years to complete. Two thirds of medical students are women.

**PERSONAL SPACE** – Hugs and embracing are not common among Poles; they are not regarded as “touchers.” While conversing, people usually stand about an arm’s length from each other, and casual body contact rarely occurs. Most Poles speak relatively softly. It is considered impolite to chew gum while conversing.

**ETHNIC GROUPS** - Polish - 96.7 percent; German - 0.4 percent; Belarusian - 0.1 percent; Ukrainian and other - 3.3 percent

**RELIGION** - Roman Catholic - 89 percent (practicing - 75 percent); Russian Orthodox, Protestant, other and unspecified 11 percent.

## POLISH LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION

Polish is spoken by approximately 98 percent of the population of Poland and by millions more in the United States, Canada, Ukraine, Romania, the former Czechoslovakia, Germany, Israel, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.

Standard Polish, based on the Warsaw dialect, is spoken in mostly urban areas and is officially used in government, media, administration and education. Because of movements of the population after World War II, and due to mass education and communication, standard Polish is spoken or understood by almost all people in Poland. Still, in rural areas, local dialects are normally used in conversation. Five main dialects represent both regional and old tribal divisions. Greater Polish is spoken in the west, Lesser Polish in the south and southeast, Mazovian in the center and east, Silesian in the southwest and Kashubian in the area of Gdansk on the Baltic Sea. There are also minority groups of Germans, Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Lithuanians and Slovaks who maintain their native languages but understand standard Polish as well.

The Roman Catholic Church has always been an important influence in Poland and was brought there in the 10<sup>th</sup> century by Czech missionaries. At this time the Roman alphabet used by the clergy for Latin religious manuscripts was adopted by Poland and Polish, which heretofore had been only a spoken language, was first written down. The first writings in Polish were translations of Latin prayers and sermons to appeal to the large number of converted. Today, the Polish alphabet is an expanded version of the Roman alphabet with additional letters with diacritical marks. It has ten vowels, 35 consonants and numerous diagraphs.

The Polish language reflects Poland's history of foreign control, partition and independence. In 1772, Poland was partitioned by the controlling powers of Russia, Prussia and Austria. Russia and Prussia promoted their own languages to the detriment and near extinction of the use of Polish. The language survived due to undying nationalism which simmered underground for decades. After the end of World War I, Poland regained its independence in 1918, but was controlled again just 20 years later by Germany and Russia in World War II and became a Russian satellite state. Since 1989, when the political system changed, connections to the West became more important as did the place of English. Now English is a crucial part of education and is widely taught in school and by corporate in-service classes. Thus, Latin, Czech, French, Italian, German, Russian and, most recently, English have influenced the Polish language.

## A. SYNTAX and GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. **Nouns** are feminine, masculine, or neuter; they are declined like Latin/German nouns.
2. **Adjectives** are also declined; they must agree in number and gender with the nouns.
3. There are three basic **verb tenses**; present, past and future. Verbs are conjugated, so **subject pronouns** are not necessary because they are contained within the verb.
4. There are **no articles** in Polish.

## B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. In the initial position, the letter **J** will always sound like a **Y**.  
**January > Yanuary**
2. There is no **TH** sound in Polish.
  - a. Initial voiceless **TH** can become **T** or **F**.  
**three > tree or free**
  - b. Initial voiced **TH** usually becomes **D**.  
**that > dat**
  - c. Final **TH** can be replaced by **S** or **T**.  
**with > wis or wit**
3. The letter **W** becomes **V**.  
**want > vant**
4. Since Polish has several sounds for **L**, it is hard for students to produce the English L.

### Loanwords

spruce

pirogi

kielbasa

polka

vodka

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*My Notes . . .*

# PORTUGAL



**HOLIDAYS** - The Portuguese celebrate All Saints Day on November 1- a day to celebrate dead friends and relatives. On this day, graves are decorated with flowers. June 10 marks National Day of Portugal, a day in which the poet Luis de Camoes is honored and the Portuguese community celebrated.

**GESTURES** - The Portuguese commonly use physical gestures during conversation to convey meaning. To summon someone in Portugal, one waves the fingers with the palm facing up. Pulling down the skin below the eye using the index finger means "You are kidding me." The sign for "more or less" is made by spreading all fingers with the palm facing down, followed by a rocking motion. The "V" or "rabbit ears" sign is considered a serious insult to the Portuguese; the gesture connotes a lack of morals and values.

**FAMILY** - Both the immediate and extended family play a large role in Portuguese society. Married couples living in the city tend to have only one child, while couples in rural areas have larger families. Children live with their parents until they marry and are responsible for caring for their parents in their old age. Both mother and father typically share authority in the Portuguese household.

**EDUCATION** - Education in Portugal is compulsory; it begins at age 6 and continues through the ninth grade. After elementary school, children may attend high school, vocational school or a college preparation program. There are 18 universities in Portugal and tuition is relatively low. However, space is limited and access is highly competitive.

**PERSONAL SPACE/COURTESIES** - When greeting, many Portuguese prefer a light, quick handshake. Friends and family hug and give small kisses on both cheeks. However, the Portuguese are generally a reserved culture. The Portuguese find pointing at someone with the index finger extremely rude.

**ETHNIC GROUPS** - mostly Mediterranean stock; African descendants - .01 percent; some Eastern Europeans have immigrated since 1990.

**RELIGION** - Roman Catholic - 90 percent; other denominations - 5 percent; not affiliated - 5 percent

# BRAZIL



**HOLIDAYS** - Brazil is most famous for the extensive preparation and celebration of *Carnaval*, the five day festival preceding Ash Wednesday. Lavish parades are held with music, costumed samba dancers and conga drummers leading the people through the streets of most cities. On April 21, Brazilians celebrate *Tiradentes* Day, which marks the death of Joaquim Jos da Silva Xavier known as Tiradente, a dentist and nationalist who died in 1792, fighting for Brazilian Independence. Other Christian holidays are celebrated throughout the year. On New Year's Eve, candles and flowers are put on the beaches by *Candomblé* believers to honor the sea goddess *Iemanjá*.

**GESTURES** - When a Brazilian holds his lower eyelid down with his index finger, he is expressing doubt or caution about what he has just heard. Tapping the fingers horizontally across the chin indicates the person who is talking does not know what he is talking about. Making the "OK" sign with one's forefinger and thumb is considered offensive in Brazil.

**FAMILY** - Brazilian families are traditionally large and often include the extended family in one household. In urban areas, however, the nuclear family is on the rise. Children usually live with their parents until they marry. Although women have traditionally worked at home, more women, especially in urban areas, are taking jobs outside the home. One fifth of the Brazilian population lives in poverty; therefore, in order to survive, most poor mothers work as domestics and young children hold jobs as well.

**EDUCATION** - Education in Brazil is compulsory until the eighth grade; approximately 40 percent of the population goes on to secondary school and half of this group goes on to trade schools. Entrance into universities is highly competitive. The average literacy rate for both males and females is 84 percent.

**PERSONAL SPACE/COURTESIES** - It is common for Brazilians to stand close, use an array of gestures and touch one another when conversing. A handshake is a common greeting in formal situations; friends, with the exception of male to male, greet each other with a hug and kiss or "air kiss" on each cheek. When one leaves a group, it is customary to shake hands and say goodbye to everyone present. A person's title and family name is used to address those in superior or authoritative positions.

**ETHNIC GROUPS** - European heritage - 55 percent; mixed heritage - 38 percent; African - 6 percent; Amerindian, Japanese, Arab - 1 percent

**RELIGIONS** - Roman Catholic - 74 percent; Protestant - 15 percent; and Afro-Brazilian religions such as Candomblé, Macumba, and Xangô - 3 percent; not specified - 7 percent

## PORTUGUESE LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION

In addition to being the official language of Portugal, Portuguese is the official language of Brazil, Angola, Mozambique, Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde Islands, San Tome E Principe, East Timor, Goa and Macau. Over 200 million Portuguese speakers are spread world wide in Europe, South America, Africa and China. In 1996, all but East Timor, Goa and Macau united in an international organization known as the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries which solves medical, economic and other pressing problems of member countries as well as works to maintain linguistic standards. East Timor was added to the association in 2002 after gaining its independence.

Portuguese is a Romance language derived from spoken Latin brought to the area by Roman soldiers in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century. Historically, Portuguese was influenced by the languages of Barbarian and Moorish invaders; words of German origin exist and most words which begin with "al" are of Arabic origin. During the height of Portugal's period of discoveries, Portuguese spread from Europe to Asia, Africa and the Americas. Later in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, during Portugal's colonial period, Portuguese was used in administration and commerce and became the *lingua franca* of other foreign nationals doing business in Asia and Africa. During the hundreds of years of contact with other languages, loan words from Italian, French, Japanese, Malay, Mandarin, South American Amerindian and English have crept into Portuguese.

When speaking about Portuguese, one must take into account the differences between European Portuguese (EP) and Brazilian Portuguese (BP). The dialects differ mostly in the pronunciation of vowels, but differ in vocabulary and syntax as well. EP has more words of Arabic origin. It is used in East Timor, Gao, Macau and former African colonies. The standard or prestige dialect of EP is that of the Lisbon and Coimbra regions. BP has more words borrowed from Indian languages and English and its prestige dialect is that of Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo. Within each country there are a host of regional dialects. It is said that Portuguese speakers from Portugal, Brazil and Angola might understand one another perfectly well, but speakers of different dialects within Brazil or Portugal might not understand one another at all.

# Portugal

# PORTUGUESE

## ***A. SYNTAX and GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES***

1. **Nouns** are masculine, feminine, or neuter and are shown by the article and the ending on the noun.
2. **Possessive pronouns** and **adjectives** must agree in gender and number with the nouns they modify.
3. **Descriptive adjectives** usually follow the noun.
4. No **helping verbs** are used to form questions. Instead, the verb is placed in front of the subject (inverted).
5. All **vowels** are pronounced.

## ***B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES***

1. **CH** will sound like **SH**.  
**cheep > sheep**
2. The letter **H** is never pronounced.
3. Since Portuguese has many nasal sounds, this may cause the ESOL student some problems in pronunciation.

### **Loanwords**

albino  
bossa nova  
cocoa  
samba,  
molasses  
tapioca

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*My Notes . . .*



**HOLIDAYS** – June 12 is Russia’s newest and most celebrated holiday, Independence Day.

This day commemorates the 1991 adoption of the Declaration of Sovereignty of the Russian Federation. Many celebrate it twice, on January 1 and 14 (which corresponds to January 1 in the Julian calendar used by the Russian Orthodox Church). Christmas is celebrated on January 7, which also corresponds to the Julian calendar.

**GESTURES** – The popular “O.K.” sign is considered vulgar to most Russians. Russians consider it bad luck to shake hands over a threshold. Whistling at public gatherings is a sign of disapproval to most Russians. Conversing with one’s arms folded across the chest is also considered impolite.

**FAMILY** – Both men and women work in Russia, but the women are responsible for most of the household duties. For their work, women rarely receive equal pay, promotions or vacation time and earn only one-fifth of the nation’s income. It is not uncommon in Russia for the elderly to live with their children and grandchildren. The divorce rate in Russia is high, due to the fact that many do not consider marriage a lasting commitment.

**EDUCATION** – Between ages six and 17, education is free and compulsory. Students can specialize in a subject during their final two years of high school. In Russia, education is highly valued; however, economic downturns have caused a sharp decline in attendance and numerous school closures. More than 500 universities can be found throughout Russia.

**PERSONAL SPACE** – In Russia, people of the same sex often walk arm-in-arm or holding hands – this is a sign of friendship. When greeting, Russians commonly give large hugs accompanied by three short kisses on alternate cheeks.

**ETHNIC GROUPS** - Russian - 81.5 percent; Tatar - 3.8 percent; Ukrainian - 3 percent; Chuvash, Bashkir, Belarusian, Moldavian and other - 11.7 percent

**RELIGION** - Russian Orthodox - 50 percent; Muslim - 10 percent; Jewish and Buddhists - small groups; non-affiliated - 30 percent.

## RUSSIAN LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION

The Russian language is the official language of Russia and one of six official languages of the United Nations. It remains one of the official languages of the independent states which were part of the former Soviet Union, such as Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. Russian remains the *lingua franca* or second language of many of the former republics which have declared their native languages official. Russian is spoken widely by immigrant groups in Israel, the U.S, Canada, Germany, Britain, France, Italy, Belgium and Greece. In the past, immigrant groups in Western Europe tended to lose their native language by the third generation. Today, Russian émigrés often tend to live in Russian speaking communities and, with open borders and accessible transportation, return to their homeland once a year. In addition, Russian cable television and websites allow the Russian language to survive elsewhere than in Russia.

Standard Russian is based in the Moscow dialect. There are basically two other regional dialects which are divided into Northern and Southern dialects, with Moscow as the central dividing point.

Russian has incorporated loan words with origins from Turkic languages, Mongolian, Chinese, French, German and English.

Russian is written in the Cyrillic alphabet which was based on the Greek alphabet with additional letters to represent specific Slavic sounds not found in Greek. The original alphabet was reformed and simplified by Peter the Great and then was further refined in 1918. Today's alphabet consists of 33 consonants, 10 vowels and two letters with no sound but which indicate "hard or soft" pronunciation of a consonant. There are many letters in the Cyrillic alphabet that resemble English letters but do not always have the same sound; for example, "В" is pronounced as English "V". Other English letters do not appear in the Cyrillic alphabet (s, r, i, h, l, f, b, t, j, I, G, Q, N) and may create a difficulty for Russian students at first.

Today, foreign languages are taught routinely in Russian secondary schools; children can learn English, French, German, Spanish or other languages of their choosing.

## A. SYNTAX and GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. Russian uses the **Cyrillic** alphabet.
2. **Nouns** have feminine, masculine, or neuter genders.
3. **Nouns** and **adjectives** are declined as in Latin/German. All nouns and adjectives must agree in gender and number.
4. There are fewer **verb tenses** in Russian than in English.
5. There are **no articles** in Russian.
6. The verb **“to be”** is almost never used in the present tense.  
**The car is red > car red.**

## B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. English **short vowel** sounds are very difficult.
2. There is no **TH** sound in Russian.
  - a. Voiceless initial **TH** becomes **S**.  
**think > sink**
  - b. Voiced initial **TH** becomes **Z**.  
**that > zat**
  - c. Voiceless final **TH** becomes **F, S, Z, or T**.  
**with > wif, wis, wiz, wit**
  - d. Middle **TH** becomes **Z**.  
**father > fazer**
3. There is no **W** sound in Russian. It is replaced by the **V** sound.  
**want > vant**
4. The letter **R** is rolled or “growled” at the back of the throat.
5. A hard **G** sound replaces the letter **H** in foreign words.  
**Ohio > Ogio**

### Loanwords

sputnik  
tundra  
borsch  
mammoth  
gulag

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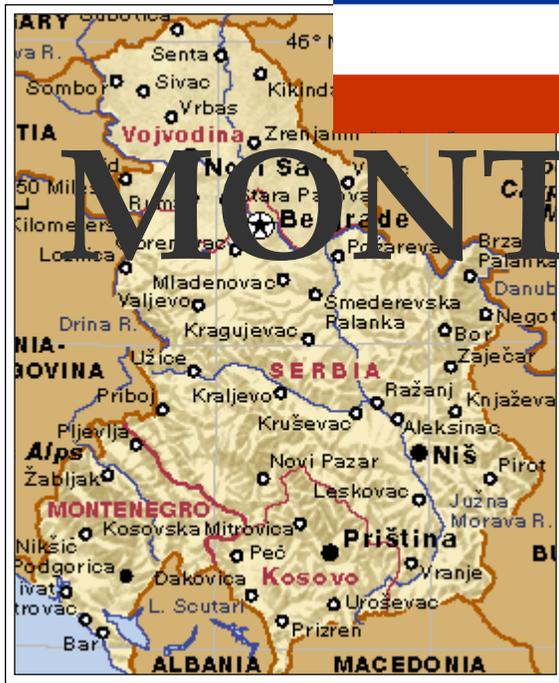
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*My Notes . . .*



# SERBIA MONTENEGRO

**HOLIDAYS** – Serbs and Montenegrins celebrate Christmas on January 7. Women’s Day, celebrated March 8, is a day to honor women in the workforce. June 28 commemorates the Battle of Kosovo. Zadushnice, a day to honor the dead, is celebrated four times throughout the year by Orthodox Serbs.

**GESTURES** – Generally, Serbs do not use hand gestures when speaking. The “O.K.” sign means something is “perfect” or “super.” The thumbs-gesture means “O.K.” to a Serb. Slapping the palm of the hand downward on a closed fist is an obscene gesture. Extending the middle finger downward while holding the hand out is also considered an obscene gesture.

**FAMILY** – Divorce and remarriage are extremely common among Serbs and Montenegrins. Male children are more valued than female children – especially in rural areas. Typically, both husband and wife work outside the home. Child-care facilities are scarce; the elderly are typically responsible for taking care of children. The male is considered the head of the household, and after marriage, couples move in with the groom’s parents

**EDUCATION** – Serb and Montenegrin children begin free, mandatory schooling at age seven. Schooling at the basic level lasts eight years; children then have the option of attending middle/high school. Serbia and Montenegro have four state universities and entrance is determined by examination. Literacy rate: Male – 97 percent, Female – 89 percent

**PERSONAL SPACE/COURTESIES** – Both Serbs and Montenegrins consider it impolite to stretch, yawn, or crack knuckles in public. Pointing with the index finger is considered extremely rude and eye contact is expected during conversation.

**ETHNIC GROUPS** – Serb - 62.6 percent; Albanian - 16.5 percent; Montenegrin - 5 percent; Hungarian and other - 15.9 percent.

**RELIGION** – Serbian Orthodox Christians - 65 percent; Muslim - 19 percent; Roman Catholic - 4 percent; Protestant, Jewish and others - 12 percent

## SERBIAN - LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION

Serbian is spoken by over 11 million speakers and is the official language of the republics of Serbia and Montenegro. Large groups of Serbian speakers live in the United States and Canada, while smaller numbers reside in Hungary, Romania, Albania and Russia.

Ekavian, a dialectical division of Stokavian, is the basis for standard Serbian and is most widely spoken in Serbia. A second dialectical variation, Ijekavian, is spoken in western Serbia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Hercegovina as well as parts of Croatia.

The original alphabet used by both Serbs and Croats was Glagolitic which was created in the 9<sup>th</sup> century by monks Cyril and Methodius as the written language of Old Church Slavonic. Glagolitic was replaced by Cyrillic in the 12<sup>th</sup> century in the Orthodox areas of Serbia and Bosnia. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Vuk Stefanovic Karadzic, a national literary folk hero, revised the Cyrillic alphabet so that there are as many sounds (30) as there are symbols. He promoted the spoken language of the people to be the national norm rather than liturgical religious language. His premise was "Write what you speak and read as you write." Serbian was further revised to correspond on a one-to-one basis with Latin sounds and symbols used by Croats. This Cyrillic alphabet is used today; however, the official language in Serbia uses both the Cyrillic and Roman alphabet.

The differences between Serbian, Croatian and Bosnian are not extreme, as they come from a common origin. What is diverse is the ethnic, religious, social and historic character of each language group. For example, while Croatian has promoted using new words that are based on Croatian roots, Serbian has included in its lexicon many words with foreign origins. Most of these are internationally used words with Greek, Turkish or Latin roots which reflect Serbia's history. In addition, many French words were incorporated in the early twentieth century and, since World War II, English words have been assimilated as well.

# SRBIJA

## ***A. SYNTAX AND GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES***

1. Serbian has three grammatical **genders**, masculine, feminine and neuter.
2. Word order can vary, but it is usually **SVO**.
3. Serbian has borrowed more from western European languages; it uses the same set of international Latin-derived names for **months** as English.
4. **Nouns, pronouns and adjectives** must agree in gender and number.
5. Verb endings are used in place of **pronouns**.
6. There are no **articles**.
7. **Irregular verbs** may be difficult. Perfect tenses will be unfamiliar in meaning.

## ***B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES***

1. The **short English vowel** sounds are very difficult. Generally, the student tends not to hear the slight variations in these sounds.
2. Cyrillic **J** is pronounced like **Y** in "you."
3. Cyrillic **B** is pronounced like **V** as in "very."
4. Cyrillic **H** is pronounced like **N** as in "not."
5. Cyrillic **P** is pronounced like **R** as in "room."
6. Cyrillic **C** is pronounced like **S** as in "son."
7. Cyrillic **Y** is pronounced like **U** in "rule."
8. Cyrillic **X** is pronounced as **H** in "his."

### **Factoid**

Nicola Testa, a Serbian-American, was an acclaimed electrical and mechanical engineer and inventor in the U.S. in the 19th and 20th century. He is honored by a statue at Niagara Falls for his enormous body of scientific work.

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*My Notes . . .*

# SOMALIA



**HOLIDAYS** - Somali Muslims celebrate the Islamic holidays of Eid al Fitr (the end of Ramadan), Eid al Adha, (the Feast of the Sacrifice, when Abraham was willing to sacrifice his son) and the Prophet's birthday, Eid Mawliid. Somali Muslim's fast from dawn to dusk during the holy month of Ramadan. Prior to Somalia's current volatility, independence from Britain in the north was celebrated on June 26 and from Italy in the south on July 1. Many Somali celebrate the ancient Persian New Year *Dab Shiid*.

**GESTURES** - In order to dramatize speech, the Somali use broad hand gestures during conversation. In fact, many ideas are conveyed using specific hand gestures. Placing both index fingers parallel to one another signifies "the same." To say "no," Somali swiftly twist their open hand. Placing ones thumb under the chin indicates fullness. If a Somali snaps their fingers, they may be saying "long ago" or "and so on." To greet one another, Somali men shake hands three times and then place that hand to their hearts. Somali women often shake hands with one another and then kiss that hand. It is inappropriate for Somali of the opposite sex to touch when meeting.

**FAMILY** - Family loyalty plays an extremely important role in Somali society. Families always help each other in time of need, assuming that help will be reciprocated in the future. Good deeds bring honor to the family. If aid is needed, a clear hierarchy of who should be helped is in place. For example, the father's extended family always has first priority. Urban Somali families often take in rural children of their extended family and put them through school.

**EDUCATION** - Unfortunately, Somalia's formal education system has been destroyed by war. However, education plays an important role in Somali society; many people have established private schools for children to attend. Until the 1970s, the language of instruction in Somali schools was Arabic, English or Italian. Sadly, by the 1980s, only one in ten children was able to attend school.

**PERSONAL SPACE/COURTESIES** - The formal greeting in Somalia is "Peace be upon you" (Asalaamu aleikum) and the response is "And peace be upon you." (Aleikum ma salaam). This is usually followed by inquiries about the person's health or general welfare. People greet one another by name or, in the case of a relative, by a word indicating the relationship (grandfather, uncle). When eating with other than the immediate family, women and men eat separately. Only the right hand is used for eating; the left hand never comes in contact with food or is used to offer or pass anything to anyone.

**ETHNIC GROUPS** - Somali - 85 percent; Bantu and other non-Somali, including 30,000 Arabs - 15 percent

**RELIGION**- Almost all Somalis are Sunni Muslim; there are some small groups of Christians.

## SOMALI - LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION

Somali is a lowland Eastern Cushitic language spoken by people in Somalia and in Ethiopia, Djibouti and Kenya. Although it is the Somali national language, Arabic, Italian and English are also officially used. Somali has been influenced by Arabic due to Arab loanwords from Islam. It is spoken by Somali communities all over the world.

Three distinct dialects of Somali are used throughout Somalia. *Af Maxaa* (pronounced *af mahaa*) is spoken by most people and is used by broadcasting stations in Somalia. *Af Maay* (pronounced *af my* or *maa maa*) is spoken in the south in the area located between the Jubba and Shabeelle Rivers. *Af Benaadir* is spoken along the coast from Mogadishu south and in the areas immediately inland. These dialects share some similarities in written form but are different enough in spoken form as to be mutually unintelligible. ( see Somali Bantu)

Linguistic ability is highly valued in Somali society. One's status and capability is often judged by one's facility with language. Conversation tends to have a very poetic style and is often highlighted with proverbs.

The Somali writing system has been in existence since 1972. Prior to that time, Italian and English were the languages of the government, reflecting the colonial era. In pre - revolutionary times, those who spoke Italian or English had access to positions in government and the private sector. Because most secondary schools and government posts were in urban areas, a great socio - economic discrepancy existed between the urban and rural citizenry, based on linguistic ability and literacy. After the revolution in 1960, an official Somali script was required in government which was supposed to end the language barrier and encourage literacy.

An official language committee investigated the best form for written Somali and in 1962 recommended using Latin script. By 1975, the new Somali script was being used in all levels of education and a "cultural revolution" was aimed at making the entire population literate in two years.

# Soomaaliya

# SOMALI - Af Mahaa

## A. SYNTAX AND GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. The **definite article** in Somali has gender suffixes to denote masculine or feminine. Somalis can have difficulty mastering the English indefinite article (a/an) because their own language has no equivalent. In Somali, the concept of indefiniteness is expressed by the noun alone.
2. In Somali, the **noun** has eight **plural forms** as well as forms for gender and case. These different forms are marked by grammatical **tone**. Therefore, Somalis will drop the apostrophes possessive and instead change the tone e.g. "Mary book", with a rising intonation on the first syllable of "Mary".
3. Somali **adjectives** often have the short form of the verb *to be* (*aa*) as a suffix. Therefore, Somalis may tend to add *aa* to adjectives in English. This may cause confusion and sound as if they are speaking British English, e.g. big *aa* = bigger, tall *aa* = taller.
4. Somali has only four **prepositions**; they come before the verb
5. **Verbs** usually come last in a Somali sentence. Therefore, students may put the verb at the end of the sentence.
6. There is no **passive voice** in Somali.
7. Somali has a **present** and **present progressive** tense but they are not used in the same context as in English. Somalis use the present progressive when the simple present would be used in English; therefore, they may use it when speaking English when they should be using the simple present.

## B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. Somali uses all but the letters **p, v** and **z** of the English alphabet.
2. The English sounds most likely to be difficult for Somalis are **c, q, r** and **x** since these letter are pronounced quite differently in Somali.
3. In Somali, the consonants **b, d, dh, g, l, m, n** and **r** can be doubled to create a sound with more force than its single counterparts, such as in "marry" and nibble".
4. **Vowels** always have a fixed value in Somali; each letter has one sound and each sound has one letter. Somalis may also draw out double vowels.

### Factoid

Proverbs are a very important part of daily speech in Somalia.

"Being without knowledge is to be without light".

## SOMALI BANTU - LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION

Although the Somali Bantu do not speak “Bantu”, they have a special historical connection to Eastern and Southern Africa where Bantu is spoken. As a group, they migrated from the west and central parts of Africa to the east and south. Arab slavers in South Africa shipped Bantu-speaking people to Zanzibar (Tanzania) and northern Mozambique in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century and later to southern Somalia. The Somali Bantus were brought to the south of Somalia to the Lower and Middle Jubaa area as agricultural workers. After independence in 1960, they were emancipated and although free, they were treated as second class citizens and have been, until presently, a persecuted minority. In 1972, when the Somali government decided to use *Af Mahaa* as the official language, the people of the south, including the Bantu who speak *Af Maay*, continued to be at a disadvantage in the areas of politics, government and education.

Some Somali Bantu in the south still speak their ancestral languages from Tanzania as well as Swahili and do not understand *Af Maaha* at all. More recently, while in Kenyan refugee camps, some adults have learned English or have become proficient in Swahili so as to communicate with Kenyan aid workers and other officials. Some Bantu children may have very strong English skills which they acquired while living in refugee camps.

Literacy has been an on going issue for the Bantus of Somalia due to their exclusion from formal education and positions that required literacy. Without accurate data, the literacy rate of the Bantu in the refugee camps was observed to be lower than the United Nations estimate of 24 percent. Children were offered elementary and secondary education in refugee camps and therefore, many school age Somali Bantu children, especially boys, may have learned to read and write.

Approximately 12,000 Somali Bantu refugees, who had spent as much as a decade in refugee camps along the Somali - Kenyan border, arrived between 2003 and 2004 in fifty cities and towns across the United States. Recent reports indicate the Somalai Bantu are a hard working people who find jobs quickly and are determined to learn English.

# SOMALI BANTU- Af Maay

## A. SYNTAX AND GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. **Af Maay** uses the Roman alphabet with a few modifications to accommodate unique pronunciation. Since it has only recently been codified, the written language is very much a work in progress. Like **Af Mahaa**, the grammar is not well documented although the use of proper grammar is very important.
2. "**Ieh**" is a common ending on nouns and verbs in **Af Maay** and is represented in writing by "**y**". It may be added likewise when speaking English.

## B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. **Af Maay** has 24 consonants and five vowels  
**Consonants:** **b, p, t, j, jh, d th, r, s, sh, dh, gh, f, q, k, l, m, n, ng, w, h, y.** The consonants **b, d, g** and **n** are pronounced more distinctly by adding force when they are not at the beginning of a word, but they are not doubled as in **Af Mahaa**. This may occur when speaking English.  
**Vowels** in **Af Maay** are extended and pronounced **aa, ee, ii, oo** and **uu**.
2. "**Th**" is pronounced as in "**the**" in English.
3. "**P**" always occurs in the middle of a word and sound like "**p**" in English.
4. "**Gh**" is produced with the sound coming from the back of the mouth with air forced forward as when clearing one's throat.
5. "**Ng**" is similar to "**ing**" in English.
6. "**Yc**" is a sound found in Italian in the word "**signore**" and is a sound found universally in many Asian and African languages. In some **Af Maay** scripts it is represented by "**ny**" or "**gn**". The possibility of this sound appearing when speaking English is slim, but should be noted.

### Factoid

Minneapolis has the largest Somali community in the United State followed by Columbus, Ohio and New York City.

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*My Notes . . .*

# SPANISH SPEAKING WORLD



# THE SPANISH SPEAKING WORLD

Spanish is the fourth most spoken language in the world. It is spoken by more than over 300 million people worldwide. Over 20 million residents in the United States speak Spanish as their native language. Spanish was also at one time the official language of the Philippines; the Filipino language has thousands of Spanish words in its vocabulary and much of its phonetics follows the Spanish pattern. Thirty-two percent of the ABLE/ ESOL students in Ohio speak Spanish as a first language.

## SPAIN

Spain is the “mother country” of the Spanish language. Some time before the beginning of recorded history, Spain was occupied by a people usually called *Iberians*. The Iberians origin is unclear, but many Spanish anthropologists believe they probably came from Africa. Some time after the Iberians occupied the peninsula, the Indo-European groups began their migration. The tribe that first moved west – **the Celts** – settled in all the territory that we now call Europe, as far west as Ireland and the Iberian Peninsula.

The great seafaring and trading nations of the Mediterranean – Phoenicia, Athens, and later Rome – all had trading posts or colonies in the Iberian Peninsula. Roman civilization persisted in the peninsula for more than 600 years. They spoke Latin rather than a Germanic language and brought Aryan Christianity with them.

The Moors – Muslim adventurers from North Africa – arrived in 711 A.D. and occupied the entire peninsula for 700 years. The term “Moor” does not designate a particular ethnic group, but rather the group which dominated almost all of Spain in the early years of the 8th century A.D., and some of it until 1492. The rich tapestry of language, culture and religion migrated to the “New World.”

## THE “NEW WORLD” consisting of Mexico, Central and South America, Cuba and Puerto Rico

The first migratory people from Asia had populated North, Central and South America as well as the Caribbean islands beginning as long as 12, 000 years ago. Although probably from a common ethnic group, they fragmented into many tribes with as many languages.

Christopher Columbus introduced Spanish language and culture to the New World. The Spanish Empire in the New World originally consisted of only a few Caribbean islands and a foothold in Panama.

In what is now modern Mexico and Central America, the Mexica – commonly called Aztecs – subjugated other existing empires, including the Maya, with varying degrees of success. Their capital of Tenochtitlán was larger in area and population than any city in Europe. When Hernán Cortés landed in Mexico in 1519 with 508 men, some of the tribes were only too willing to assist him against the hated Mexica. The number of indigenous people killed by Spanish soldiers was undoubtedly significant, but far more significant was the astonishingly high

number of those who died of diseases unknown in the New World, such as smallpox. Some scholars have estimated the death toll from disease at as much as 90 percent of the indigenous population.

In 1523, after Cortés had subjugated the empire of the Mexica, he sent his assistant Pedro de Alvarado to extend Spanish domination as far south as modern Honduras.

Francisco Pizarro ventured in expeditions from Panama to meet and conquer the Inca. In 1532, Pizarro's 180 men and 27 horses defeated the Inca's army and captured Atahualpa, the 13th and last emperor of the Inca. Although Atahualpa fulfilled his promise to fill one room with gold and two with silver in exchange for his freedom, Pizarro tried and executed him. The great source of Spanish wealth in the New World had been acquired and would finance the Spanish treasury until the early 1800s.

Expeditions from Cuba were exploring and establishing settlements in Colombia, Venezuela and Florida at about the same time as Pizarro was defeating the Inca. Most of Northern Mexico, California, New Mexico, Texas and Louisiana were opened later by expeditions of soldiers and priests from Mexico City. Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay were settled by Spaniards from Peru. Spanish Roman Catholicism spread with them.

The Spanish crown was serious about its obligation to bring the native people to Christ; therefore, priests accompanied every expedition. Thus began the deep Roman Catholic affiliation of the Spanish-speaking countries.

Spanish settlers who were interested in long-term residence followed the conquerors. Although they were never in huge numbers, their families grew over time to a significant population. Persons of Spanish descent born in the New World were known as *criollos*, while those who had been born in Spain were known as *peninsulares*.

In the 19th century, rebellion erupted by the criollo elite against Spanish rule. Among the principal leaders of the rebellion were former Spanish officers José de San Martín in Argentina and Simón Bolívar in Colombia and Venezuela, assisted by Antonio José de Sucre, who liberated Peru and Bolivia. Bernardo O'Higgins is recognized as the Liberator by Chileans. In Central America, the Honduran Francisco Morazán was prominent. In Mexico, Agustín Iturbide, another Spanish officer, became Emperor after an abortive revolt begun by the priest Miguel Hidalgo.

### ***ETHNIC HERITAGE***

There are significant differences among immigrants to the United States from the various American Republics because of their geographical differences, principal resources, locations and the percentage of their indigenous population.

Argentina has had a very small indigenous population since the end of the 19th century and is largely of Spanish, Italian or other European origin, as is Uruguay. Bolivia has a high percentage of people who speak their indigenous languages and Spanish as a second language. Similar native influence can be found in Peru and Ecuador, while Chile is largely of European heritage. Colombia has a significant indigenous population, although its countryside and many cities contain those of European heritage and mixed-race, or *mestizo*, populations.

The populations of Venezuela and Paraguay are mixed to a degree not seen in much of the Americas. The countries that border the Caribbean have substantial numbers of descendents of African slaves, usually near the coast, and citizens of mixed African, indigenous and Spanish ancestry abound. The Caribbean islands, such as the Dominican Republic, are largely of African descent. Cuba had a substantial population of European heritage prior to the Castro government, but many of those who could leave have done so. Central America has many citizens of mixed race, usually indigenous and Spanish, but also African, as well as pockets of mostly indigenous and some largely of European origin. Mexico has all of the above.

## ***RELIGION***

Freedom of religion is a right guaranteed by law in Spain, all the Republics of the Americas, Mexico and Puerto Rico. Approximately 80 - 90 percent of South and Central Americans, Mexicans and Puerto Ricans are Roman Catholic. Cubans are probably the least religious and most secular because of Communism, although at least 50 percent have been baptized in the Catholic Church.

In South American countries, a percentage of people tend to preserve their allegiance to the old gods of their indigenous beliefs and may mix those beliefs with Roman Catholicism. Although still a minority in the Americas, denominations from the United States such as the Mormons, Seventh Day Adventists, Jehovah's Witnesses and other Protestant fundamentalist sects have begun to dramatically increase the number of Christians who do not identify themselves as Roman Catholics. There are Jewish communities in Spain and all over the Americas, notably in Argentina, Colombia and Mexico. Muslims have also moved to the Americas in recent years.

## ***FAMILY***

Families are important and tend to be very close. Generally the eldest male is considered the head of the family and is respected and expected to provide support to its members. Although fathers are generally most prominent in their roles, mothers have traditionally made decisions regarding child rearing and the home.

Surnames are taken differently in Spanish-speaking countries than they are in English-speaking countries. Generally children are given the surnames of both parents. Married women tend to keep their maiden names, while adult males tend to use their fathers' surnames. There is a great deal of variety, which can lead to confusion with record keeping. If clarification is needed, ask.

Families in urban areas tend to have two children, while those in rural areas have three to four. Even in urban areas, where the nuclear family is the norm, relatives tend to be supportive of one another and remain connected.

Children often live with their parents until they marry. This is changing somewhat as in Ecuador and Colombia, where children who want to attend college or university in urban centers leave their parents' home but tend to live with family members. In Cuba and Peru, a newly married couple will continue to live with their parents because of critical housing shortages or poor standards of living. In Puerto Rico, parents regard it as their responsibility to support their children financially and emotionally through life. On the other hand, it is expected in almost all societies for children to care for their elderly parents. In Puerto Rico, nursing homes are relied upon more now than in the past.

It is still common for the extended family to reside together in Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay and Venezuela, sometimes including four generations which live on the same farm or in the same home.

Women are working outside the home more, especially in urban areas. They represent one third of the work force in most countries and one half of the workforce in Venezuela.

Divorce rates are consistently low due to the influence of the Catholic Church. Common-law marriage tends to be common in Bolivia and Venezuela, especially in the rural areas.

Many immigrants to the United States send significant portions of their incomes to families they have left at home, and they plan to return when they have earned enough money to do so. Others spend a great deal of money to bring their family members to the United States.

### ***EDUCATION AND LITERACY***

Literacy rates range from 97 to 67 percent. These numbers reflect the people over the age of 15 who can read and write. The highest literacy rates are in Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Spain and Uruguay, which are all over 95 percent.

In countries with substantial groups of indigenous people, such as Bolivia, Colombia, Guatemala, Mexico, and Paraguay, literacy rates for indigenous people are approximately 40 percent. Efforts have been made recently, especially in Bolivia, to provide bilingual classes in the indigenous language and Spanish, where before Spanish was the only language of instruction. Likewise, countries with low literacy rates in their rural areas, such as Peru and El Salvador, have recently made a concentrated effort to expand the number of schools to reach both the rural and indigenous people.

Education in most countries is compulsory for the first six grades and through age 14 in others. Schooling is government sponsored and free. Cuba, El Salvador and Uruguay even provide post-graduate and doctoral education for free. Parochial schools, which are numerous throughout the area, may be subsidized by the government, as in Argentina. Education is generally viewed as a way to a better life, and to that end Costa Rica spends one half of its national budget on education. It has one of the finest urban education systems and four international education centers.

On the other hand, many countries like the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama are still struggling with the need for adequate school buildings, more teachers and a generally higher standard of living. Children often drop out of school because of transportation, work or family responsibilities. Schools often require families to pay for transportation, uniforms, books, and other supplies which they often can not afford. In Guatemala, for instance, one half of primary school children attend school.

Cubans, in contrast, have a government sponsored educational system from preschool through university level, with one teacher for every 45 citizens. Puerto Rico's educational system is the same as in the United States. A high school diploma is necessary to attain a good job and therefore there is a very low drop out rate. Young Puerto Ricans have a much higher literacy rate than other adults. In Spain, the government instituted educational reforms which added more vocational and special-education schools and improved teacher training. Vocational schools in Spain have seen a higher proportion of their graduates become employed than university graduates.

As can be seen in the above discussion, literacy rates and educational opportunities vary enormously from country to country and within a country itself. Therefore, assessing a student's ability to read and write is one of the first essential steps in the ESOL orientation process.

### ***GESTURES, PERSONAL SPACE COURTESIES***

It is common in almost all Spanish-speaking countries for people speaking to each other to stand close to one another when talking. This is sometimes combined with gestures and physical contact, such as tapping the arm. In addition, using hand gestures is an expected part of conversation. Gestures may not always be accompanied with words. In some circles, however, using excessive hand gestures is not acceptable, but others say they would not be able to express themselves without using hand gestures.

Interrupting is not considered impolite in most countries except in Colombia. Engaging in an overlapping conversation in which people talk over one another is not only common, but it is part of the good-natured spirit of a lively conversation. Indigenous people are more reserved and may touch their cheek or mouth when speaking

Finger pointing may be misunderstood and considered vulgar or impolite. Instead of pointing with the finger, the lips or chin are used to point. Beckoning to someone is usually done with the palm facing downward and the fingers moving back and forth in unison

Eye contact is generally expected and considered courteous. Lack of eye contact indicates that one can not be trusted, is suspicious or shy. In some situations, lack of eye contact expresses deference to another, as in a child to a parent or teacher.

Politeness and chivalry are common; it is important to say thank you for any favor or business transaction. Men usually give their seats on public transportation to women and the elderly; deference to elders is extremely important in all cultures.

### ***GREETINGS***

Each country has its own manner of greeting with accompanying gestures. The *abrazo*, usually between men who are close friends, is common but varies depending on the country. It is usually a handshake, then a hug and kiss on or near the cheek. In Venezuela, this is accompanied with a pat on the back. In Bolivia, close friends hug and pat one another on the shoulder.

In most countries a firm handshake is the acceptable greeting; however, in Spain, a kiss on the cheek is traditional between men and women even when being introduced by a friend for the first time. A hand shake and nod to show respect when first introduced is expected in Mexico and Argentina.

Another common gesture is a kiss on the cheek or both cheeks for both men and women, as in Bolivia, Peru and Colombia. In Puerto Rico, close female friends or friends of the opposite sex hold one another's shoulders and kiss on the cheek. In Ecuador, close friends touch cheeks in an "air kiss" and men often embrace.

When saying goodbye, the same gesture is often repeated as when greeting one another.

## ***TIME***

In Puerto Rico, Mexico, Central and South America and Spain, the concept of time is more relaxed than in North America. The belief that people are more important than schedules is held in all countries. Therefore, a 30-minute delay may be common and should not be considered impolite. This attitude is changing in urban areas where punctuality may be admired but not strictly observed. The degree of formality of the event, however, may dictate the degree of punctuality: the more important the event, the more punctual the participants.

Even in more cosmopolitan centers, such as Buenos Aires, where there is more concern with schedules and time, personal relationships still take precedence over a schedule. People tend to be more relaxed about time and schedules than North Americans. In fact, North Americans' desire to remain on schedule may be misunderstood as not caring about relationships.

The Spanish concept of "honor" has little to do with honorable behavior and is similar to the contemporary concept of "respect." Demonstration of "honor" toward a person requires not making eye contact with superiors. Teachers and other authority figures have confused this behavior with guilt, but it is very common in the behavior of students toward teachers.

## ***WORK WEEK AND HOLIDAYS***

It is traditional in Spain for businesses to be closed during the hottest part of the day, and some American republics preserve that tradition. A typical business day begins at about 9 or 10 a.m. and extends until 1 p.m., at which time people go to lunch. Business resumes at about 4 p.m. and continues until 9 or often 10 p.m.

Many national and local festivals are based on the Roman Catholic faith. Most notable are the Day of the Dead and the Day of the Virgin Guadalupe in Mexico, the celebration in most countries of *Carnaval* and the various local festivals in which towns honor their patron saints. Every country also observes one or more national days. For example, Argentina and Mexico both have two independence days, and Puerto Rico celebrates both local and United States holidays.

## ***WHAT TERM TO USE***

A variety of terms are used by and for people of the Spanish-speaking community. "Hispanic" is a term developed by the U.S. Census for demographic purposes. Many people who might otherwise be classified as "Hispanic" prefer terms such as "Latino" or "Chicano" or national references such as "Cubano."

## SPANISH - LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION

Spanish is the native language of over 300 million people and is the fourth most spoken language worldwide. Some consider it the second most important language after English, due to its wide distribution and influence on the global market and in international politics. It is the official language of Spain and 19 other countries including Cuba, the Dominican Republic, countries in South and Central America and of Spanish territories in Africa. Mexico has the largest Spanish-speaking population, followed by Colombia, Spain and the United States. There are over 30 million first language Spanish speakers in the United States and Spanish enjoys co-official status with English in New Mexico.

Spanish originated on the Iberian Peninsula when its people who spoke a form of Celtic learned Latin from Roman traders and soldiers. The language further evolved when Arabic-speaking Moors from North Africa dominated most of the area, with the exception of the north where Latin was maintained. A dialect called "Mozarabic" came to be spoken by most of Islamic Spain. It is estimated that today over 4,000 Spanish words have Arabic origins, many of which begin with "al."

When the Northern Christian kingdoms overtook Moorish Spain, Latin and the Castilian dialect gained a foothold and spread south and east. The standardization of Castilian Spanish began in the 1200s and has over time become the modern standard Spanish of today.

Dialects and variations of Spanish are numerous. Within Spain there are as many as five regional dialects, but the majority of Spaniards can understand and speak Standard Spanish. In the Americas, the varieties of Spanish differ mostly in regional vocabulary which reflects the languages of indigenous people and are found in proper names and words for plants, animals and geographic features. Spanish in the United States reflects early Spanish exploration and settlements in what is now Arizona, Southern Colorado and California, as well as immigration from the Americas, Guam, the Philippines and Puerto Rico.

Languages within Spain other than Spanish are mainly Euskara, spoken by the Basque people on the Spanish-French border, Catalan, spoken on the north eastern coast and finally Galician, spoken on the border with Portugal in the northwest.

## A. SYNTAX and GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. Usually **descriptive adjectives** follow the nouns they modify.
2. **Adjectives** and **articles** must agree in gender and number with the nouns they modify.
3. There is no neuter in Spanish. Since the word “car” is masculine, its corresponding pronoun is “he.” Since the word “pen” is feminine, its corresponding pronoun is “she.”
4. In a **question** or an **exclamation**, the punctuation both precedes AND follows the statement: ...! ...?
5. All **vowels** are pronounced.

## B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. There are **no voiceless consonant blends beginning with “S”**; consequently, an “e” sound will precede these blends.  
**street > estreet; school > eschool**
2. There is no **SH** sound. It becomes **CH**.  
**shoe > choe**
3. The letters **R** and **RR** are formed in the front of the mouth and are trilled.
4. The letter **H** has no sound. The letter **J** always carries the **H** sound as does **G** before the vowels **E** or **I**.
5. The sound **TH** exists in Spanish, but the letters **TH** are never used together. **D** will have the **TH** sound wherever possible in a Spanish sentence. In Spanish, **Z** and **C** (before **E** or **I**) carry the sound **TH**.
6. In many cases **V** will sound like a soft **B** sound.  
**have > hab**

### Loanwords

alligator  
barbecue  
canoe  
chocolate  
renegade  
rumba

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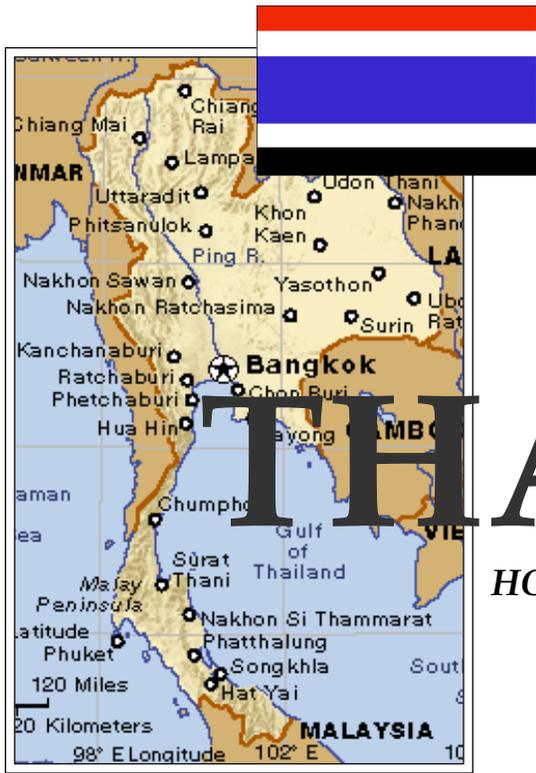
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*My Notes . . .*



# THAILAND

**HOLIDAYS** - During the Thai New Year, people throw buckets of water on one another and enjoy many parties. On National Children's Day, schools in Thailand close, and children enjoy festivals and parties. Many important religious holidays are celebrated throughout the Thai year, all marking important events in Buddhism's history.

**GESTURES** - Posture and physical gestures say a great deal about one's view of others. Thai people consider it extremely rude to cross the ankle over the knee while sitting. In Thailand, it is offensive to pass an item using the left hand, and it is especially rude to pass an object over another person's head. Thais often use their chin to point. Placing your arm over the back of a chair in which another person is sitting and patting someone on the shoulder are both gestures considered offensive by Thais.

**FAMILY** - Several generations live in the traditional Thai household. The typical Thai family has about three children. The parents support the children until they are married, and then the children must provide for their elderly parents. Polygamy was practiced in Thailand until 1935. The youngest daughter of a household inherits the family home and assets.

**EDUCATION** - Education in Thailand is highly regarded and compulsory. Children receive free schooling for nine years. Attending a university is determined by examination; however, there is a great deal of competition for limited space. In Thailand, marriage is discouraged until education is complete.

**PERSONAL SPACE/COURTESIES** - As in many Asian nations, the Thai consider a person's head to be sacred. It is considered extremely rude to point the bottoms of the feet at another person. Standing directly in front of a Buddha statue or monk is sacrilegious to a Thai person, and women must never touch images of Buddha. Thais always avoid stepping on doorsills when entering a room.

**ETHNIC GROUPS** - Thai - 75 percent; Chinese - 14 percent; other -11 percent

**RELIGION** - Theravada Buddhist - 95 percent; Muslim -4 percent; Christian and other - 1 percent

## THAI LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION

Standard Thai, sometimes referred to as Siamese, is based on the dialect of Bangkok and the Central Plain of the Kingdom of Thailand. It is the dialect taught in schools and used in the media and government. Other dialects of Thai are spoken regionally and are divided into Northern, Northeastern and Southern Thai. The regional dialects are mutually intelligible and, because the central government's literacy program has been so successful, young people these days are bi-dialectical, meaning they speak and can function in both Standard Thai and their regional dialect. It is estimated that of the 60 million Thai people, one half speak Standard Thai at home, at school and in business, while the remaining half speak a regional dialect or other language such as Lao, Khmer, Hmong or Malay. Abroad there are large groups of Thai speakers in the United Arab Emirates, Singapore, Canada, Vietnam and the United States. Los Angeles, Chicago, New York and Washington D.C. have significant numbers of Thai speakers where professionals such as doctors, nurses and engineers have settled.

Thai is a tonal language of five tones, each of which is attached to a syllable and changes the meaning of a word. The tones are mid-level, low-level, falling from high to low, high-level/slight rise and rising from low to high.

The Thai script-like alphabet is written horizontally from left to right with no spaces separating words. Spaces that occur indicate punctuation marks as in English. There is no distinction between upper and lower case letters.

As in most Asian societies, the way one speaks to another is as critical and important as what one says. In Thai society, preserving social harmony is of the highest value. Thai people will try to avoid hurting another's feelings and smile often, which in some situations may seem inappropriate to Westerners. A smile may be a thank you, a greeting an answer to a greeting or a non-committal reply. In addition, controlling and not showing one's emotions are also highly valued.

Closely connected to maintaining social harmony is the issue of "saving face". In Thai society, protecting your own honor, dignity and self - identity and that of others around you is paramount. Open and direct confrontation, although valued in western society, is avoided at all costs by Thai people.

## A. SYNTAX AND GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. Thai has a **non-Roman alphabet**.
2. Thai has **SVO** sentence structure most of the time.
3. There are no **articles** in Thai.
4. **Nouns** in Thai have no plural forms. This concept is conveyed, instead, through the use of quantitative words which follow the nouns.  
**six pencils > pencils six    two children > child two**
5. **Adjectives** follow nouns.
6. There is no **apostrophe**. An “of” phrase shows possession.  
**My mother’s hat > the hat of my mother**
7. Because there is **no punctuation** in Thai written language, a student may have difficulty with punctuation and learning what constitutes a sentence.

## B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. Voiced **final consonants** in English are omitted. Multiple final clusters are impossible.
2. Voiceless **consonant blends** at the beginning of English words are difficult. ESL students will tend to voice them.  
**stop > sadop; spend > sabend**
3. The **TH** sound does not exist in the Thai language.
  - a. Voiceless **TH** becomes **T**. **three > tree**
  - b. Voiced initial **TH** becomes **D**. **that > dat**
  - c. Voiceless final **TH** becomes **T**. **with > wit**
4. The letter **V** has a **W** sound. **visit > wisit**
5. The letters **R** and **L** are interchanged because they sound the same.  
**free > flee; fly > fry**
6. **CH** sounds like **SH**.  
**cheep > sheep**

### Loanwords

bangle  
bungalow  
cushy  
dungaree  
khaki  
pajamas  
verandah

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*My Notes . . .*

# TURKEY



**HOLIDAYS** – National Sovereignty Day is celebrated on April 23 and commemorates the Grand National Assembly’s inauguration in 1923. Turkish Muslims celebrate the month of *Ramadan* by fasting from dawn until dusk. Ramadan is followed by *Seker Bayrami* - “sugar holiday” - in which Muslims eat sweets for three days in celebration of the end of fasting.

**GESTURES** – Turks generally gesture a great deal while conversing; their hand movements often add meaning and emphasis to a conversation. It is extremely offensive to point the sole of the foot toward another person. It is also seen as an insult to pass an item with the left hand, or to cross one’s legs in front of an older or more senior person. The “tch” sound means “no” in Turkey. Slowly tipping the head back also signifies “no.” The American “OK” gesture signifies homosexuality to a Turk.

**FAMILY** – About 40 percent of the Turkish labor force is female. Traditionally, the husband is the head of the family, and females must have approval from their husbands before pursuing work outside the home. Though banned in the 1920s, polygamy is still practiced in rural areas.

**EDUCATION** – Turkey has more than 30 government-funded universities and almost 600 specialist colleges and institutions. Primary and secondary education is free in Turkey. Schooling is available until the age of 17. A foreign language course is required for successful completion of a Turkish education.

**PERSONAL SPACE/COURTESIES** – Always ask permission before taking a photograph of a Turk. Turks do not find public displays of affection acceptable. It is also considered rude to cross the arms over the chest while conversing with another person.

**ETHNIC GROUPS** – Turkish - 80 percent, Kurdish - 20 percent

**RELIGION** – Sunni Muslims - 98 percent; Christians and Jews - .02 percent

## TURKISH LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION

Turkish is the official language of Turkey and one of the co-official languages of Cyprus, the other being Greek. Turkish is spoken today by minority groups in Bulgaria, Greece, Romania, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Cyprus and Uzbekistan. Turkish speaking “guest workers” in Germany and other European countries are estimated at about one million; the United States is home to approximately 40,000 Turkish speakers.

There are currently two major dialect groups in Turkish: Western dialects and Eastern dialects. Modern standard Turkish is based on the Istanbul dialect of Anatolian.

During the Ottoman Empire, the indigenous Turkish language was literally invaded by Persian and Arabic words and “Ottoman Turkish” became a blend of the three languages with some vocabulary and grammatical changes attached. Although Ottoman Turkish and spoken Turkish existed side by side, spoken Turkish was not studied or used in official and educated circles. During this time, the language was written in Arabic script.

In 1928, Kemal Ataturk created the Turkish Language Foundation (TDK) to systematize a “new Turkish” which was to reflect the aspirations of the new republic. The TDK purified the language by discarding all foreign words and replaced them with new Turkish counterparts. Arabic script was replaced with Roman script. Ataturk himself traveled throughout Turkey to lead a literacy crusade which in just months established new Turkish as the official language. These reforms were designed to make the language more Turkish, modern, precise and easier to learn. Today, despite great efforts to standardize the language, there still exist some differences between the vocabulary used by different generations. Those born up to the 1940s tend to still use some words with Arabic origins, while the younger generations favor using new expressions. Literacy rates are estimated at about 90 percent.

# TÜRKİYE

## A. SYNTAX AND GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. The **Roman alphabet** is used.
2. **Writing** and **reading** are done from left to right.
3. Turkish and English have many similar consonant sounds. There are very few difficulties in this area.
4. There is **no definite article** in Turkish; the number “one” may be used as an **indefinite article**.
5. **SOV** word order is most common, but other word order can be possible under specific discourse conditions.
6. Turkish has postpositions rather than **prepositions** as in English.
7. In Turkish, all **verbs** are regular.

## B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. There are **no initial consonant clusters** in Turkish. The most difficult to learn are those beginning with **S**. ESOL students will insert a vowel before or after the **S**.  
**store > istore or sitore**
2. The **TH** sound does not occur in Turkish.
  - a. Voiceless initial **TH** becomes **S** or **T**.  
**thin > sin or tin**
  - b. Voiced **TH** becomes **Z** or **D**.  
**that > zat or dat**
3. The letters **V** and **W** are confusing. **V** is especially difficult to produce before vowels. **W** is replaced by **oo** as in noon.  
**white > ooite**
4. Words ending in **B**, **D**, or **G** will be substituted with **P**, **T**, or **K** respectively.  
**nab > nap; lid > lit ; pig > pik**
5. Where **P**, **T**, or **K** occur in the middle of the word, **B**, **D**, or **G** will be substituted.  
**dipper > dibber; butter > budder; bicker > bigger**

### Loanwords

horde  
 khan  
 kiosk  
 yogurt  
 turquoise

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*My Notes . . .*

# UKRAINE

**HOLIDAYS** – New Year's is the most important holiday in Ukraine. On this holiday, people decorate fir trees and attend parties. Children go door to door during the Christmas season and receive candy in exchange for Christmas carols. On Christmas Eve, Ukrainians customarily have a 12 course meal – symbolic of the 12



apostles. Independence Day is celebrated August 24. Victory Day, which marks the end of World War II, is an extremely important day to most Ukrainians.

**GESTURES** – Ukrainians use hand gestures in moderation, and facial expressions tend to be reserved. During conversation, it is important to establish eye contact only a few times – not constantly. In Ukraine, using the index finger to point is considered rude and uncultured. Ukrainians rarely smile at strangers.

**FAMILY** – The extended family plays an important role in Ukraine. Average Ukrainian families consist of two children. Usually, both parents work outside the home. Grandparents commonly live with their adult children and provide child care. Ukrainian women are responsible for most household work, and many parents support their children until they marry.

**EDUCATION** – Education is valued in Ukraine. Children are required to attend school from ages six to fifteen. Upon completion of middle school, most Ukrainian teenagers attend high school to prepare for university education. All Ukrainian universities are located in large cities, and all require entrance exams.

**PERSONAL SPACE/COURTESIES** – Chewing gum and speaking to a superior with hands in the pockets is considered extremely rude in Ukraine. Ukrainian women expect chivalry from men. It is disrespectful for a man not to open a door for a woman.

**ETHNIC GROUPS** – Ukrainian - 77.8 percent; Russian - 17.3 percent; Belarusian, Moldovan, Crimean Tatar, Bulgarian, Hungarian, Romanian, Polish, Jewish and other - 4.9 percent.

**RELIGION** – Russian and Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Greek Catholic and Roman Catholic - 62 percent; small groups of Protestants, Jewish and unaffiliated - 38 percent

## UKRAINIAN LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION

Ukrainian is one of three East Slavic languages, the others being Russian and Belarusian. In 1991, after independence from the Soviet Union, Ukrainian was declared the official language of Ukraine. Several modern Ukrainian dialects exist: Ukrainian proper spoken in the central area and around Kiev; “Surzhyk”, a mix of Russian and Ukrainian spoken in rural areas of the east, south and center; and three sub-dialects spoken in the area of the Carpathian Mountains: Rutherfordian, Rusyn and Nash. Approximately 67 percent of the inhabitants speak Ukrainian, while 24 percent speak Russian, and the remaining small minorities speak Romanian, Polish or Hungarian.

Historically, the Ukrainian language has been influenced by those who ruled this strategically located land bordering the Black Sea. Polish and Russian had heavy influences on the language, as well as earlier Tatar and Turkish borrowings. During the Soviet era, the policy of local autonomy dictated that Ukrainian be the official language of the Ukrainian SSR, however, in actuality, Russian was more highly valued because it was the *lingua franca* throughout the Soviet Union. Expressions of Ukrainian nationalism were eventually deemed politically incorrect. Changes in Soviet policy promoted a systematic assault on Ukrainian culture and education. Russian language and literature became mandatory in schools and Ukrainian cultural institutions and publications were closed down. In areas of Ukraine where major industrialization was taking place, Russian workers migrated in great numbers, bringing with them their cultural heritage.

During the Khrushchev years, a liberal attitude toward autonomy allowed parents to enroll their children in either Ukrainian or Russian schools. Few accepted the opportunity and the study of the Ukrainian language became more a hobby than a necessary skill for future employment. After the Khrushchev years, a policy of repression of Ukrainian was again instituted. The Russian language was used in government functions, media and commerce until 1991 when independent Ukraine made Ukrainian the official language.

# Україна

# UKRAINIAN

## A. SYNTAX and GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. Ukrainian has an alphabet that is a subset of the **Cyrillic alphabet** with many letters similar to the Latin alphabet
2. There are **no articles** in Ukrainian.
3. There is no fixed **word order**.
4. Certain **sentence parts** that are necessary in English can be omitted in Ukrainian and are indicated by a dash when written or a pause in speech. Thus, "Mykola is a student." becomes "Mykola –student." The **verb** is often omitted in sentences with "this is".
5. To ask a **question** in Ukrainian, simply say the affirmative sentence, but use questioning intonation stressing the word under question. **You** study here? You **study** here? You study **here**?

## B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. Some of the letters of the Ukrainian alphabet look exactly like those of the Latin alphabet used in English, however most are pronounced differently than in English and may resemble other English sounds:
  - B** represents the sound "v" in English.
  - H** represents the sound "n."
  - P** represents the sound "r."
  - C** represents "s."
  - X** represents "h"; it is not soft but rather like "ch" in "Bach."
2. Vowels: The **vowel "i"** is pronounced like "ee" in "meet".  
The vowel **"y"** is pronounced "oo" as in "noon".

### Factoid

Since gaining its status as an independent country, Ukraine is no longer referred to as "the Ukraine". It is now properly called "Ukraine."

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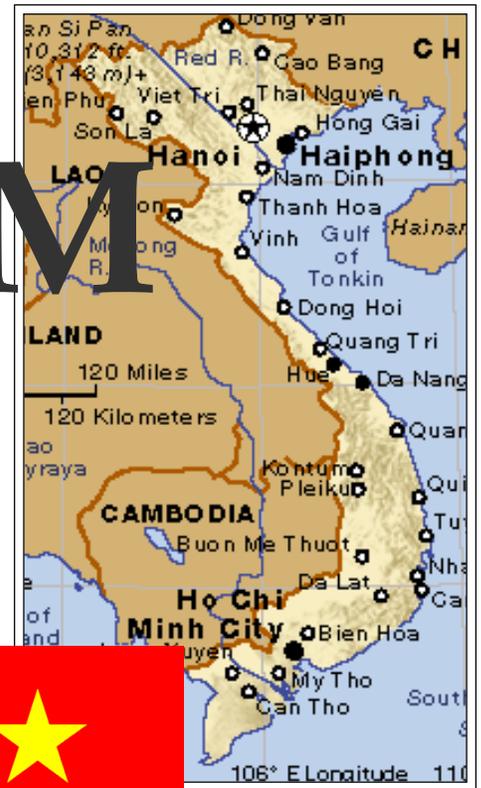
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*My Notes . . .*

# VIETNAM



**HOLIDAYS** - Celebrated in late January or early February, the Lunar New Year is the most important holiday in Vietnam. This day is celebrated by repaying debts, mending relationships and correcting one's faults. Also on this day, everyone celebrates his or her own birthday and considers him or herself another year older. September 2, National Day, commemorates the day Ho Chi Minh declared independence.



**FAMILY** - Traditionally, the youngest son inherits the family household and is responsible for caring for the elderly parents. Extended families play a large role in Vietnamese culture; aunts, uncles and cousins provide support as needed. A great emphasis is placed on family hierarchy. Men and women share the household and financial responsibilities; both husband and wife usually have jobs. However, men are traditionally considered the authority.

**GESTURES** - It is considered extremely rude to beckon another person using the index finger. Instead, all four fingers are waved with the palm held down. The Vietnamese prefer to communicate verbally; thus hand gestures and body movements are uncommon. It is rude to cross the index and middle fingers.

**EDUCATION** - Primary education begins at age five and is free to all Vietnamese children. The Vietnamese school week is Monday through Saturday. The Vietnamese education system is based upon repetition and memorization. A great deal of competition exists for a University education; space is extremely limited. However, University education is free to those who qualify.

**PERSONAL SPACE/COURTESIES** - To the Vietnamese, the head is the body's most spiritual point. Thus, it is inappropriate to touch another person's head. Both hands are used when passing an object to another person. Vietnamese consider showing affection in public to be in poor taste.

**ETHNIC GROUPS** - Vietnamese - 85-90 percent; Chinese, Hmong, Thai, Khmer, Cham, mountain groups - 10-15 percent

**RELIGION**- Buddhist - 55 percent; Taoist - 12 percent; Roman Catholic - 8 percent; Muslim - 1 percent

## VIETNAMESE LINGUISTIC DESCRIPTION

Vietnamese is spoken by approximately 59 million people in Vietnam and by ethnic minorities who live in the surrounding countries of Laos, Cambodia and Thailand. There are significant immigrant groups of Vietnamese speakers in the United States, France, Canada, Australia, Senegal and the Ivory Coast.

Vietnamese is a tonal language with six tones which means a specific word can be pronounced six different ways and have six different meanings.

Vietnamese is the official language of Vietnam, but it did not become so until the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Chinese was used for many centuries under Chinese rule, supplanting the native Vietnamese language in the area which is now Vietnam. The Chinese writing system was later adapted by Buddhist priests to write Vietnamese in “cho nom”, in which a combination of characters was used, one to give the meaning and the other to indicate pronunciation. As contacts were made with the West in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, attempts were made to Romanize the alphabet, but such a system, known as “chu quoc ngu” was not officially adopted until much later. When the French colonized Vietnam in the late 1800s, the French language became the standard for government, business and education. Finally, after the end of the French colonial regime after World War II, Vietnamese with its Romanized alphabet became the official language.

Vietnam’s three main regional dialects differ mainly in tone, pronunciation and local vocabulary. They represent the Hanoi dialect (Northern Vietnamese), Hue dialect (Central Vietnamese) and Saigon dialect (Southern Vietnamese).

The Vietnamese language has a system of honorific pronouns which are more like forms of address. These pronouns depend upon the age, sex and social position of the person one is addressing and the relationship, whether close or distant, that one has with that person. Vietnamese students may have difficulty adjusting to the lack of honorific terminology in English.

“Saving face”, not bringing attention to one’s self, and having a high regard for other’s feelings are highly valued in Vietnamese society. Therefore, Vietnamese students may not ask or answer questions as they may be too embarrassed to do so.

# Việt Nam

# VIETNAMESE

## A. SYNTAX and GRAMMAR DIFFERENCES

1. Vietnamese differs from many Asian languages because it uses the **Roman alphabet** and it is written and read **from left to right**.
2. There are six voice tones in the Vietnamese language and all words are **monosyllabic**.
3. Vietnamese is patterned like Spanish and Portuguese in **syntax, vowel usage** and **word order**; **adjectives** follow nouns.
4. There are no **plural noun endings**.

## B. POSSIBLE PRONUNCIATION DIFFICULTIES

1. Pronunciation may be choppy for ESOL students because the English language has so many words of more than one syllable.
2. The **TH** sound is difficult.
  - a. Voiceless initial **TH** can become **T** or **S**.  
**think > tink or sink**
  - b. Voiced initial **TH** can become **Z**.  
**that > zat**
3. **CH** has the **Sh** sound.  
**cheep > sheep**
4. The **L** can have the sound of **R**.  
**load > road**
5. The letter **D** is confusing. It may be replaced by **J, Y, or Z**.  
**dig > zig; jig > yig or zig**

### Factoid

Repeating a part of a word to create a new word is common in Vietnamese. The meaning of the new word is different from the original.

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*My Notes . . .*

## WHILE WE WERE PRINTING . . .

We acknowledge that our world is always changing and therefore we must constantly be updating our information. To that end, we are sending you the following information to add to *On Speaking and Cultural Terms*.

# MONTENEGRO

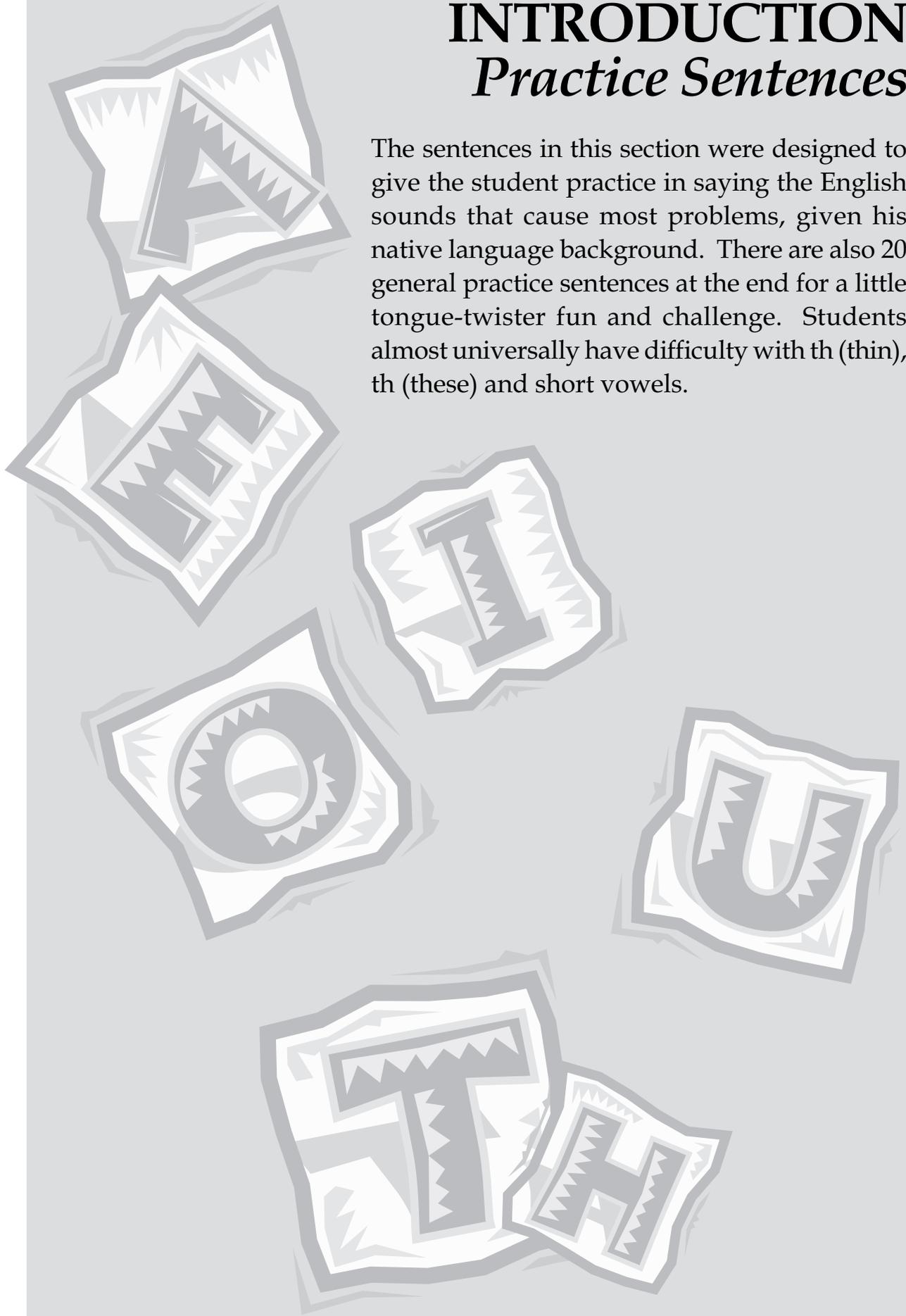
As this edition of *On Speaking and Cultural Terms* was being printed, Montenegro declared its independence from Serbia. (See pages 87 - 90.) The vote held on April 22, 2006 was 55.5% for independence. Montenegro's independence was made official on June 3, 2006. Montenegro has already been recognized by the European Union, the United States and a host of other countries. It will become the 192nd member of the United Nations. 6/06



# INTRODUCTION

## *Practice Sentences*

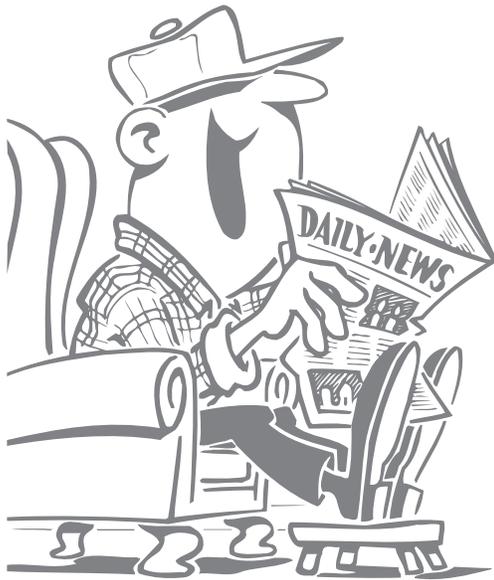
The sentences in this section were designed to give the student practice in saying the English sounds that cause most problems, given his native language background. There are also 20 general practice sentences at the end for a little tongue-twister fun and challenge. Students almost universally have difficulty with th (thin), th (these) and short vowels.





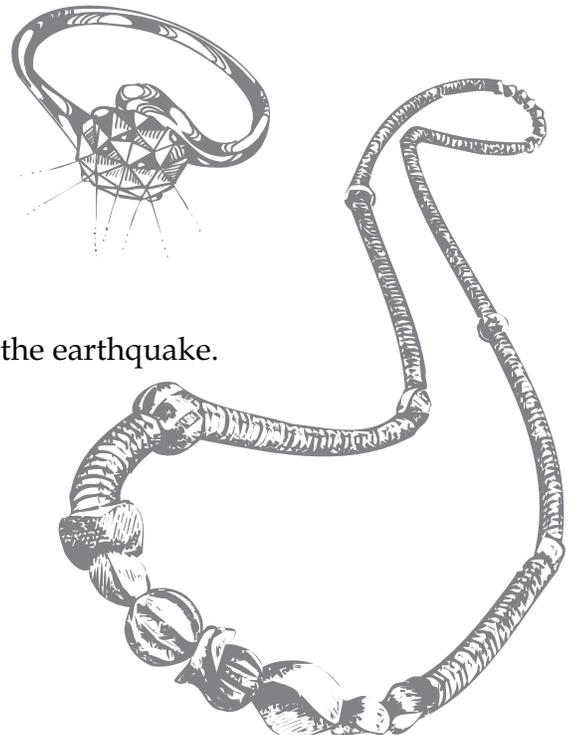
# ALBANIAN

## *Difficult Sounds*



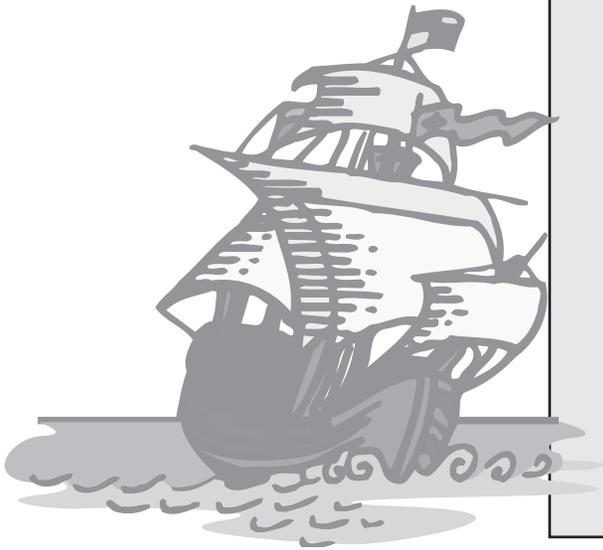
c	(cat)
i	(sit)
j	(joy)
q	(quiet)

1. Carrying coal is back-breaking work.
2. The kitchen cook quickly cut a piece of chicken.
3. Cathy carries both cash and credit cards.
4. Is it difficult?
5. Bill lives in the middle of the city.
6. Phil will sit still and take his pill.
7. George enjoys jokes.
8. Julie's jewelry is gorgeous.
9. The queen's quail quivered quietly during the earthquake.
10. Georgia's peaches are big and juicy.



# ARABIC

## *Difficult Sounds*



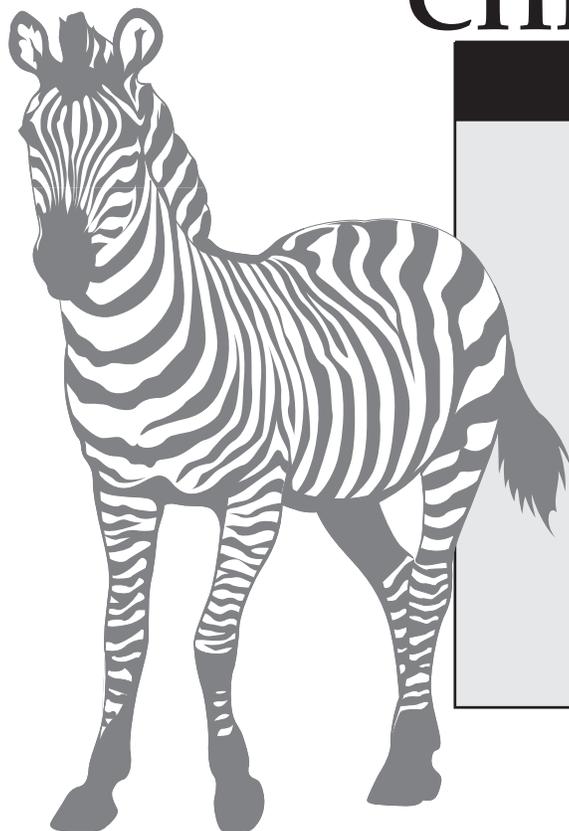
ch	(chin)	th	(thin)
g	(go)	th	(then)
ng	(ring)	a	(man)
p	(pot)	e	(egg)
r	(red)	i	(sit)
sh	(ship)	o	(hot)
t	(ten)	u	(up)

1. Ted had better head west.
2. Put the peeled potatoes in a pot.
3. She is doing the washing this morning.
4. The boys enjoy their toys.
5. It's a pleasure to meet you.
6. Richard is roller skating with Chuck this Thursday.
7. Gigantic garlic and green grapes grow in the garden.
8. I sing songs every evening in Spring.
9. The three brothers' birthdays are this month.
10. Charlie's dishes were chipped when they arrived at the china shop.



# CHINESE - Mandarin

## *Difficult Sounds*



th (think)

th (this)

l (low)

r (rose)

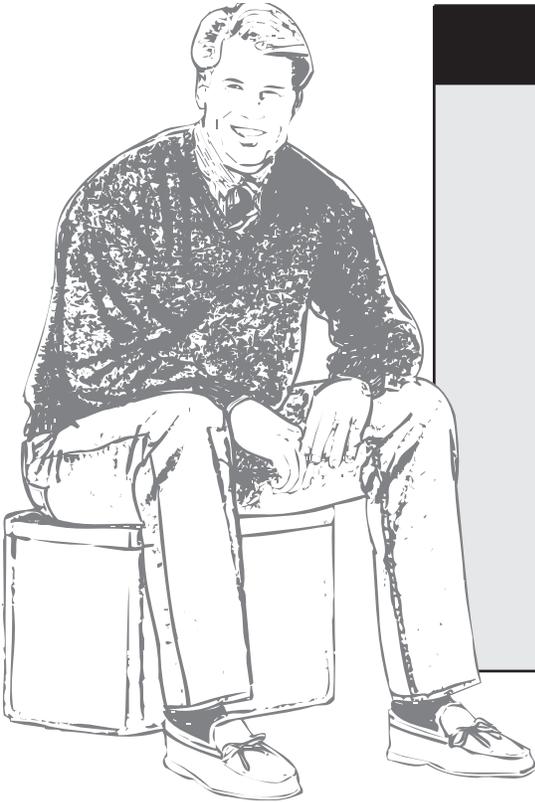
z (zebra)

1. He thanked both of us for everything.
2. I think the thimbles will fit my thumb.
3. Neither brother likes this weather.
4. The father and mother would rather go together.
5. Laws don't allow pets loose in public places.
6. Michelle has the most beautiful smile in the world.
7. Knowing right from wrong is important.
8. Gregory and his brother really like rock-and-roll music.
9. Zak uses his razor on his fuzzy face.
10. Zebras always are grazing at the zoo.



# CHINESE - Cantonese

## *Difficult Sounds*



n (name)

v (very)

i (sit)

u (up)

oo (boot)

e (seen)

1. No news is good news.
2. Nick never wears new neckties.
3. Love me or leave me.
4. Very careful drivers avoid swerving into curves.
5. Bill lives in the middle of the city.
6. Is it difficult?
7. The ugly mutt jumped into the mud puddle.
8. Honey buns cost too much money.
9. She is wearing cute boots.
10. Sleet falls every week in January.



# CROATIAN

## *Difficult Sounds*



c	(cent) always soft	a	(man)
r	(red)	e	(egg)
th	(thin)	i	(sit)
th	(then)	o	(hot)
w	(water)	u	(up)

1. Zach has a black cat.
2. We got the best egg from the red hen.
3. Max hums happily along with the music.
4. Put the poster up on the other wall.
5. In winter, the wind whistles from the west.
6. Both boxes arrived on Thursday, not Tuesday.
7. Thelma thinks these things through.
8. Please put the lid on that pot.
9. They stopped and picked up better vegetables.
10. They met the photographer at the theater.



# CZECH

## *Difficult Sounds*

j (jet)

ng (ring)

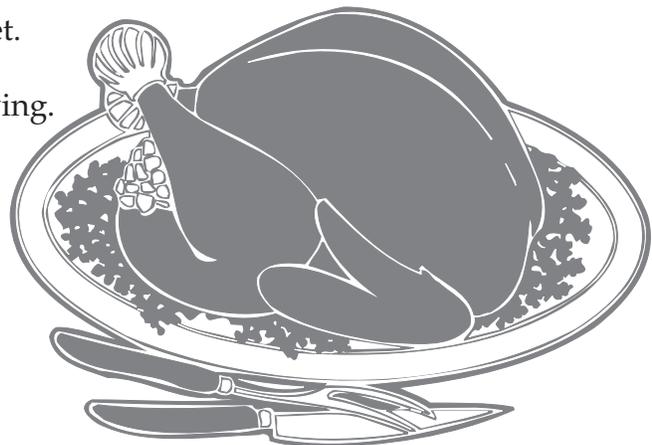
th (thin)

th (then)

w (water)

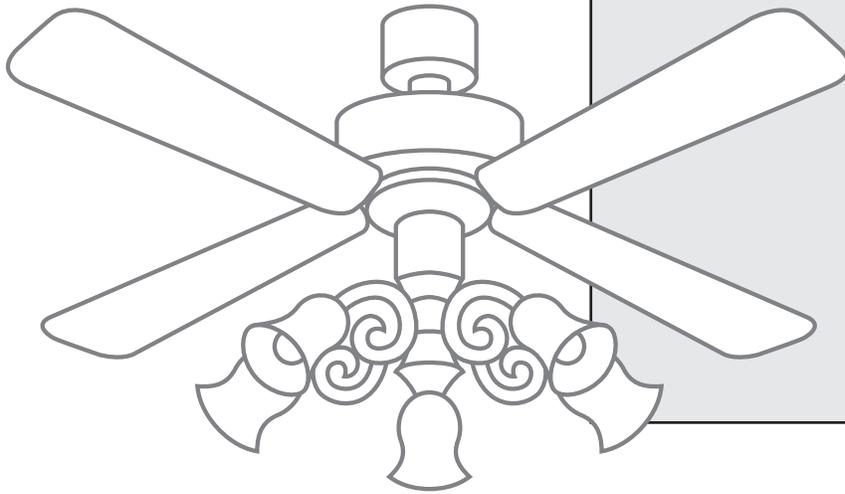


1. The fat cat sat on Father's hat.
2. Let the yellow Jell-O set.
3. Which way will Willy wander?
4. The King heard the gong ring.
5. The birds sang and fanned their wings.
6. Just the edge of the page was damaged.
7. "Dad," "father" and "pa" mean the same thing.
8. Jimmy saw the vet get the Jack Rabbit wet.
9. Stuffed turkey is a favorite for Thanksgiving.
10. Thelma thinks these thighs are thin.



# FILIPINO (TAGALOG)

## *Difficult Sounds*



f (fan)

j (jet)

v (vote)

th (thin)

th (then)

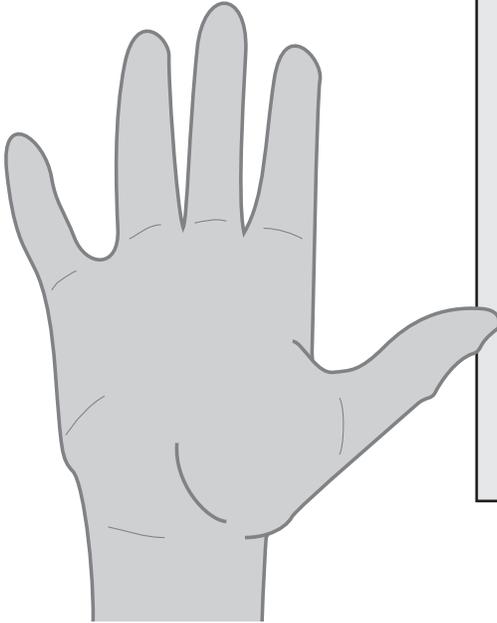
z (zoo)

1. Visitors favor the vast valley.
2. John enjoys George's jokes.
3. Is this his business?
4. Fat fish find fresh food.
5. Thelma thinks these things through.
6. I fly my kite on Friday night.
7. Zelda's jazz band needs some pizzazz.
8. Vivian buys very big vitamins.
9. Did you pick this big gift?
10. Five very heavy waves covered the victims.



# FRENCH

## *Difficult Sounds*



ch	(chin)	t	(tent) final
h	(hand)	th	(thin)
j	(jet)	th	(then)
ng	(ring)	e	(egg)
r	(red)	i	(sit)
s	(pots) final	u	(up)
t	(jacket) final after vowel		

1. Who took the history book?
2. Have a happy thirtieth birthday.
3. George is a judge.
4. The boys enjoy their choice of toys.
5. Would you tell us how long the line is?
6. Swimming and sailing are enjoyable things.
7. Charles cashes his check each Thursday.
8. Thelma thinks these things through.
9. Susan thanked him for the theater tickets.
10. Jack usually chooses orange juice and vegetables for lunch.



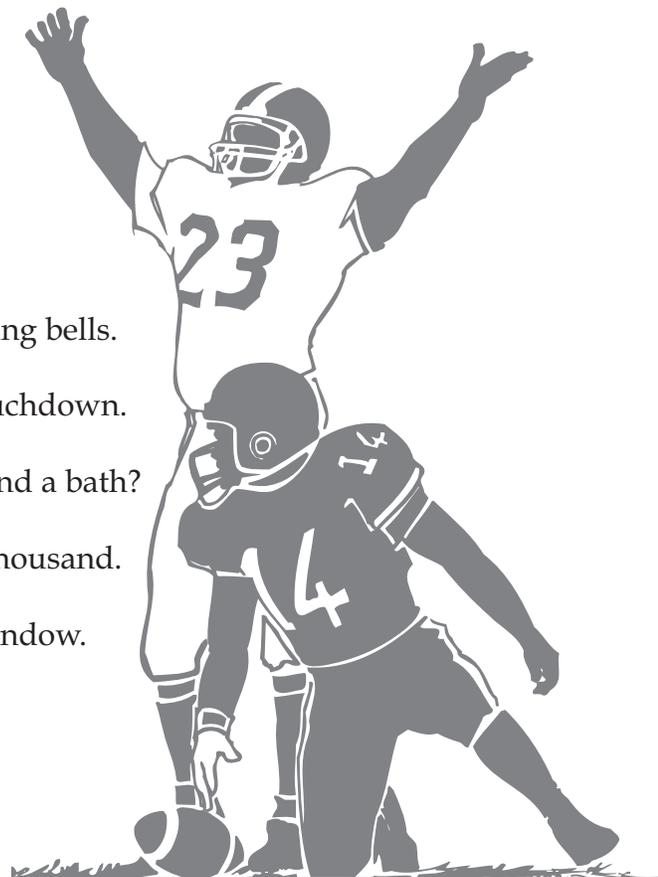
# GERMAN

## *Difficult Sounds*



b, d, g	(tab, bad, bag) final
ng	(ring)
s	(sad) plus vowels
s	(spot, stop, slow) plus p, t, l
th	(thin)
th	(then)
w	(water)

1. John is going swimming.
2. This was Steve's razor.
3. Join the youth group.
4. Slowly step onto the street.
5. Which way will we walk?
6. The women's choir is singing with the ringing bells.
7. The coach watched the Chargers score a touchdown.
8. Does her apartment have three bedrooms and a bath?
9. Heather says there are three zeroes in one thousand.
10. Mr. Smith slowly scraped snow from his window.



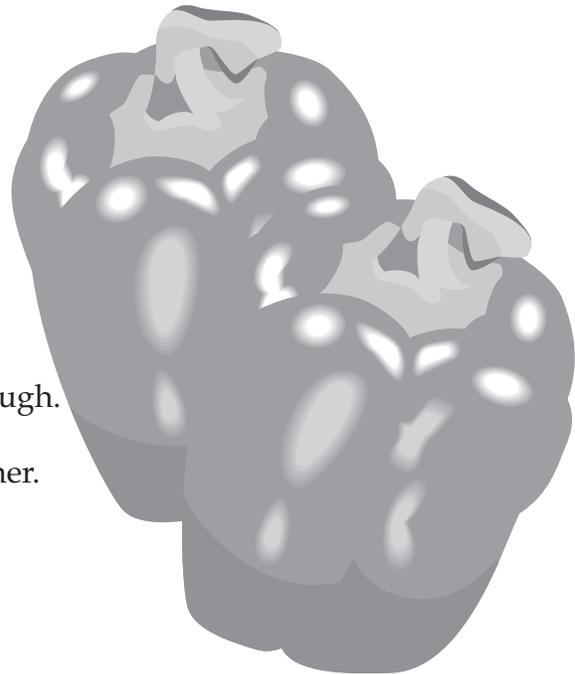


# HINDI

## *Difficult Sounds*

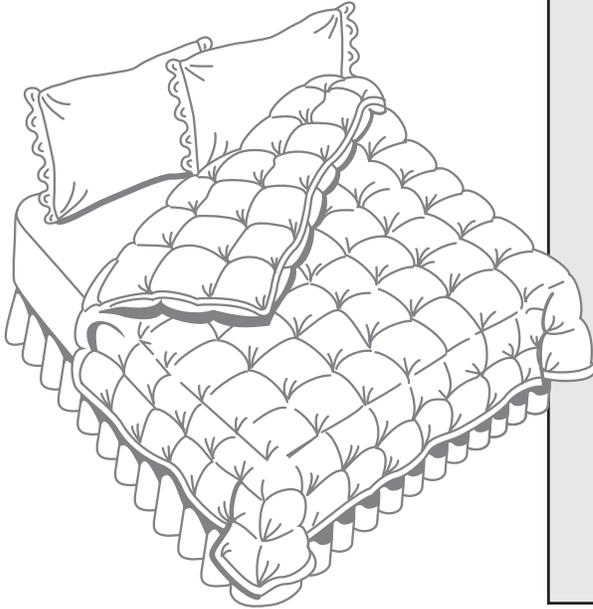
ch	(chin)	w	(water)
f	(foot)	x	(extra)
ng	(ring)	a	(man)
p	(pot)	e	(egg)
q	(queen)	i	(sit)
th	(thin)	o	(hot)
th	(then)	u	(up)
v	(vote)		

1. Peter picked purple plums.
2. Frank fixes fine furniture.
3. Bring the ping pong ball.
4. Set those three thick tree trunks on the truck.
5. Chelsea shouldn't choose chocolate shakes.
6. Which show will we watch?
7. Put the pot of peppers on the back porch.
8. Martha thoroughly thought these things through.
9. I wouldn't want to wear wool in warm weather.
10. Does he pet the cat on the head or the back?



# HMONG

## *Difficult Sounds*



b	(boy)	th	(thin)
d	(dog)	th	(then)
d	(bed) final	w	(water)
k	(kind)	a	(man)
k	(sack) final	e	(egg)
p	(pot)	i	(sit)
p	(map) final	o	(hot)
t	(ten)	u	(up)
t	(pet) final		

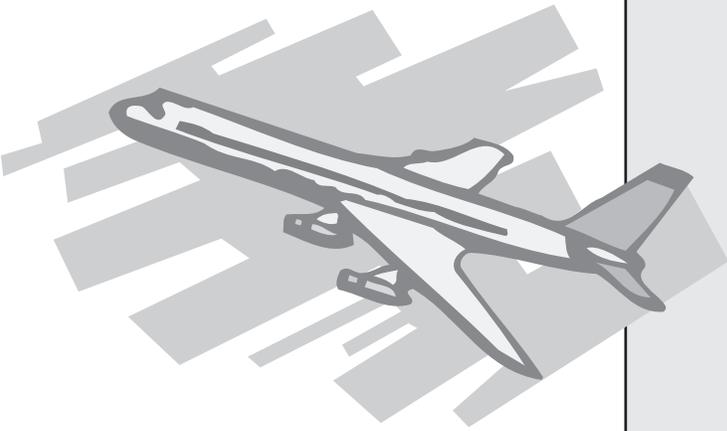
1. Cats are the best pets.
2. Elizabeth won three prizes.
3. What size is the garage?
4. I will leave at twelve o'clock.
5. Bob read the paper to Dick.
6. The weather is bad through the winter.
7. I rarely go there.
8. Bring the broom into the other room.
9. Beth gave me big blue violets.
10. Bob said he would take a walk this evening.



# HUNGARIAN

## *Difficult Sounds*

j	(jet)	a	(saw)
r	(red)	e	(egg)
th	(thin)	i	(sit)
th	(then)	o	(hot)
w	(water)	u	(up)
a	(man)	u	(cute)



1. Jane jumps for joy.
2. This leather is smooth.
3. Which way is Washington?
4. Matthew has three brothers.
5. Park Jerry's car near the yard.
6. Have you used these new running shoes?
7. Robert rode the red raft in the river.
8. That fat cat sat at the back of that very hat rack.
9. Willy wondered why Warren's watch was wet.
10. Thelma thoroughly thanked thirty thin weathermen.



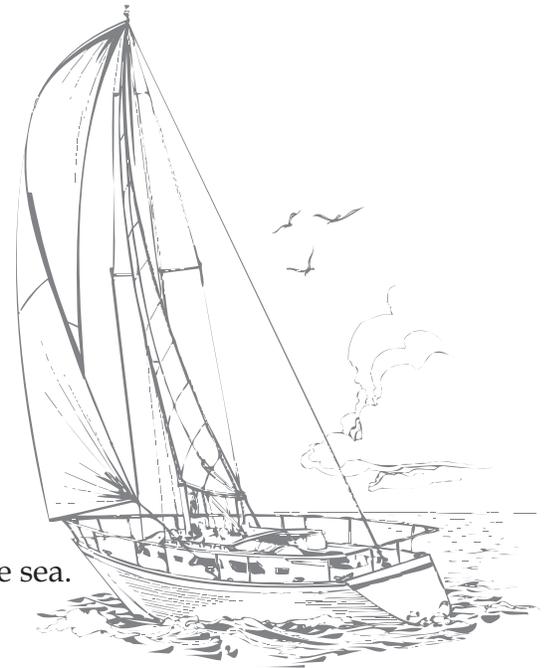
# JAPANESE

## *Difficult Sounds*



c	(cent)
l	(lip)
r	(red)
th	(thin)
th	(then)
v	(vote)
w	(water)

1. Matt sat near the pet cat.
2. That thin man is Arthur.
3. Carol carries cartons of crackers.
4. We want to wash in warm water.
5. Gil likes lots of little clams.
6. Cheryl wears pearl jewelry.
7. Sue said she sees the sailboat in the center of the sea.
8. Ruth's thirteenth birthday is April third.
9. Valerie ran to the grocery store for celery.
10. The doctor urged her to leave work early.



# KOREAN

## *Difficult Sounds*



b	(boy)
h	(hope)
j	(jet)
l	(lip)
r	(read)
th	(thin)
th	(then)
w	(water)

1. Show me the saw.
2. Let's all listen.
3. Barbara's baby boy is beautiful.
4. Those three men are his brothers.
5. Larry plays Little League baseball.
6. Jeb just jumped into the Jeep.
7. The heavy handle hit Harold's head.
8. The willow leans slightly to the left.
9. Blend blueberries and butter in the batter.
10. Jan's car is parked near the curb on Brown Drive.



# LAO

## *Difficult Sounds*



a	man
o	not
d	dog
p	pot
ph	phone
t	ten
th	both
v	visit

1. Zach has a fat cat.
2. Beth visited Phillip.
3. Both vines produce grapes for jam.
4. The sad man vanished last Thursday.
5. The clock stopped last night.
6. The chicken broth was hot and burned his mouth.
7. Victor plays the violin.
8. Peter picked purple plums.
9. Ted had better head west.
10. The three brothers' birthdays are this month.



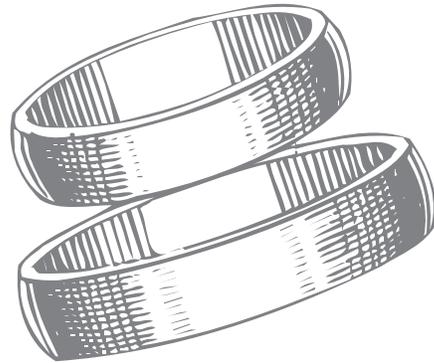
# PERSIAN

## *Difficult Sounds*

d	(bad)	final	th	(then)
g	(game)	initial	w	(water)
i	(sit)		e	(egg)
(ng)	(ring)		o	(hot)
s	(sad)	plus other consonants	u	(up)
th	(thin)			

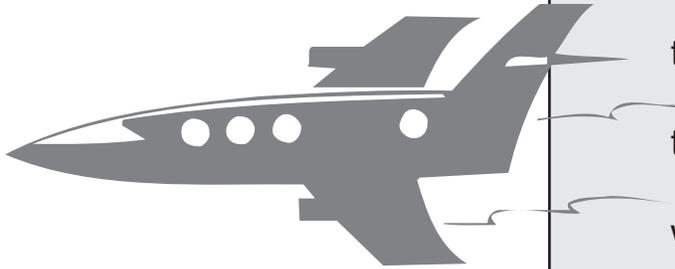


1. Please stop at the post office.
2. He sawed the wide rod in two.
3. He will have a wonderful voyage.
4. Gary, hold out your hand.
5. She saw a school of cod under the net.
6. Wayne wants Willy to wait with Wendy.
7. This Thursday is Heather's third birthday.
8. Gail gave me a great gift before Gary did.
9. They're both wearing gold wedding rings on their fingers.
10. Did Bob find a big bug under the bed?



# POLISH

## *Difficult Sounds*



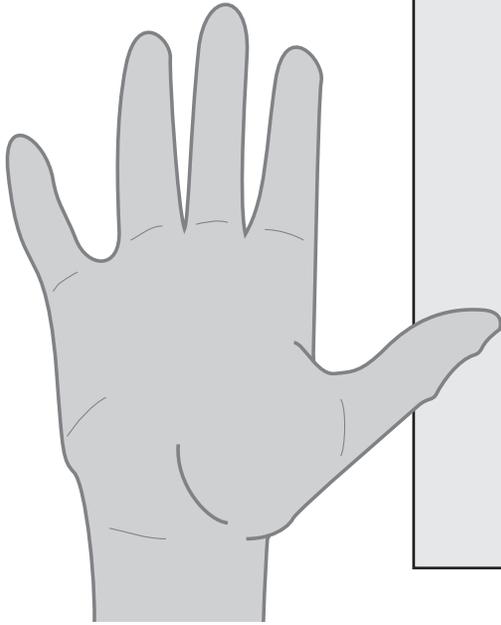
j	(jet)	i	(mile)
th	(thin)	o	(hot)
th	(then)	oo	(boot)
w	(water)	u	(cute)
a	(take)		

1. Tom lost the golf ball.
2. Willy wants to whistle.
3. Put shoes and boots in your new suitcase.
4. I like white rice.
5. Jean easily eats green peas.
6. This pitcher is filled with chilled milk.
7. She wears a single ring on her finger.
8. Matthew's thumb thoroughly throbs.
9. Wash the windows with warm water.
10. Lillian leaned lightly against the little ladder.



# PORTUGUESE

## *Difficult Sounds*



ch (chin)

h (hand)

l (tell) final

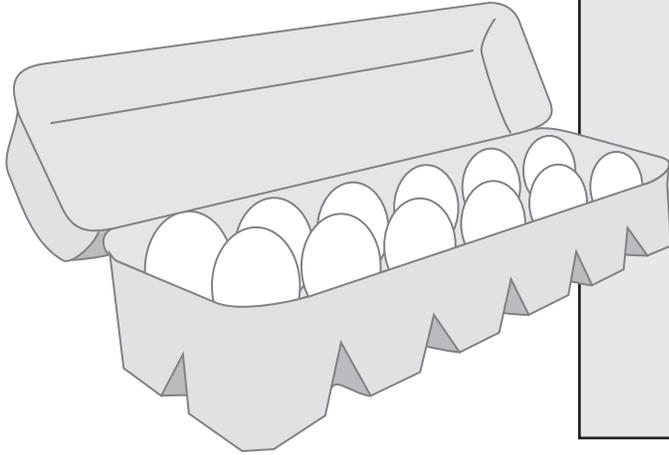
r (red)

1. Here is the helping of ham.
2. Jim just jumped down.
3. Wear your raincoat when it is raining.
4. This Thursday is the third of the month.
5. Did Charles choose cherry or chocolate cheesecake?
6. There are swirls of curls in her brown hair.
7. Jed picked baskets of peaches each morning.
8. This big ship slips into the mist.
9. He has hot dogs and hamburgers on holidays.
10. The teacher watches each child choose his lunch.



# RUSSIAN

## *Difficult Sounds*



g	(leg)	voiced final consonants
h	(hand)	w (water)
r	(red)	a (man)
th	(thin)	e (egg)
th	(then)	i (sit)
v	(vote)	o (hot)

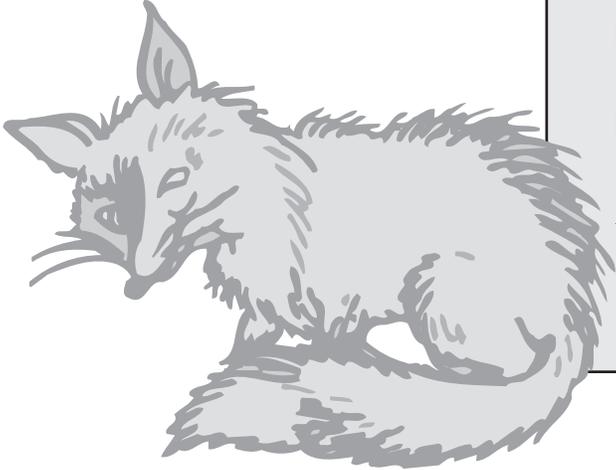
1. Beth bought a small hat.
2. That bed is not bad for a cat nap.
3. Purple birds chirp.
4. The red cherries are riper than the others.
5. William's voice is weak.
6. Her red hair is very curly.
7. Rob worked hard in the warm weather.
8. Who would like to sing a song?
9. Swimming and sailing are wonderful things.
10. She cooks turkey stuffed with dressing for Thanksgiving.



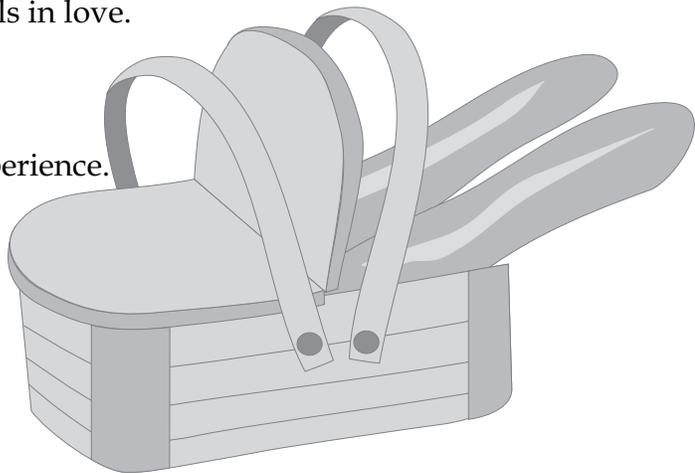
# SERBIAN

## *Difficult Sounds*

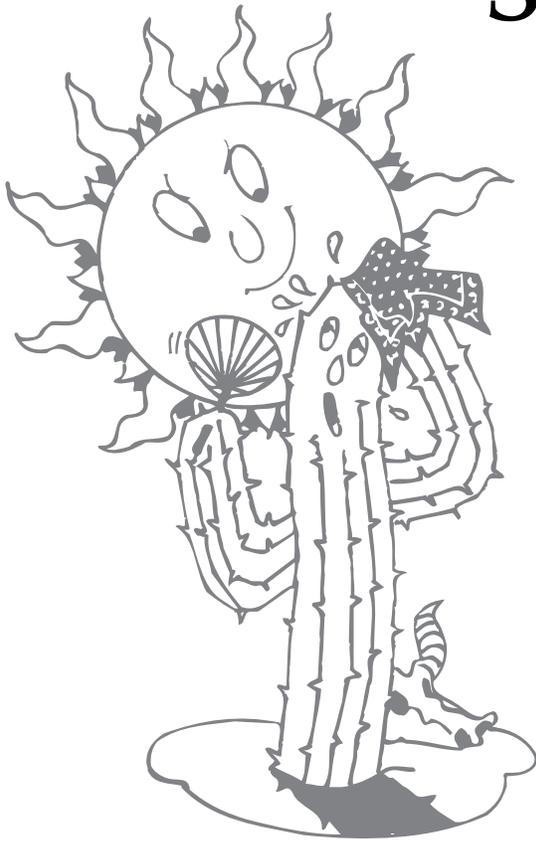
j	(joy)	a	(man)
c	(cat)	e	(egg)
b	(baby)	i	(sit)
h	(hat)	o	(hot)
x	(fox)	u	(up)



1. George enjoys jokes.
2. The general and his soldiers jumped off the bridge.
3. Cathy carries both cash and credit cards.
4. The kitchen cook quickly cut a piece of chicken.
5. Bob will probably become a Boy Scout.
6. Barbara buys fresh bread and butter from the baker.
7. Heather is hopelessly head over heels in love.
8. Have a happy holiday.
9. He is excited about the excellent experience.
10. That is an example of a poor excuse.



# SOMALI - AF MAHAA



## *Difficult Sounds*

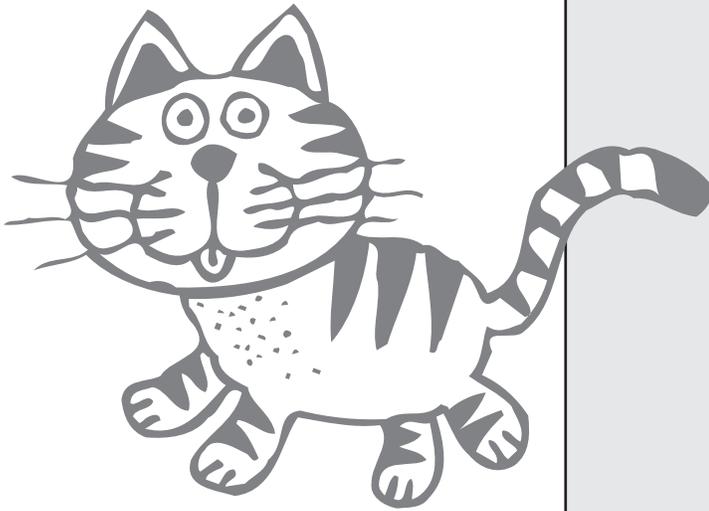
c	(cat)	a	(man)
q	(queen)	e	(egg)
r	(red)	i	(sit)
x	(fox)	o	(hot)
a	(take)	u	(up)
e	(Pete)		
i	(mile)		
n	(no)		
u	(uniform)		

1. Carrying coal is back-breaking work.
2. The queen quivered during the earthquake.
3. The three friends ran in the race on Thursday, November thirteenth.
4. He was excited about the extra day off.
5. Andy was sad because Cathy was mad.
6. November eleventh is Ellen's birthday.
7. Phil will sit still and take his pill.
8. Usually October is not hot.
9. Doug is as snug as a bug in a rug.
10. Katie ate cake from a paper plate.
11. Sleet falls every week of January.



# SOMALI BANTU - AF MAAAY

## *Difficult Sounds*



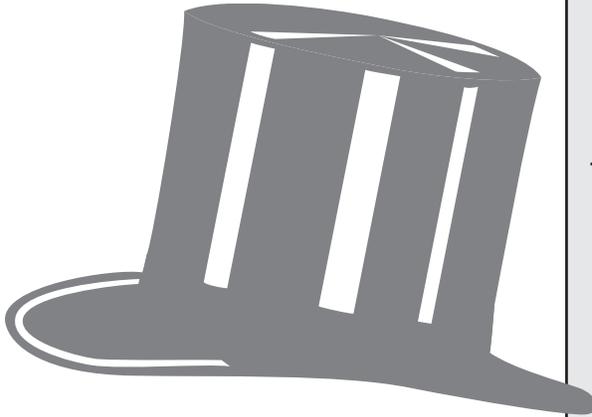
c	(cat)	a	(man)
p	(pot)	e	(egg)
th	(this)	i	(sit)
z	(zebra)	o	(hot)
v	(very)	u	(up)

1. Cathy carries both cash and credit cards.
2. Andy was sad because Cathy was mad.
3. Pumpkin pie is popular.
4. Ed likes eggs everyday.
5. Neither brother likes this weather.
6. Bill lives in the middle of the city.
7. Zebras are always grazing at the zoo.
8. Bob and his father shop at the garden center.
9. Every November eleventh is Veteran's Day.
10. Honey buns cost too much money.



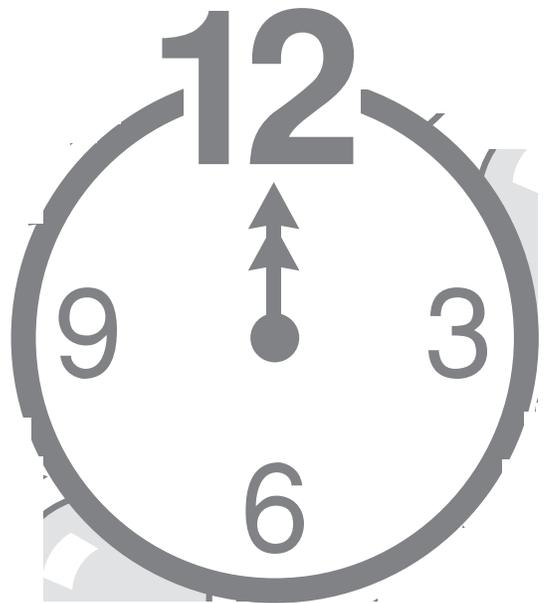
# SPANISH

## *Difficult Sounds*



h	(hat)	w	(water)
j	(jet)	z	(zoo)
r	(red)	a	(man)
s	(sad)	e	(egg)
sh	(ship)	i	(sit)
th	(thin)	i	(mile)
th	(then)	o	(hot)
v	(vote)	u	(up)

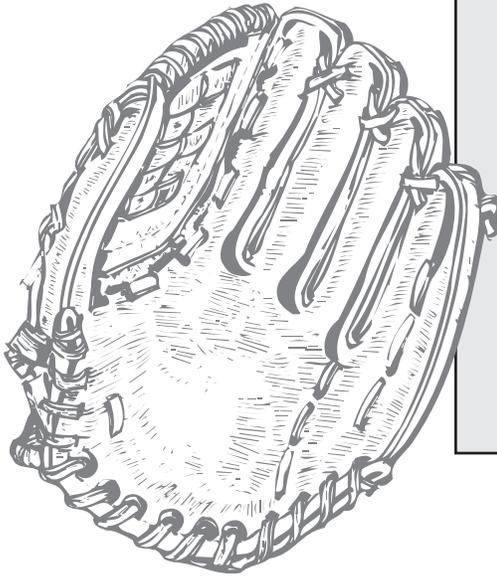
1. This chip dip is rich.
2. Julie enjoys jelly and jam.
3. Have a happy holiday.
4. The clock stopped last night at school.
5. That thin beef is the very best buy.
6. Georgia's peaches are big and juicy.
7. Please park your car in the garage.
8. Shelly showed the chair to Sharon.
9. Does this jet stop in Mississippi?
10. Southern cities have better weather in the winter than northern cities.



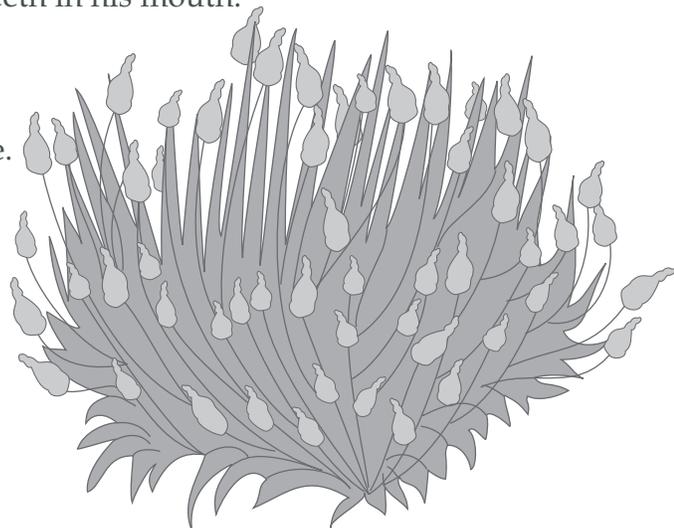
# THAI

## *Difficult Sounds*

ch	(chin)	w	(water)
l	(lip)	z	(zoo)
p, t, k	(top, mitt, pick) final	i	(sit)
s	(stop) s plus consonants	e	(bed)
th	(thin)	o	(go)
th	(then)	oo	(book)



1. It's not easy to study.
2. Charles read a good book.
3. "Oh, Susannah" is a folk song.
4. Samantha went with Elizabeth.
5. Chuck chooses to chew the chocolate chips.
6. The students step up to the school bus.
7. Matthew thinks there are thirty-two teeth in his mouth.
8. Laura kept thick books in boxes.
9. Open that pop-top pack of pop, please.
10. Wildflowers will wilt without water.



# TURKISH

## *Difficult Sounds*



b, d, g (tab, bad, bag) final	th	(then)
k, p, t (cracker, upper, butter) medial	v	(very)
ng ring	w	(water)
s (stop) initial clusters with s	a	(man)
th (thin)	e	(ten)

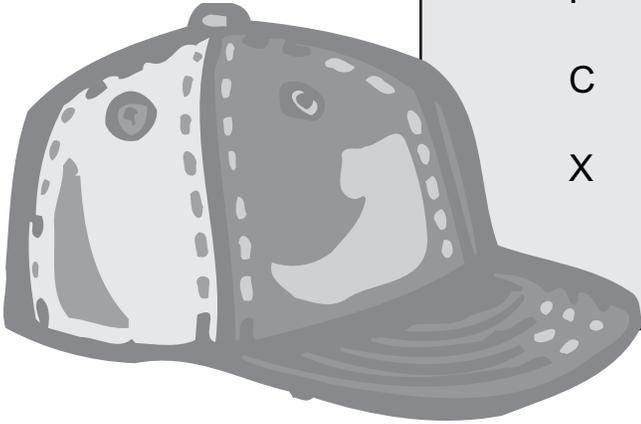
1. Stacy stands still.
2. Ted had a very good dog.
3. Stack the packages of butter on the upper shelf.
4. Hank gets giddy when he drinks.
5. Get them out of bed at ten.
6. Where is the white vase kept?
7. Harold thought these things were theirs.
8. Why would Martha wear violet to the wedding?
9. Swimming sends shivers down my spine.
10. Stop at the stationery store for stamps.



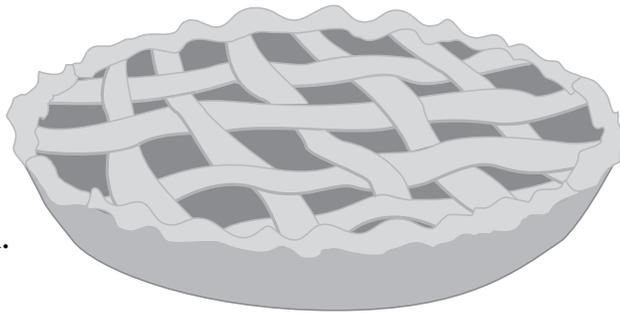
# UKRANIAN

## *Difficult Sounds*

B	(Bob)	i	(sit)
H	(hat)	i	(ice)
P	(peace)	y	(yes)
C	(cat)	y	(canyon)
X	(x-ray)		



1. Bob and Barry will probably become Boy Scouts.
2. Heather and Harry are hopelessly head over heels in love.
3. Peter and Paul forget to prepare their reports.
4. Cathy and Carmen carry both cash and credit cards.
5. X-rays are expensive.
6. Bill lives in the middle of the city.
7. I invited Iris for pie and ice cream.
8. Yellow onions and yams are yummy.
9. The canyon is one million years old.
10. Union soldiers were often young.



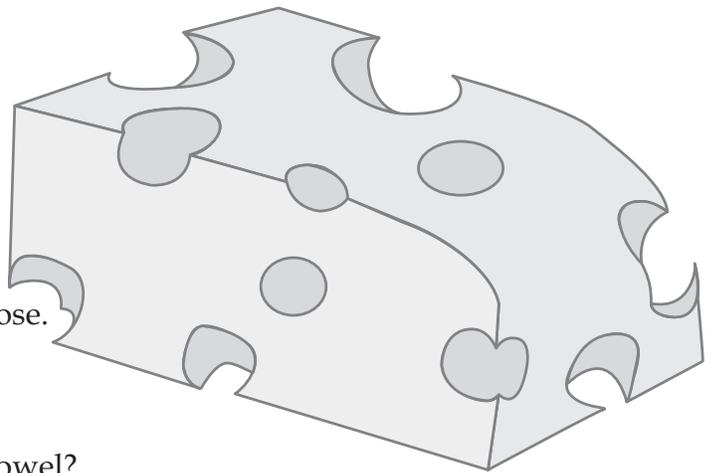
# VIETNAMESE

## *Difficult Sounds*



ch	(chin)	th	(then)
d	(dog)	a	(take)
l	(lip)	a	(man)
s	(cats) final	e	(seen)
th	(thin)	oo	(boot)

1. Paid vacations are great.
2. Both boys bought brown boots.
3. This chip dip is rich.
4. Think these things through.
5. Charles checks which cheese I choose.
6. Laura rarely writes letters.
7. Have you seen Ruth's terry cloth towel?
8. Dad does the dirty dishes.
9. Chew the chunks or you will choke.
10. Sue slathers sunscreen on her skin when she sits in the sun.



# General Practice



1. She sells seashells by the seashore.
2. Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.
3. How much wood would a woodchuck chuck if a woodchuck could chuck wood?
4. Beth gave me big blue violets.
5. Fish feed at the fourth fathom.
6. The frozen ice formed floes that flowed forth from the thaw.
7. Lillian leans lightly against the little ladder.
8. Wayne washed his wrists in the warm running water.
9. Thelma thinks these thing through.
10. Holly held the heavy hose in both hands.
11. The Lincoln Lawn Service sells certified fertilizer.
12. This sink stinks more than you think.
13. Charlie shared chocolate with Sharon.
14. Heather thinks her thighs are thin.
15. Willie wishes his wrists were thick.
16. Lillian's lilies, so lovely and rare, are grown in the garden you see over there.
17. The fat cat sat at the back of that very hat rack.
18. Martha thoroughly thanked thirty thin weathermen.
19. Open that pack of pop-top pop, please.
20. Queenie's quail quivered quietly in the earthquake.



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**Overview**

**Sounds of English**

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