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RUSSIAN

ELEMENTARY COURSE



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PREFACE

This elementary course of Russian is designed chiefly for adults studying Russian with a teacher. However, it may also serve the purpose of a self-instructor. It contains keys to most of the exercises as well as pronunciation keys; moreover, the contents of the book have been so arranged as to facilitate the student's unaided study of the language.

The aim of this book is to help students of Russian to acquire a practical knowledge of the spoken language and to learn to read and understand Russian newspapers as well as easy fiction. The choice of the material, the order in which it is arranged, the number and character of the exercises are all directed towards the achievement of this aim. The course of study covers the principal rules of Russian grammar and phonetics and contains a vocabulary of some 5,000 words as well as a large number of set phrases and idioms.

Russian, an Elementary Course is comprised of Book I and Book II (Book II is to be published shortly after Book I). Book I, in its turn, is divided into four parts. Each of the four parts covers about ten lessons and deals with a definite group of language phenomena, arranged in such a way as to ensure a gradual mastery of speech habits.

In compiling this elementary course of Russian much forethought was given to the relation of grammar and lexical material. Beginning with Lesson 12, after the student has already been made familiar with the rudiments of the language, the lessons are broken up into "a" and "b". In "a" the emphasis is on new grammar rules. These find their practical application in the extensive lexical material given in "b".

Russian, an Elementary Course is an improvement on the method employed in the text-book entitled "Russian" (Part I), by the same author, published in 1946. The principles underlying the method are further developed and the general structure of the book completely revised.

The author will be most thankful for any suggestions or remarks which will help to improve this book. These may be forwarded to the *Foreign Languages Publishing House, Zubovskiy Blvd. 21, Moscow.*

N. F. Potapova.

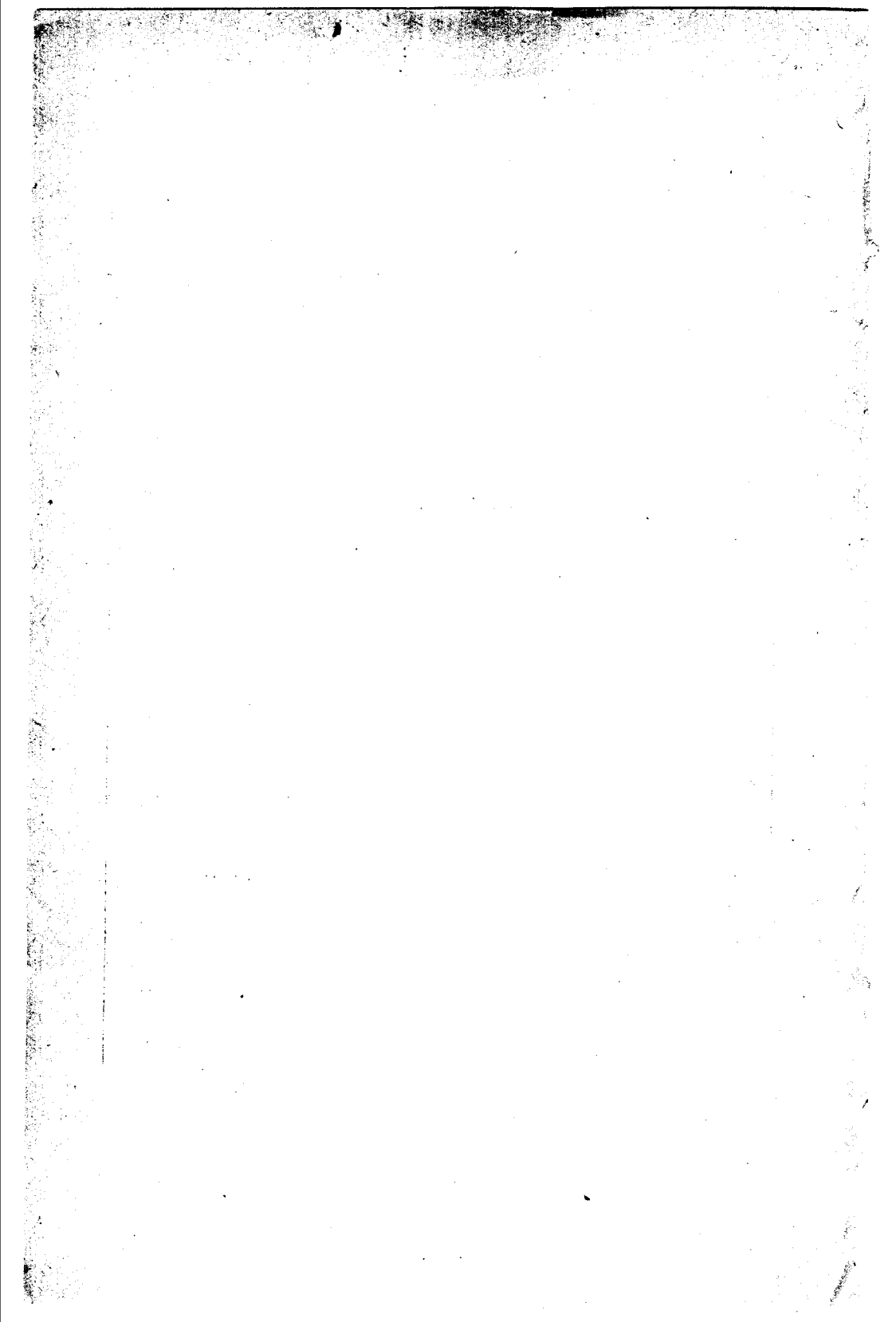
THE RUSSIAN ALPHABET

No.	The letters		Pronounced approximately as *	Names of the letters
	Printed	Written		
1	Аа	<i>А а</i>	<i>a</i> in "father"	а
2	Бб	<i>Б б</i>	<i>b</i> in "book"	бэ
3	Вв	<i>В в</i>	<i>v</i> in "vote"	вэ
4	Гг	<i>Г г</i>	<i>g</i> in "good"	гэ
5	Дд	<i>Д д</i>	<i>d</i> in "day" (cf. Lesson 1)	дэ
6	Ее	<i>Е е</i>	<i>ye</i> in "yes"	е (йэ)
7	Ёё	<i>Ё ё</i>	<i>yo</i> in "yolk"	ё (йо)
8	Жж	<i>Ж ж</i>	<i>s</i> in "pleasure"	жэ
9	Зз	<i>З з</i>	<i>z, s</i> in "zone, please"	зэ
10	Ии	<i>И и</i>	<i>ee</i> in "meet"	и
11	Йй	<i>Й й</i>	<i>y</i> in "boy"	и краткое (short)
12	Кк	<i>К к</i>	<i>k</i> in "kind"	ка
13	Лл	<i>Л л</i>	<i>l</i> (hard) in "full, gold" (cf. Lesson 2)	эл (эль)
14	Мм	<i>М м</i>	<i>m</i> in "man"	эм
15	Нн	<i>Н н</i>	<i>n</i> in "note" (cf. Lesson 2)	эн
16	Оо	<i>О о</i>	<i>o</i> in "port"	о

* When there is a noticeable difference of pronunciation between the Russian sound and its English counterpart, the student is referred to the lesson where the difference is explained.

No.	The letters		Pronounced approximately as *	Names of the letters
	Printed	Written		
17	Пп	<i>П п</i>	<i>p</i> in "pen"	пэ
18	Рр	<i>Р р</i>	<i>r</i> (cf. Lesson 2)	эр
19	Сс	<i>С с</i>	<i>s</i> in "speak"	эс
20	Тт	<i>Т т</i>	<i>t</i> in "too" (cf. Lesson 1)	тэ
21	Уу	<i>У у</i>	<i>oo</i> in "book" (but longer)	у
22	Фф	<i>Ф ф</i>	<i>f</i> in "fire"	эф
23	Хх	<i>Х х</i>	<i>h</i> (cf. Lesson 3)	ха
24	Цц	<i>Ц ц</i>	<i>tz</i> in "quartz"	цэ
25	Чч	<i>Ч ч</i>	<i>ch</i> in "lunch" (but softer)	че
26	Шш	<i>Ш ш</i>	<i>sh</i> in "short"	ша
27	Щщ	<i>Щ щ</i>	<i>shch</i> in "tovarishch" (cf. Lesson 8)	ща
28	Ъъ	<i>ъ</i>	(cf. Lesson 9)	гвёрдый знак ("hard" mark)
29	Ыы	<i>ы</i>	<i>i</i> in "it" (but harder)	ы
30	Ьь	<i>ь</i>	(cf. Lesson 7) (cf. Lessons 5, 9)	мягкий знак ("soft" mark)
31	Ээ	<i>Э э</i>	<i>e</i> in "men"	э
32	Юю	<i>Ю ю</i>	<i>yu</i> in "Yukon"	ю (йу)
33	Яя	<i>Я я</i>	<i>ya</i> in "yard"	я (йа)

* See footnote on page 4.



PART I

УРОК 1—LESSON 1

Speech Sounds and Letters:
The Vowels **а, о, у, э.**
The Consonants **м, д, т, в, с.**
Grammar.

SPEECH SOUNDS AND LETTERS

Russian sounds are unlike English sounds in many ways. In Russian, for example, there is no *th* sound and there are many sounds in Russian which have no counterpart in English. Most Russian sounds are pronounced differently from their English equivalents.

Do not confuse speech sounds with letters. Sounds we pronounce and hear. Letters we write and see.

The letters of the Russian alphabet differ considerably from those of the English alphabet.

1. Vowels

A

The Russian **а** is pronounced like the *a* in *ask, father, past*. However, it is not so deep as its English counterpart (the tongue is not moved so far backwards) and is shorter (it is pronounced in less time than required by the equivalent English sound).

O

The Russian **о** has approximately the same sound as the English *o* in *port, morning*.

However, to pronounce the Russian **о**, the lips must be rounded and protruded more than in the equivalent sound in the English words cited above. Moreover, the Russian **о** is shorter than the English *o* in the above examples.

У

The Russian **у** is pronounced as the English *oo*, but is not so short as the *oo* in *book* and not so long as the *oo* in *school*.

To pronounce the Russian **у**, the lips must be rounded and considerably advanced (almost in the same way as in pronouncing **о**), the tongue drawn back and raised (the back part) to the soft palate.

Э

The Russian **э** resembles the English *e* in *men, let*.

It is, however, a more open sound (the tongue is not raised so high to the roof of the mouth as in the English sound). Therefore in pronouncing the Russian **э** the mouth should be in a more open position than in the English *e* in *men* and *let*.

Summary

All Russian vowel sounds are of medium length.

In the Russian language the lengthening or shortening of the vowel sound does not affect the meaning of the word. Russian vowel sounds, however, may be lengthened to convey emotional shades. Hence, the tendency to lengthen the vowels in the interjections **а!** **о!** and **э!**

The names of the letters **Аа**, **Оо**, **Уу**, **Ээ** are identical with their pronunciation.

Pronounce:

а — у, а — о, а — э
о — а, о — у, о — э
у — а, у — о, у — э
э — а, э — о, э — у

2. Consonants

М

м is pronounced like the English *m* in *my*.

The letter **Мм** is called *эм*.

Pronounce:

ма — мо — му — мэ

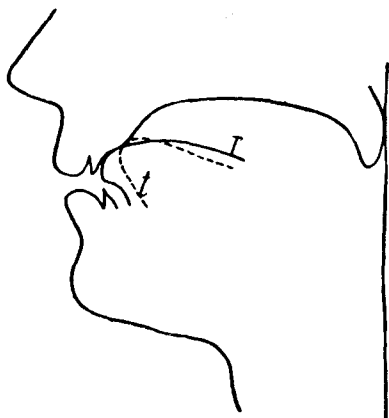
Д, Т

The Russian **д** may be compared with the English *d*.

The Russian **т** may be compared with the English *t*.

However, the Russian **д** and **т** sounds differ greatly from the English *d* and *t*. To pronounce the Russian sounds, you must

bring the tongue against the back of the upper teeth and see that the tip of the tongue points downwards. Do not raise the tip of the tongue to the alveoles or the upper gums as is the case when *d* and *t* are pronounced in English.



д is a voiced consonant, **т** is voiceless. Compare:

дом house and **том** volume

The letter **Дд** is called *дэ*; the letter **Тт** is called *тэ*.

Pronounce the following sound combinations from left to right and from the top down:

да — да, до — до, ду — ду, дэ — дэ
 та — та, то — то, ту — ту, тэ — тэ
да yes, **там** there, **тут** here

В

The Russian **в** is pronounced almost like the English *v* in *voice*.

The slight distinction between the Russian and English pronunciation of this sound is that the Russian sound is pronounced with the upper teeth pressed against the back of the lower lip and not the front, as is the case in uttering the English *v*. Besides, the Russian **в** is pronounced with less energy than the English *v* (i. e. in producing the Russian sound the speech organs are in a less tense position).

The letter **Вв** is called *вэ*.

Pronounce:

ва — **во** — **ву** — **вэ**
вог here

C

The Russian **c** is pronounced like *s* in *soon*, *yes*.
The letter **Cc** is called *эс*.

мост bridge

Summary

Russian consonants are pronounced less distinctly than English consonants, especially at the end of a word (i. e. at the moment of articulation the organs of speech are less tense).

GRAMMAR

1. The Russian language has no article. The noun **дом** may mean *the house*, *a house* or *house*, depending on the sense.

2. In Russian the link-verbs equivalent to the English *is*, *are*, etc., are not generally used. The sentence: **Дом там** corresponds to *The house is there*.

3. Interrogation in Russian may be denoted by the intonation of a question, the word order of the sentence remaining the same as in a statement: **Дом там?** *Is the house there?*

Read:

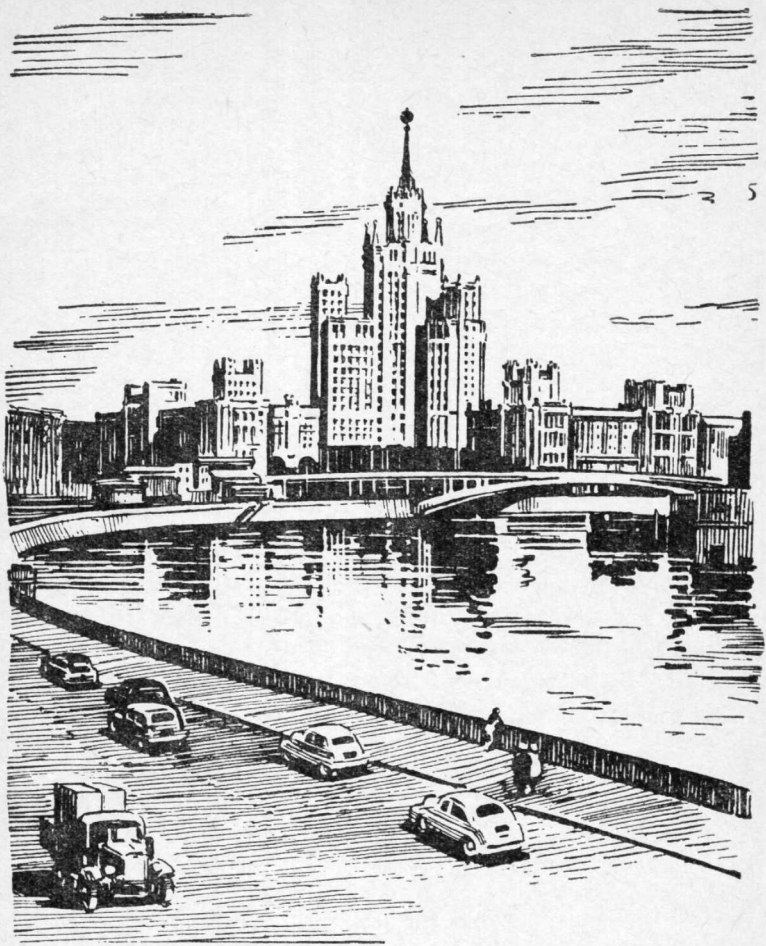
Вот дом.	Here is the house.
Вот мост.	Here is the bridge.
Дом там.	The house is there.
Мост тут.	The bridge is here.
Дом там?	Is the house there?
Да, дом там.	Yes, the house is there.
Мост тут?	Is the bridge here?
Да, мост тут.	Yes, the bridge is here.

Аа, Оо, Уу, Ээ

Вв, Дд, Мм, Тт, Сс

Дом. Мост. Вот дом.

Там мост. Дом.



EXERCISES

1. Write each of the above letters three times.
2. Rewrite the sentences.
3. Give the names of the letters in the following words:

ВОТ, МОСТ, ДОМ, ТАМ

4. Translate into Russian:

1. The house is here.
2. The bridge is there.
3. Here is a house.
4. Here is a bridge.

УРОК 2—LESSON 2

Speech Sounds and Letters:

The Vowel и.

The Consonants: р, б, п, з, н, л, ф.

Syllables and Word Stress.

SPEECH SOUNDS AND LETTERS

1. The Vowel И

The Russian и resembles the English vowel sound in the words *eve, eat, each*.

However, in comparison with the English sound, the Russian и is shorter even in stressed syllables, but not so short as the *i* in the English words *it* and *ill*:

и and
и́ва willow

Note: The accent sign ['] over a vowel, as for example in the word и́ва, indicates that the syllable should be stressed and pronounced with greater force.

The name of the letter Ии is identical with its pronunciation.

2. Consonants

Р

For the Russian р there is no corresponding English sound.

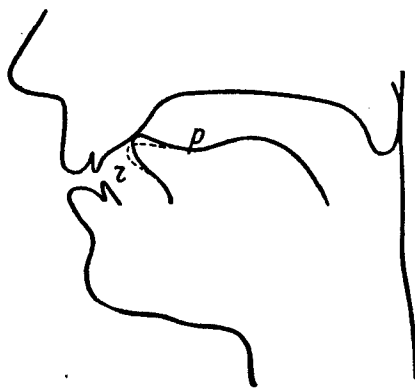
A sound somewhat resembling the Russian р is the rolled *r* of Scotland and Northern England. The *r* of current English usage is unlike the Russian р.

The Russian р is formed by the vibration of the tip of the tongue against the front of the palate. It is a distinct, trilling sound.

р is a voiced consonant.

The letter Рр is called эр.

Do not confuse the Russian letter р (эр) with the English letter *p*.



Pronounce:

ра	ро	ру	рә
ра-ра	ро-ро	ру-ру	рә-рә
ар	ор	ур	эр
ра́ма	frame	ро́т	mouth
Ира	(<i>a feminine name</i>)	аэродро́м	aerodrome
трава́	grass	дво́р	courtyard

Вот двор. Here is a courtyard.
Там йва и трава́. There are a willow and grass there.

Note: The combination **аэ** in the word **аэродро́м** should be pronounced as two separate sounds.

Б, П

б corresponds to the English *b* in *boy*.

п corresponds to the English *p* in *please*.

The slight aspiration audible in pronouncing the English *p* in *pen, pin, etc.*, is completely absent in the Russian sound.

б is a voiced consonant, **п** is voiceless. Compare:

бо́рт side and **по́рт** port

The letter **Бб** is called *бэ*; the letter **Пп** is called *пэ*.

бра́т brother **па́рта** school-desk
рабо́та work **спорт** sport

бра́т тут, ра́ма тут, па́рта там

З

з is pronounced like *z* in *zero*.

з is a voiced consonant. Its corresponding Russian voiceless consonant is **с**. Compare:

зу́б tooth and **су́п** soup

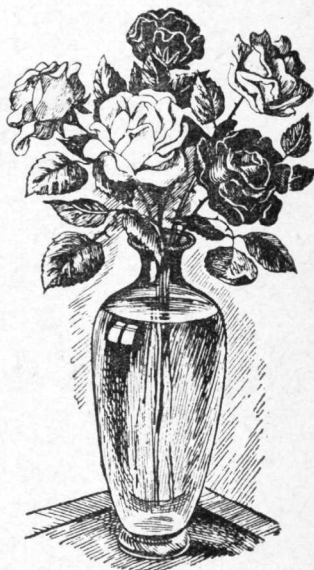
Note: **б** at the end of the word **зу́б** is pronounced like [п].

The letter **Зз** is called *зэ*.

ва́за vase
ро́за rose
изба́ cottage
заво́д plant, mill

Note: **д** at the end of the word **заво́д** is pronounced like [т].

Вот ва́за и ро́за.
Вот заво́д. Тут рабо́та.
Вот изба́ и дво́р.



Н

н corresponds to the English *n*.

However, there is a difference between the pronunciation of the Russian н and that of its English counterpart. To pronounce the Russian н, thrust the tongue against the back of the upper teeth with the tip pointed downwards (as in pronouncing д and т). Do not raise the tongue tip upwards (to the alveoles), as is the case when the English *n* is pronounced.

н is a voiced consonant.

The letter Нн is called эн.

Pronounce: •

на — на, но — но, ну — ну, нэ — нэ

нос	nose	он	he	страна́	country
но́та	note	До́н	the Don	сно́ва	again
Ива́н	(a masculine name)				

Вот До́н и мо́ст.

Ива́н сно́ва тут. Вот он.

Л

The Russian л resembles the English *l* and even more so the American *l* in the words *full*, *table*, but is somewhat harder.

To articulate the Russian л, raise the back part of the tongue to the roof of the mouth as in у, and bring the front part of the tongue against the back of the upper teeth (as in the sounds д, т, н). See that the tip of the tongue points downwards (do not raise it to the alveoles, as is done in the articulation of the English *l*). This tongue position will ensure the correct pronunciation of the typical Russian hard л.

л is a voiced consonant.

The letter Лл is called эл.

Note that the Russian л is hard not only at the end of a word. Before the vowels а, э, о, and у it is also hard. This particularly distinguishes it from the English *l* before vowels: ло́тос and lotus, ла́мпа and lamp.

Pronounce:

л — ал	л — ол	ул — эл			
ла — ла	ло — ло	лу — лу			
мо́л	piér	за́л	hall	ла́мпа	lamp
по́л	flooꝛ	ба́л	ball	пла́н	plan
сто́л	table	плот	raft	сла́ва	fame
сту́л	chair	сло́н	elephant	луна́	moon

Вот стул, стол, пол.
Вот лампа, план.
Стол тут, лампа там.
Вот зал. Тут бал.
Вот зал. Тут стул, стол и лампа.

Ф

The Russian **Ф** closely resembles the English *f* as in *farm*. To pronounce the Russian **Ф**, the upper teeth are pressed against the back of the lower lip and not the front, as in the pronunciation of the English *f*. The Russian **Ф** is uttered with less vigour than the English *f*.

В is a voiced consonant, **Ф** is voiceless. Compare:

ва́за vase and фа́за phase

The letter **ФФ** is called эф.

фра́за phrase флот fleet
фо́рма form футбо́л football

Вот порт. Тут флот.

3. Syllables and Word Stress

A great many words in the Russian language are made up:

- 1) of one syllable — дом
- 2) of two syllables — стра-на́ — страна́
- 3) of three syllables — ра-бо́-та — рабо́та

Words composed of more than three syllables are less common.

Word stress, that is the pronouncing of one syllable with greater vigour than another, is more emphatic in Russian than in English.

In some Russian words the stress falls on the first syllable:

ка́рта map, ла́мпа lamp

In others the stress falls on the last syllable:

страна́ country, футбо́л football

There are words in which the stress is on the middle syllable:

рабо́та work

In dictionaries and text-books of the Russian language, the stressed syllable is indicated by the sign [']. Monosyllabic words rarely have the accent indicated.

In other books and also in newspapers the stress is marked only when the meaning of the word would otherwise not be clear.

The syllable on which the stress falls is called a stressed syllable. All other syllables are called unstressed syllables.

In Russian the stressed syllable, as compared with the unstressed, is articulated with much greater force and is therefore lengthened. Hence, the pronunciation of vowels is affected by stress:

1) Vowels on which the stress falls are pronounced clearly and distinctly (more time is required to pronounce the stressed vowel than the unstressed one and the organs of speech are more tense).

2) Unstressed vowels are fainter and less drawn out (less time is spent on their pronunciation and the organs of speech are less tense).

Note the pronunciation of the unstressed *a* in the words given in this lesson and try to pronounce it more faintly and shorter than the stressed *a*.

Read:

Вот стол, стул, лампа.
Там стол, ва́за и ро́за.
Вот зал, пол, лампа.
Там порт, там мол.
Там двор, дом и мост.
Тут ра́ма, стол и стул.
Вот заво́д. Тут рабо́та.

*Ши, Ъб, Пп, Ззз, Жн, Лл, Рр
Страна. Брат. Работа. Дом и двор.
Зал. План.*

EXERCISES

1. Write each of the above letters and each of the above words three times.
2. Copy the above eight sentences.
3. Point out in the sentences the words which have two *a*'s. Determine which of the two letters *a* has a clear and distinct sound and which is pronounced more faintly.
4. Translate the following into Russian:

Here is a lamp, a chair, a table. There is a school-desk. Here is a plan.

УРОК 3—LESSON 3

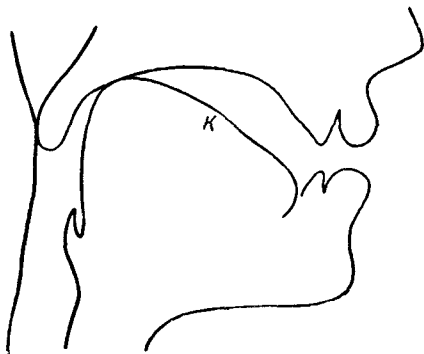
Speech Sounds and Letters:
The Consonants **г, к, х**.
The Unstressed Vowels **а** and **о**.
Orthography:
The Spelling of Unstressed Vowels.

SPEECH SOUNDS AND LETTERS

I. Consonants

Г, К

г is pronounced like *g* in the word *good*.
к is pronounced like *k* in the word *kind*.



The Russian **к** is pronounced without the slight aspiration accompanying the pronunciation of the English *k* in the words *kind*, *Kate*.

г is a voiced consonant; **к** is voiceless. Compare:

густ thick and **куст** bush

The letter **Гг** is called *зэ*; the letter **Кк** is called *ка*.

грамм gram	класс class (room)	Баку́ Baku (<i>a city</i>)
гром thunder	уро́к lesson	замо́к lock
ваго́н carriage	ка́рта map	стано́к lathe
бума́га paper	кана́л canal	вокза́л station
нога́ foot	рука́ hand	нау́ка science

Вот ка́рта и бума́га.
Там вокза́л. Там ваго́н.
Вот заво́д. Тут стано́к.