



# SPOKEN RUSSIAN

BOOK ONE



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藏书章

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with linguistic analysis by  
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**SPOKEN**

**RUSSIAN**

BOOK ONE

Spoken Language Services, Inc.

This is one of a series of self-teaching textbooks in more than thirty languages prepared under aegis of the American Council of Learned Societies and the Linguistic Society of America. There are four hours of recordings keyed to the printed text.

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## INTRODUCTION

**1. What We Are Trying to Do.** This course in spoken Russian is designed as a general introduction to the Russian language. It contains all the essential grammatical materials for learning to speak everyday Russian, and its vocabulary, though small, is built around a number of the most useful common situations and current topics. It is based on the principle that you must *hear* a language if you are to understand it when spoken, and that you must practice *speaking* it in order to master its sounds and its forms.

A teacher of Russian will not always be available for those for whom this book is written. So the course has been made as nearly self-teaching as possible. This manual covers the course completely and requires the use of no other reference material. It explains in detail, step by step, how the work is to proceed, and sets the stage for the listening and talking which you are to do.

**2. The Russian Language** is spoken by about 120 million people in the Soviet Union as their native language. In addition, there are about 40 million speakers of Ukrainian and 10 million speakers of White Russian. These two languages are closely related to Russian; the

people who speak them understand Russian when it is spoken to them, and learn the standard Russian language in school. Furthermore, the remaining 20 million people of the Soviet Union, whose native languages (Estonian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Rumanian, and various Finnish, Caucasian, and Turkic dialects) are very different from Russian, learn Russian as a second language. All together then, about 190 million people use Russian as their only language or as their most useful second language. Russian is also widely used as a commercial language in Mongolia and parts of Afghanistan, Persia, and Sinkiang.

Russian is one of the Slavic languages; the others are Ukrainian, White Russian, Polish, Czech, Slovak, Serbo-Croatian, Slovene, and Bulgarian. These languages are all very much alike, and a knowledge of Russian makes their acquisition relatively easy.

Russian is also distantly related to English and most of the other languages of Europe, and you will find, after you have overcome its first apparent strangeness, that its general structure is not very different from that of English.

Variations in language are perfectly natural and are

found in every language in the world. Americans from New England don't speak exactly like Americans from California, and Englishmen and Australians speak differently from all Americans and from each other. In Russian the differences between different regions are much less than in English and to a foreigner are barely noticeable. All the people you meet in Russia will understand the kind of Russian presented in this manual, and a great many of them, especially in the larger towns and cities and among the fairly well educated, will speak it exactly as you find it here. The people in the country areas and even some of the people in the cities may, however, speak a slightly different kind of Russian. So do not be surprised if the pronunciation you hear does not quite match what is given to you in this manual or what you hear in this course. Imitate the person with whom you are speaking. He, in turn, will do his best to pronounce so that he can be understood. Likewise, do not be surprised at the use of gestures; they are a normal accompaniment to the language; use the gestures yourself, if you can imitate them.

**3. How to Use This Manual.** To help you in learning to speak Russian, this course makes use of two tools: a native speaker of the language, and this book. The two must be used together, as neither one is of any use without the other.

This manual has been so organized that it can be used to study by yourself or in a group. The group may or may not have a regular teacher; if you have no regu-

lar teacher choose one of your own number (called the *Group Leader*) to lead the others and to direct their work.

**4. A Native Speaker** is the only good source of first-hand knowledge of the pronunciation and usage of any language. The method used in this manual requires the use of a native speaker of Russian, preferably a person who can be on hand through the course, or next best the voice of a native speaker recorded on cassettes that were prepared to accompany this manual. But even when a native speaker is present during the course, the cassettes can always be used for additional study. The native speaker of Russian is referred to as the Guide. The Guide's job is to act as a model for you to imitate, and as a check on your pronunciation; it is *not* his business to be a teacher or to "explain" the language to you. The Guide should be, if possible, a person who speaks more or less the type of Russian found in this manual, not merely the dialect of a particular region; but he should speak this type of Russian naturally and without affectation. He should be neither overeducated nor too uncultured.

**5. The Book** is divided into two major parts, each containing five *learning units* and one unit devoted to review. Each unit contains several sections, usually the following:

- A. Basic Sentences (with Hints on Pronunciation)
- B. Word Study and Review of Basic Sentences
- C. Review of Basic Sentences (Cont.)

- D. Listening In
- E. Conversation
- F. Conversation (Cont.)

These six sections are followed in each learning unit by a Finder List containing all the new words in the particular unit. At the end of the manual is included a summary of all word study material. All the words in the manual are included in two complete vocabularies, Russian-English and English-Russian.

**6. The Basic Sentences** in each unit are arranged so as to give you a number of new words and a number of new ways of saying things; first broken up into words or short phrases, and then combined in complete sentences. On the printed page, they are presented in parallel columns, which contain on the left the English equivalent, in the center and on the right the Russian material. The Russian material is given both in the *Aids to Listening* in the second column and in the *Conventional Spelling* in the third column.

When you have your book open at whatever unit you are going to study, and when the Guide is ready to begin speaking the words for you, or the Group Leader is ready to start the cassette records, you can start working on the Basic Sentences for that unit. If the Group Leader is working with the Guide, the Leader will read the English out loud, and the Guide will pronounce the Russian twice, each time allowing enough time for you to repeat the Russian after him. If you

are using the cassette records, two voices on the records will act as Leader and Guide for you. While you are listening to Guide, follow with your eyes the Aids to Listening. When you repeat the words and sentences after the Guide or cassette records, repeat them loud—good and loud. Never mumble. It is absolutely essential that you repeat after the Guide or cassette record each time, and that you imitate as closely as you can, and learn by heart what you have imitated.

**7. The Aids to Listening** which are given in the first twelve units, present a simplified spelling, which is designed to help you in remembering the Russian words *as they sound*. In the Aids to Listening, each Russian sound is represented by one letter or group of letters. Every letter (or group of letters) always stands for the same sound. Concentrate your attention first on the Aids to Listening, especially through Part I; in Part II you should pay more attention to the Conventional Russian Spelling.

**8. The Hints on Pronunciation** are given you to help you improve your speech in Russian. No language has sounds exactly like those of any other; and in Russian you will find some sounds which are quite absent from English, and others which are somewhat but not exactly like English sounds. After you have been through the Basic Sentences of the unit at least once, read through the Hints on Pronunciation carefully, having the Guide repeat or playing on the cassettes the words and sounds which are being discussed. Then go back and

listen again to the Basic Sentences, always repeating them after the Guide or cassette as you did before. Try to hear and imitate more precisely the sounds to which your attention has been called.

**9. Pronouncing to Be Understood.** Pronunciation is important for a number of reasons: if you expect to be understood when you speak a foreign language, you will have to pronounce it more or less the way the people are used to hearing it. If you are too far off from the usual way of talking the language, people won't be able to understand you at all. Furthermore, the nearer you get to pronouncing the precise sounds, the easier it will be for your ear to catch the sound as spoken by a native, and the more rapidly you will pick up new words and phrases and make progress in learning the language.

Learning to pronounce is really not hard, if you go about it in the right way. If you follow the suggestions and instructions given in this manual, and work carefully through all the hints, practices, and drills, you can expect to acquire the kind of pronunciation you need. Many students who are good mimics and who get into the spirit of speaking Russian will learn to talk like natives.

The only way to learn to pronounce like a native is to imitate. You must get a native to pronounce the words, then say them right after him, mimicking everything, even to the tone of his voice. This manual will make it easier for you by pointing out the sounds you need to observe, and by describing their peculiarities.

**10. Each Word Study** shows you new uses and new combinations of materials studied up to that point; you are taught how to take apart the words and phrases which you hear and how to make new words and phrases on the same model. Read each part of the Word Study carefully, and make sure you understand thoroughly everything which is said in them; then go back over the Basic Sentences with the Guide or cassettes, exactly as you did before. By this time you can start going through the Basic Sentences with your book closed, and you should now be able to understand the sentences without looking at the English equivalent.

**11. The Listening In** section gives you a number of conversations, anecdotes, or stories, which use the vocabulary and constructions you have learned in each unit and in all those preceding. Its purpose is to give you practice in listening to and understanding the foreign language as you might overhear it in normal conversation among Russian-speaking people, and to furnish you with models for your own conversation practice.

**12. The Conversation Practice** represents the central aim of the course. In order to converse well, you should know well everything that has been introduced in the unit you are working on, and everything that you have learned in previous units as well. When you take part in a conversation, do so as easily and naturally as you can. Don't try to bring in new words and phrases that you haven't learned in the material you have

studied in this course; stick to what you have learned and practice it thoroughly.

**13. Talking Russian.** In speaking Russian you should not first figure out what you want to say in English and then translate it into Russian, word for word. This will get you nowhere. You should apply, instead, the words and expressions you already know to the given situation. If you cannot immediately rattle off a word or expression to fit a particular situation, go on to another, or ask a question, but under no circumstances attempt to compose. As soon as you do, you lapse into English speech habits and stop learning Russian and Russian speech habits.

When people speak to you, they will frequently use words and expressions you do not know. If you can't guess their meaning, try to find out by asking questions in Russian, or by asking them to repeat slowly, or to explain in simpler terms. If you (and they!) are good natured, and reasonable about it, you won't have any trouble. *On the contrary you will constantly learn more*

and will practice the Russian you already know in the process.

Your learning of the language will not stop, therefore, when you have mastered this material. You will, rather, be able to get around among the people, practice what you know, and steadily pick up more and more words and phrases. Try to learn them thoroughly. Carry along a notebook to jot down what you want to remember; you can then review this material from time to time.

You should not wait until you have finished this manual before you start using the language. Start practicing at once. When you have done the first unit, try out the expressions on as many people as possible. When you try out your Russian at this early stage, make it slide off your tongue as smoothly as possible. Be careful not to slip back into a careless English-like pronunciation. Listen closely to what the person says in response, trying to catch as much as you can. The first few times it may be hard to catch even the words you know, but you will improve rapidly if you keep on practicing every chance you get.



# CONTENTS

## PART ONE

UNIT	Page	UNIT	Page
1. GETTING AROUND. Greetings and general phrases. Places and directions. Comment on Aids to Listening. Buying things.	1	4. WHERE ARE YOU FROM? Accusative case. Verb forms.	88
2. THE FAMILY. Cases. Nominative case. Masculine, Feminine, Neuter. Singular, Plural.	29	5. THE WEATHER. Locative case. Verbs.	112
3. MEETING PEOPLE. Genitive case.	61	6. REVIEW.	137

## PART TWO

7. AT THE AIRPORT. Higher numbers. Time by the clock.	144	10. WRITING A LETTER. Regular verbs. Durative and Punctual verbs.	229
8. LAUNDRY AND BARBER. More numbers. Imperative form. Reflexive form. Compound verbs. Dative case.	172	11. EATING AND DRINKING. Durative and Punctual verbs. Actual and Iterative verbs.	264
9. FINDING A ROOM. Short forms of adjectives. Instrumental case.	201	12. REVIEW.	295
		SUMMARY OF RUSSIAN GRAMMAR	300
		RUSSIAN-ENGLISH WORD LIST	327
		ENGLISH-RUSSIAN INDEX	365
		KEY TO EXERCISES AND TESTS	

# PART ONE

# UNIT 1

## GETTING AROUND

*To the Group Leader:* Each *Unit* of this course is divided into six *Sections*. It is suggested that the group spend not less than fifty minutes on each *Section*.

Before you get the group together to work on this first unit, read carefully the following material up to the heading *Useful Words and Phrases* on page 4. When the group meets, read the material aloud to them or have some other member of the group do the reading. The students will follow the reading with their books open. Be sure that your Guide, or the phonograph and records, are ready before the group meets for work on Section A. See that the Guide is supplied with a copy of the manual *Справочник Руководителя*, which tells him just what he is to do and gives him the Russian he is to speak to the group.

You should look through all of the sections of the unit, reading the directions carefully, so that you will have in mind the general plan of the work. Always get clearly in mind the directions for a section before you take that section up in group meeting.

This unit gives you the most immediate and necessary expressions that you will need in meeting people, asking your way, buying things, and counting. The amount of learning and memorizing required for the first unit is considerably greater than that for any later unit. You are given such a large dose at the start because this unit is meant to be a kind of "language first aid" which gives you enough useful expressions to enable you to make

ordinary wants known and to carry on a simple conversation in Russian from the very start.

All but a few of these words and phrases are selected from the phonograph records for the *Russian Language Guide* (introductory Series) (TM 30-344). If you have worked with these records, the present unit will serve as a review.

### SECTION A—USEFUL WORDS AND PHRASES

In the list of *Useful Words and Phrases* which follows, the English equivalent of these words and phrases is given at the left of the page. Opposite, in the middle column, is a simplified spelling of the Russian which will help you in getting the sounds. In the third column

is the ordinary or *conventional* Russian spelling. The *Leader* of the group will first read the *English Equivalent* and pause for the *Guide* to speak the Russian. Every member of the group then repeats after the Guide. The Guide will then say the Russian a second time and

everybody will repeat after him as before. The Leader will then read the next English equivalent and the Guide and group will follow the procedure indicated.

If no Guide is available, the *phonograph records* provided for the course should be used. When the group is ready, the Leader will begin playing the appropriate record and the group will repeat right after the Russian speaker during the silences on the record. The phonograph records can be used with profit even in cases where a Guide is available because they can be heard between meetings of the group, whenever it is convenient to you; they furnish additional practice in hearing Russian; you may listen only to those portions which you have found difficult; and the records may be played as often as you wish. In case the speaker on the record has a Russian pronunciation different from that of your Guide, use the records only for listening and understanding and not for imitating.

Whether you are working with a Guide or only with the phonograph records, you must repeat each Russian word and phrase in a loud, clear voice, trying at all times to imitate the pronunciation as closely as you can. Keep constantly in mind the meaning of the Russian you are about to hear, glancing at the English equivalent whenever you need to remind yourself. When you are hearing the Russian, keep your eyes on the *Aids to Listening*. But whenever the written form seems to you to differ from the spoken sound, follow the spoken sound always.

Learning to understand and pronounce a language is not really hard. Every one of us learned to do this as a

2 [1-A]

child, and all over the world children learn to speak all kinds of languages without any trouble. The difficulty that an adult faces in learning a foreign language as you are now learning Russian, is that the adult already has a set of habits for pronouncing his own language and this makes it harder for him to learn new ones than for a child who is starting from scratch. That is why it is so important that you should not be afraid of mimicking even when what you hear may sound strange to you. Don't be afraid to let yourself go. You will never learn to speak a language if you don't plunge right in as soon as you can. Never mind if you do make mistakes at first. The important thing is for you to try to say the words and phrases. Imitate your Guide with the same spirit and enthusiasm that you use in mimicking a person whose speech sounds peculiar to you. You will find that if you do this, your Guide will not think you are making fun of him; instead he will probably smile because what you have said to him sounds like Russian.

In the first five units, do not attempt under any circumstances to pronounce the Russian before you have heard it. You will only make trouble for yourself if you try to guess the pronunciation by "reading" the *Aids to Listening*.

If you are working with a Guide who does not understand English, ask the Leader of your group to demonstrate for you and the Guide what hand signals are to be used to let the Guide know when you want him to read more slowly or to repeat. They are as follows:

1. Index finger raised: BEGIN
2. Hand raised, palm toward the Guide: STOP
3. Palm down, hand moved slowly in semi-circle: SLOWER
4. Beckoning with index finger: REPEAT
5. Hand held palm up and moved quickly up and down: LOUDER

Remember that each phrase you say has a real meaning in Russian and hence you should always act as though you were really saying something to someone

else. You will learn fastest if, when your book is open, you follow these steps:

1. Keep your eyes on the *Aids to Listening* as you listen to the Russian being spoken.
2. Repeat immediately what you have heard.
3. Keep in mind the meaning of what you are saying.

Begin the words and phrases as soon as your Guide is ready or when the Leader of your group is ready to play the first phonograph record.

**To the Group Leader:** Give the members of the group a chance to ask questions about the instructions. Make sure that everyone understands just what he is to do. Then have the students go through the list of *Useful Words and Phrases* once with the books open, repeating in unison after the Guide. Following this first practice, read with the group the *Comment on the Aids to Listening* on page 7. Make sure that everyone understands it.

Now go through the list a second time, much as you did before. And finally, go through it a third time, but let the students take turns repeating individually after the Guide—a sentence to a student. Indicate the order in which the repetitions are to go, who is first, who next, and so on. Continue this individual repetition as long as the fifty-minute period permits. Then, just before dismissing the group, read with them the paragraph headed *Check Yourself* on page 11.

Here are some hints that will make the work of the group more effective.

1. Insist that everyone speak up. Don't allow any mumbling! Each member of the group must be able to hear what is being said at all times.
2. Indicate to the Guide that he is to repeat whenever the pronunciation is bad and to keep on repeating until he gets a pronunciation that sounds like Russian.
3. Urge everyone to mimic to the limit every sound, every inflection, even the mannerisms of the Guide.
4. Keep the work moving. Don't let it drag at any time. See that everyone is listening, not only to the Guide, but to himself and to the others as they repeat after the Guide.
5. Go through all the work yourself. Repeat with the others and take your turn at the individual repetitions.

## 1. Useful Words and Phrases

Here is a list of useful words and phrases you will need in Russian. *You should learn these by heart.*

### Greetings and General Phrases

**NOTE:** Words enclosed in brackets [ ] are not expressed in the Russian. Words enclosed in parentheses ( ) help to explain the meaning of the Russian but are not necessary in English. Words enclosed in single quotation marks ' ' are literal or word-for-word equivalents.

— ENGLISH EQUIVALENTS —	— AIDS TO LISTENING —	— CONVENTIONAL SPELLING —
<b>Unit 1, Record Side 1, beginning. (78 RPM)</b>		<b>(33½ RPM) Record Side 1, beginning.</b>
Hello! (How do you do?)	<i>ZDRastvuyfi!</i>	Здравствуйте!
how	<i>KAK</i>	как
you	<i>VI</i>	вы
(you) are getting along	<i>pazhiVAyiji</i>	поживаете
How are you?	<i>KAK vi pazhiVAyiji?</i>	Как вы поживаете?
Fine or all right.	<i>xaraSHO.</i>	Хорошо.
Thanks.	<i>spaSiba.</i>	Спасибо.
And you?	<i>a VI?</i>	А вы?
also	<i>TO zhi</i>	тоже
well	<i>xaraSHO</i>	хорошо
[I'm] fine too, thanks.	<i>TO zhi xaraSHO, spaSiba.</i>	Тоже хорошо, спасибо.
Not [so] well.	<i>ni xaraSHO.</i>	Нехорошо.
comrade or friend	<i>taVArishch</i>	товарищ
Mr. Ivanov.	<i>taVArishch ivanOF.</i>	Товарищ Иванов.
4 [1-A]		

Mrs. or Miss Ivanov.

Mr. Smith.

Mr. Smith.

Mrs. or Miss Smith.

Do you understand?

Do you understand Russian?

Yes.

No (or There is no.)

I

I understand.

I don't understand.

[I] don't understand.

Excuse [me].

what

you

(you) said

What did you say?

please or you're welcome

(you) speak

slowly

Please speak slowly.

*ta VArishch ivaNOva.*

*gaspaDIN SMIT.*

*grazhdanIN SMIT.*

*graZHDANka SMIT.*

*paņiMAyiji?*

*paņiMAyiji pa RUški?*

*DA.*

*NET.*

*YA*

*YA paņiMAyu.*

*yá ŋi paņiMAyu.*

*ŋi paņiMAyu.*

*izyiNIji.*

*SHTO*

*VI*

*skaZAŋi*

*SHTO ví skaZAŋi?*

*paZHALsta*

*gavaRIji*

*MEdŋina, MEdŋinna*

*paZHALsta, gavaRIji MEdŋinna.*

Товарищ Иванова.

Господин Смит.

Гражданин Смит.

Гражданка Смит.

Понимаете?

Понимаете по-русски?

Да.

Нет.

я

Я понимаю.

Я не понимаю.

Не понимаю.

Извините.

что

вы

сказали

Что вы сказали?

пожалуйста

говорите

медленно

Пожалуйста, говорите медленно.

(you) repeat  
Please repeat.

*paftaRIji*  
*paZHALsta, paftaRIji.*

повторите  
Пожалуйста, повторите.

### Places and Directions

where  
restaurant  
Where [is the] restaurant? *or*  
Where [is a] restaurant?

*GDE*  
*ristaRAN*  
*GDE ristaRAN?*

где  
ресторан  
Где ресторан?

### Unit 1, Record Side 2, beginning. (78 RPM)

here is  
hotel  
Here's [the] hotel *or*  
Here's [a] hotel.

*VOT*  
*gaSṬIṇica*  
*VOT gaSṬIṇica.*

вот  
гостиница  
Вот гостиница.

(railroad) station  
toilet  
To [the] right.

*vagZAL*  
*uBORnaya*  
*na PRAva.*

вокзал  
уборная  
Направо.

To [the] left.

*na LEva.*

Налево.

Here.

*ZDES.*

Здесь.

There.

*TAM.*

Там.

The restaurant is to the right.

*ristaRAN na PRAva.*

Ресторан направо.

The hotel is to the left.

*gaSṬIṇica na LEva.*

Гостиница налево.

The toilet is here.

*uBORnaya ZDES.*

Уборная здесь.

what	<i>SHTO</i>	что
this	<i>Eta</i>	это
What [is] this?	<i>SHTO Eta?</i>	Что это?
This [is the] station.	<i>Eta vagZAL.</i>	Это вокзал.

After you have gone through the *Useful Words and Phrases* once, read the following:

## 2. Comment on the Aids to Listening

The best way to learn any language is to listen to a native speaker of it, and then copy exactly what he says. That is why we ask you to listen carefully to your Guide (or the speaker on the records) and imitate him as exactly as you can. It would be ideal if you could remember everything he says simply by listening and repeating. However, most of us need to have something on paper to remind us of what we have heard. This is what the *Aids to Listening* are meant for. They are simply an attempt to put down systematically on paper the sounds that you hear on the records or that your Guide will probably say. (Later on, in Part II, you will learn to read the regular Russian spelling; pay no attention to it now.) Remember, however, that they are only *aids* to listening. The listening itself is still the most important thing; the printed material is just a reminder.

In the *Aids to Listening* capital letters are used to show which syllables in a word or phrase are most strongly accented, that is, spoken the loudest. For example, we would write for English: *mister JONES will conDUCT the SERvice*; or: *his CONduct is VERy BAD.*

Notice that words like *MISter, WILL, THE, HIS, IS* are strongly accented if they stand all alone, but they are usually not accented in a sentence.

In the *Aids to Listening* you will sometimes find an accent mark over a small letter; for instance: *á*. This means that the sound is a little louder than the sound indicated by other small letters, but less loud than that which is indicated by capital letters. For example, we would write for English *hánd me the PENcil*; or *MADison stréet* (but *MADison AVenue*).

Also, in the *Aids to Listening* you will see that a good many letters have commas under them; for instance: *í, ŷ*. You have probably noticed that where we place these commas the Russian has a peculiar sound, much as if the sound of *y* in *yes* were mixed in. This will be explained later in this Unit; you will do best if you try to get the sound by listening and imitating before you read the explanation. The sounds which we mark with a comma are called *palatal consonants*. The sounds *ch* and *y*, which are much the same as in English *church* and *yes*, are also called palatal consonants. The remain-



ing consonant sounds are called *plain consonants*; for instance: *t, sh*.

1. We can begin with the *vowels*. Russian has five vowels. In the *Aids to Listening* we use the five letters *a, e, i, o, u* to indicate the Russian vowels. The sounds of the Russian vowels are plainest when they are loudly stressed; this is when the *Aid to Listening* writes them with capital letters: *A, E, I, O, U*.

Notice, first, that the Russian vowels are rather short; they are never drawled the way some vowels are drawled in natural English pronunciation. The Russian vowel sounds are quite different from ours; you will have to listen and imitate carefully. If you have a chance to hear a Russian speak English with an imperfect pronunciation, you may find it helpful to mimic his English; probably his English seems queer in part because he is using Russian vowel sounds instead of English ones.

The Russian vowel sound which we write as *I* or *i* has two varieties.

When the Russian *i*-sound comes at the beginning of a word, or after a palatal consonant (that is, after *ch* or *y* or after a consonant that we mark with a comma underneath), it sounds like the English vowel in *eat, cheap, deep*, or like English *i* in *machine*; only the Russian vowel is much shorter than ours.

When the Russian *i*-sound comes anywhere else (that is, after a plain consonant), it has a sound that sometimes seems very queer to our ears. It is something like our *i*-vowel in *bill, hill*, but there is something muffled about

it. This is because in the Russian vowel the tongue is drawn back in the mouth. Pull your tongue back, as if you were gagging. Imitate the Guide or the phonograph record and you will soon get the right effect.

The Russian vowel which we write as *E* or *e* is much like the English vowel of *bet*. Before a palatal consonant it is likely to sound more like the vowel of *bait*, only it is shorter.

The Russian vowel which we write as *A* or *a* is like the English vowel in *father*, except that it is much shorter.

The Russian vowel which we write as *O* or *o* resembles the English vowel of *four* or *board* (and is never like English *o* in *hot*). Only the Russian vowel is shorter and has an odd sound because the Russian slightly rounds and sticks out his lips when forming this vowel. Be sure to imitate this.

The Russian vowel which we write as *U* or *u* resembles the English vowel of *put, good, pull* (and never that of *but, cut*). Only, the Russian *u* has an odd sound because, as in Russian *o*, the lips are slightly rounded and protruded. Be sure to imitate this so as to get the proper Russian effect.

When the Russian vowels are *loudly stressed* we write them with capital letters: *A, E, I, O, U*. When they are *weakly stressed* they still have the same sounds, only less loud; we write them with an accent mark: *á, é, í, ó, ú*. When the Russian vowels are *unstressed* they are shortened and slurred, very much like unstressed vowels in English; then we write plain, small *a, e, i, u*.