

Russian is an East Slavonic language spoken primarily in the former U.S.S.R. It is the mother tongue of 154 (1979) million people as well as the second language of another 60-70 million national minorities. The main dialectal division of Russian is basically north - south and features of both variants comprise the standard dialect.

The speaker in this recording is a thirty year-old male from Novosibirsk.

Russian Consonant Phonemes:

Stops:	p ^(j)	t ^(j)		k ^(j)
	b ^(j)	d ^(j)		g ^(j)
Affricates:		ts	tʃ	
Fricatives:	f ^(j)	s ^(j)	ʃ ʃ:	x ^(j)
	v ^(j)	z ^(j)	ʒ	
Nasals:	m ^(j)	n ^(j)		
Liquids:		l ^(j)		
		r ^(j)		
Glides:			j	

The Russian sound inventory, in particular, contrasts palatalization and thus there are palatalized ("soft") and non-palatalized ("hard") pairs of almost all consonants. There are exceptions, however; /ts, ʃ, ʃ:, ʒ/ are considered always hard and /tʃ/ is always "soft".

Russian Vowel Phonemes:

Vowels Encountered:

hard:	i	u
		o
	ɛ	
	a	
soft:	i	ju
	e	jo
	ja	

Palatalization contrasts extend to the vowels which, too, have an inherent distinction between palatalized (soft) and non-palatalized (hard). However, in the cases of the pairs /i, i/ & /ɛ, e/, the palatalization contrast has developed into a quality contrast. Russian reduces unstressed vowels (except /u/) extensively; in particular, a phenomenon known as *akan'e*, where /o/ tends to become [a].

I. Word Lists

Phonemic Stress:

- | | | |
|-------|--------|-----------------|
| 1. | | 'castle' |
| 2. | | 'lock' |
| 3. | | 'torture' |
| 4. | | 'flower' |
| 5. | | 'narrower' |
| 6. | | 'already' |
| 7. | | 'big' |
| 8. | | 'bigger' |
| 9. | | 'scum' |
| 10. | | 'drag' |
| → 11. | [sám] | 'myself' |
| → 12. | [sámə] | 'herself' |
| 13. | | 'heal' (heel?) |
| 14. | | 'five' |
| 15. | | 'Sabbath' |
| 16. | | 'that's enough' |

Vowel reduction:

/a/

- | | |
|-----|------------------|
| 1. | 'taken' |
| 2. | 'to take' |
| 3. | 'I knew' |
| 4. | 'at random' |
| 5. | 'willow' |
| 6. | 'horticulturist' |
| 7. | 'uncle' |
| 8. | 'mother' |
| 9. | 'crumple' |
| 10. | 'book' |

/o/

- | | |
|-----|--------------------|
| 1. | 'nose' |
| 2. | 'lock' |
| 3. | 'nasal' |
| 4. | 'a kitchen garden' |
| 5. | 'road' |
| 6. | 'water pipe' |
| 7. | 'did buy' |
| 8. | 'milk' |
| 9. | 'greenhorn' |
| 10. | 'towns' |
| 11. | 'well' |
| 12. | 'fence' |

13. 'watering place'

/e/

1. 'there is'
2. 'black grouse'
3. 'these'
4. 'wife'
5. 'slow'
6. 'rhubarb'
7. 'electrical'
8. 'to light'
9. 'sea'
10. 'become rigid'

/i/

1. 'they write'
2. 'radiate something'
3. 'I write'
4. 'silt'
5. a man's name
6. 'pant'
7. 'excuse' (v)
8. 'Abyssinians'

Fricatives and Affricates:

1. 'beetle'
2. 'knowledgeable'
3. 'crack'
4. 'Czar's son'
5. 'tender hearted'
6. 'giggle'
7. 'cool and composed'
8. 'loud laughter'
9. 'crunch'
10. 'workshop'
11. 'nonsense'
12. 'cleaner, shoe polish'
13. 'thirst'
14. 'woman'
15. 'order' (n)
16. 'to know'

Onsets:

1. 'haze'
2. 'moment'
3. 'allowed'
4. 'from childhood'

- | | |
|-----|------------------|
| 5. | 'animal chewing' |
| 6. | 'burning' |
| 7. | 'double' |
| 8. | 'flower' |
| 9. | 'wrongly' |
| 10. | 'grandson' |
| 11. | 'fall into' |
| 12. | 'anger' (n) |
| 13. | 'tell lies' |
| 14. | 'opinion' |
| 15. | 'torn' |
| 16. | 'displacement' |
| 17. | 'coral' |
| 18. | 'skirmish' |
| 19. | 'yours' |

Palatalization:

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| 1. | 'sleep' (imperfective) |
| 2. | 'to sing' |
| 3. | 'five' |
| 4. | 'both' |
| 5. | 'dinner' |
| 6. | 'convince' |
| 7. | 'checkmate' |
| 8. | 'mother' |
| 9. | 'thin' |
| 10. | 'actor' |
| 11. | 'wind' |
| 12. | 'evening' |
| 13. | 'whose' |
| 14. | 'receipt, cheque' |
| 15. | 'away' |
| 16. | 'honey' |
| 17. | 'copper' |
| 18. | 'Wednesday' |
| 19. | 'among' |
| 20. | 'chief, leader' |
| 21. | 'money' |
| 22. | 'flexible' |
| 23. | 'cake' |
| 24. | 'of every kind' |
| 25. | 'by all means' |
| 26. | 'sit down' |
| 27. | 'eat' (perf) |
| 28. | 'axis' |
| 29. | 'wasp' |
| 30. [ɐbɪdʲeʲtʲ] | 'eat' (imperf) |
| 31. [ɐsɐdʲeʲtʲ] | 'turn grey' |

32.	'cake'
33.	'mouse'
34.	'louse'
35.	'society'
36.	'lodging'
37.	'give birth'
38.	'rifle'
39.	'rye'
40.	'ointment'
41.	'to apply ointment'
42.	'carving'
43.	'footwear'
44.	'yawn'
45.	'catch sight of'
46.	'from the left'
47.	'shelter'
48.	'blood'
49.	'pier' peer? v? n?
50.	'he swept'
51.	'mind'
52.	'ate' (eight?)
53.	'sweep'
54.	'wash'
55.	'meat' (meet?)
56.	'flax'
57.	'laziness'
58.	'note'
59.	'thread'
60.	'perch'
61.	'crushed stone'
62.	'carriage'
63.	'career'
64.	'zealous'
65.	'swearing'
66.	'people'
67.	'linen'
68.	'become white'
69.	'sense'
70.	'only'
71.	'pebbles'
72.	'moth'
73.	'has become'
74.	'steal'

II. Reading Sample

III. Tongue Twisters

References:

- Campbell, George L. 1991. *Compendium of the World's Languages*. New York: Routledge.
- Bright, William (ed.) 1992. *International Encyclopedia of Linguistics*. New York: Oxford University Press. 3:350