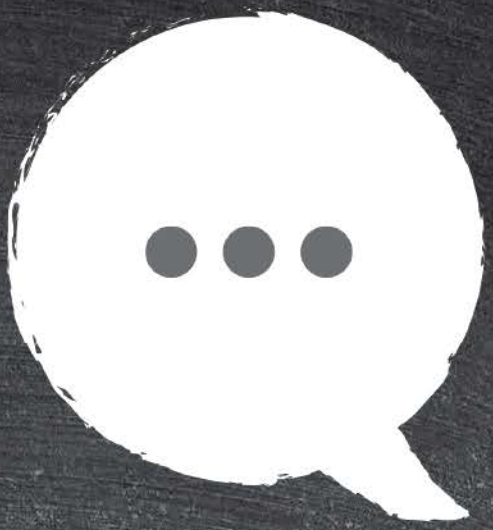
PolishPod101.com



# If you love the Polish language, then you'll love this!

Get our Complete **Polish** Learning Program at **PolishPod101.com.**



- **Speak Polish From Your First Lesson**
- **Access hundreds of Audio & Video Courses by Real Teachers**
- **Get FREE New Lessons Every Week**
- **Learn Anywhere, Anytime on Any Android Device or Computer**

**Go to**
**PolishPod101.com**
**and sign up for your**

# FREE

**Lifetime Account!**



PolishPod101.com

LESSON NOTES

# Basic Bootcamp S1 #1 Self Introduction: Basic Greetings in Polish

## CONTENTS

2 Polish
2 English
2 Vocabulary
3 Sample Sentences
4 Vocabulary Phrase Usage
5 Grammar
7 Cultural Insight

# 1



COPYRIGHT © 2013 INNOVATIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

## POLISH

1. Jan: Dzień dobry. Nazywam się Jan Nowak.
2. Anna: Dzień dobry. Anna Kot.
3. Jan: Miło mi panią poznać.
4. Anna: Bardzo mi miło.

## ENGLISH

1. Jan: Good morning. My name is Jan Nowak.
2. Anna: Good morning. Anna Kot.
3. Jan: It is nice to meet you, ma'am.
4. Anna: Very nice to meet you.

## VOCABULARY

| Polish | English | Class | Gender |
|---|---|---|---|
| mi | "me" | noun | |
| nazywać się | to be called | verb | |
| poznać | "to meet, to get to know" | verb | |
| pani | ma'am, ms. mrs | noun | feminine |
| dobry | good | adjective | masculine |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| bardzo | very much, very | adverb | |
| dzień | day | noun | masculine |
| mieć (mam, masz) | to have | verb | |
| imię | first name | noun | neuter |
| być | to be | verb | |
| cześć | Hello, Hi. | noun | |

## SAMPLE SENTENCES

| | |
|---|---|
| **Miło mi cię poznać.**<br>It's nice to meet you. | **Nazywam się Tomasz Brzozowski.**<br>My name is Tomasz Brzozowski. |
| **Nazywam się Tomasz Król.**<br>My name is Tomasz Krol. | **Bardzo mi miło pana poznać.**<br>"It's very nice to meet you, sir." |
| **Poznał Anię na studiach.**<br>"He met Ann at the university." | **Dzień dobry, pani Anno.**<br>Good morning, Miss Anna. |
| **To jest pani Anna.**<br>This is Ms. Anna. | **Dzień dobry, pani Anno.**<br>Good morning, Miss Anna. |
| **To jest dobry sklep.**<br>This is a good store. | **Bardzo lubię kawę.**<br>I like coffee very much. |
| **Bardzo za tobą tęsknię.**<br>I miss you very much. | **Jest piękny dzień.**<br>It's a beautiful day. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Cały dzień spędziłam na zakupach.**<br>I (female) spent the whole day shopping. | **Mam dwie siostry.**<br>"I have two sisters." |
| **Mam na imię Beata.**<br>"My name is Beata." | **Basia to ładne imię.**<br>Barbara is a nice name. |
| **Podoba mi się jej imię.**<br>I like her name. | **Jestem z Polski.**<br>I am from Poland. |
| **Jestem Tomek.**<br>I am Tom. | **Cześć, Ewa.**<br>Hi, Eva. |
| **Cześć, Adam.**<br>Hello, Adam. | |

## VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

***Cześć*** is the universal word for "hello." If you are addressing an older person, someone you don't know, or in a formal setting, you should use the greeting *Dzień dobry,* which stands for both "Good morning" and "Good afternoon."

The verb *nazywać się* literally translates as "to be called," but its English equivalent is "My name is." When using this verb, please give your first and last name.

**For Example:**

1. *Nazywam się Jan Nowak.*
   "My name is Jan Nowak."

We usually use this form of introduction in a formal setting.

When you are among friends, your first name will be just enough. Use the phrase: ***Mam na imię*** ____, followed by your first name.

**For Example:**

1. *Mam na imię Beata.*
   "My name is Beata."

This phrase literally means "I have for my name Beata." In our lessons, we will use the translation "My name is Beata."

The phrase ***Miło mi*** literally translates as "It's nice for me." It's perfect in both formal and informal situations.

## GRAMMAR

**The Focus of This Basic Bootcamp Lesson Is to Teach You Some Essentials of Polish to Get You Speaking Right from Your First Lesson.**
***Bardzo mi miło.***
**"Very nice to meet you."**

---

We use the lines in this dialogue for self-introduction.

**For Example:**

Formal:

1. *Dzień dobry. Nazywam się Jan Nowak.*
   "Good morning. My name is Jan Nowak."

Informal:

1. *Cześć. Mam na imię Beata.*
   "Hello. My name is Beata."

The greeting *Dzień dobry* ("Good morning" or "Good afternoon") is made up of two words: *dzień*, meaning "day," and *dobry*, meaning "good."

If you would like to ask someone his or her name in an informal setting, a fellow student for

example, you should say:

1. *Jak masz na imię?*
   "What is your name?" (first name only) or

2. *Jak się nazywasz?*
   "What is your name?" (first and last name)

Now let's look at the same questions but in a formal setting.

1. *Jak ma pani na imię?*
   "What is your name, ma'am?" (first name only)

2. *Jak ma pan na imię?*
   "What is your name, sir?" (first name only) or

3. *Jak się pani nazywa?*
   "What is your name, ma'am?" (first and last name)

4. *Jak się pan nazywa?*
   "What is your name, sir?" (first and last name)

## The Responses

---

1. *Mam na imię Beata.*
   "My name is Beata."

2. *Nazywam się Beata Kot.*
   "My name is Beata Kot."

Then you can add one of the following polite responses.

**For Example:**

1. *Miło mi.*
   "Nice to meet you."

2. *Miło mi panią poznać.*
   "Nice to meet you, ma'am."

3. *Miło mi pana poznać.*
   "Nice to meet you, sir."

### Verbs in Polish

---

In a dictionary, you will find verbs in their infinitive form. The infinitive form usually ends in *-ć*.

**For Example:**

| *Polish* | "English" |
|---|---|
| *nazywać się* | "to be called" |
| *poznać* | "to get to know," "to meet" |
| *być* | "to be" |

You can find these verbs in our Vocabulary table in this lesson. Since in Polish we conjugate the verbs, we are always going to provide you with the first- and second-person singular present tense conjugations.

**For Example:**

1. *być (jestem, jesteś)*
   "to be" ("I am," "you are")

This way you will have a chance to get familiar with some basic conjugations as well as conjugations of some irregular verbs where the conjugated form differs completely from the infinitive.

## CULTURAL INSIGHT

## My Little Polish Nickname

---

Poles like to use diminutive names, especially when they are addressing someone they know or like very much. For example, the name *Katarzyna* ("Kathrine") can become *Kasia, Kaśka,* or *Kasieńka*, and the name *Stanisław* can be changed to at least *Staś, Stach,* or *Staszek.* You can do it with almost any Polish name. Try it out when you're in Poland. Good luck!!!

LESSON NOTES

# Basic Bootcamp S1 #2
# Basic Polish Sentence Structure

## CONTENTS

2 Polish
2 English
2 Vocabulary
2 Sample Sentences
3 Grammar

# 2


COPYRIGHT © 2013 INNOVATIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

## POLISH

1. Beata: Cześć. Mam na imię Beata. Jestem Polką.

2. John: Cześć. Jestem John. Jestem Amerykaninem.

## ENGLISH

1. Beata: Hello. My name is Beata. I am a Pole.

2. John: Hi. I am John. I am an American.

## VOCABULARY

| Polish | English | Class | Gender |
|---|---|---|---|
| być | to be | verb | |
| Polka | "Polish (female)" | noun | feminine |
| Polak | "Polish (male)" | noun | masculine |
| cześć | Hello, Hi. | noun | |
| Amerykanka | American (female) | noun | feminine |
| Amerykanin | American (male) | noun | masculine |
| imię | first name | noun | neuter |
| mieć | to have | verb | |

## SAMPLE SENTENCES

| | |
|---|---|
| **Jestem z Polski.**<br>I am from Poland. | **Jestem Tomek.**<br>I am Tom. |
| **Jej mama jest Polką.**<br>"Her mom is a Pole." | **Ewa jest Polką.**<br>"Eve is a Pole." |
| **On jest miłym Polakiem.**<br>"He is a nice Pole." | **Krzysztof jest Polakiem.**<br>"Chris is a Pole." |
| **Cześć, Ewa.**<br>Hi, Eva. | **Cześć, Adam.**<br>Hello, Adam. |
| **Ona jest bardzo miłą Amerykanką.**<br>She is a very nice American. | **Kate jest piękną Amerykanką.**<br>Kate is a beautiful American. |
| **Jesteś wysokim Amerykaninem.**<br>You are a tall American. | **John jest Amerykaninem.**<br>John is an American. |
| **Mam na imię Beata.**<br>"My name is Beata." | **Basia to ładne imię.**<br>Barbara is a nice name. |
| **Podoba mi się jej imię.**<br>I like her name. | **Mam komputer.**<br>I have a computer. |
| **Dziewczyna ma skarbonkę.**<br>The girl has a piggy bank. | |

## GRAMMAR

**The Focus of This Bootcamp Lesson Is to Teach You How to Talk about Your Ethnicity.**

***Cześć. Jestem John. Jestem Amerykaninem.***
**"Hi. I am John. I am an American."**

---

In this lesson, we heard the following phrases:

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| *Cześć.* | "Hello." |
| *Mam na imię Beata.* | "My name is Beata." |
| *Jestem Polką.* | "I am a Pole." |
| *Cześć.* | "Hi." |
| *Jestem John.* | "I am John." |
| *Jestem Amerykaninem.* | "I am an American." |

Other Countries and Ethnicities:

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| *Niemcy* | "Germany" |
| *Niemiec* | "German (male)" |
| *Niemka* | "German (female)" |
| *Anglia* | "England" |
| *Anglik* | "English (male)" |
| *Angielka* | "English (female)" |

Expressing Ethnicities:

| *Polish* | "English" |
|---|---|
| *Jesteśmy Anglikami.* | "We are Englishmen." |
| *Jesteśmy Angielkami.* | "We are Englishwomen." |
| *Jesteś Angielką.* | "You are an Englishwoman." |
| *Jesteś Anglikiem.* | "You are an Englishman." |

As you have noticed, in Polish we use both male and female forms to express nationality.

**For Example:**

1. *Anglik*
   "an Englishman"

2. *Angielka*
   "an Englishwoman"

In the plural, however, two forms may appear. When you have a group of males, you will use the masculine plural form.

**For Example:**

1. *Oni są Anglikami.*
   "They are Englishmen."

If you have a group of only females, you will use the feminine form.

**For Example:**

1. *One są Angielkami.*
   "They are Englishwomen."

If the group consists of both males and females, you have to apply the masculine form.

**For Example:**

1. *Oni są Anglikami.*
   "They are Englishmen and Englishwomen."

## Word Order in Simple Polish Sentences

---

The following sentences demonstrate the basic word order of a Polish sentence:

Subject + Verb + Object

In many instances, English takes the same word order for its basic sentences.

**For Example:**

1. *On pije herbatę.*
   "He drinks tea."

2. *Czytam książkę.*
   "I read a book."

LESSON NOTES

# Basic Bootcamp S1 #3
# Useful Phrases for Learning Polish

## CONTENTS

2 Polish
2 English
2 Vocabulary
3 Sample Sentences
4 Vocabulary Phrase Usage
4 Grammar

# 3


COPYRIGHT © 2013 INNOVATIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

## POLISH

1. A: Jak powiedzieć po polsku "water?"
2. B: Woda.
3. A: Proszę powtórzyć.
4. B: Woda.
5. A: Proszę to napisać.

## ENGLISH

1. A: How do you say "water" in Polish?
2. B: "Woda."
3. A: Repeat, please.
4. B: "Woda."
5. A: Write that down, please.

## VOCABULARY

| Polish | English | Class | Gender |
|---|---|---|---|
| jak | how | pronoun | |
| powiedzieć (powiem, powiesz) | "to say, to tell" | verb | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| polski | Polish | adjective | masculine |
| proszę | please | expression | |
| powtórzyć | "to repeat" | verb | |
| to | this | pronoun | neuter |
| napisać | "to write; to write down" | verb | |

## SAMPLE SENTENCES

| | |
|---|---|
| **Jak masz na imię?**<br>What's your name? | **Jak się to pisze?**<br>How do you write this? |
| **Jak długo uczysz się polskiego?**<br>How long have you been studying Polish? | **Lubię się uczyć polskiego.**<br>"I like to study Polish." |
| **Polski jest trudny.**<br>Polish is difficult. | **Mówię po polsku.**<br>I speak Polish. |
| **Proszę mówić wolniej.**<br>Speak more slowly, please. | **Proszę mleko.**<br>Milk, please. |
| **Proszę to powtórzyć jeszcze raz.**<br>"Repeat that once again, please." | **Proszę powtórzyć.**<br>"Can you repeat that, please?" |
| **Co to jest?**<br>What's this? | **Co to znaczy?**<br>What does it mean? |
| **To jest gazeta.**<br>This is a newspaper. | **Proszę to dla mnie napisać.**<br>"Write that down for me, please." |

**Ona napisała książkę.**

"She wrote a book."

## VOCABULARY PHRASE USAGE

In Polish, we can use the word *Proszę* in many different situations. In today's lesson, we introduced *proszę* as "please" since we were practicing requests.

However, there are other meanings to *Proszę:*

1. When we address someone politely or we want to attract someone's attention, we can, for example, say *Proszę Pani*, meaning "Excuse me, Miss," or *Proszę Państwa*, meaning "Ladies and Gentlemen."
2. When someone knocks on the door, saying *Proszę* means "Please come in."
3. Also, we widely use *Proszę* at stores. For example, when the shop assistant addresses the customer, he or she can say *Proszę*, meaning "Can I help you?"
4. If we did not understand something and we want the speaker to repeat it, it's absolutely proper to say *Proszę?* to mean "Excuse me."
5. In the situation when we are giving something to someone, *Proszę* means "Here you are."

## GRAMMAR

**The Focus of This Bootcamp Lesson Is to Teach You How to Express a Request**

---

One of the possible ways to express a request in Polish is to use the verb *proszę* ("please") plus another verb in its infinitive form.

In this lesson, we heard phrases such as:

1. *Proszę powtórzyć*.
   "Repeat, please."

2. *Proszę to napisać.*
   "Write that down, please."

In both examples, we start the sentences with the verb *proszę* ("please") followed by the infinitives *powtórzyć* ("to repeat") and *napisać* ("to write"). You already know how to recognize an infinitive form from Basic Bootcamp Lesson 1.

Let's give you some more examples to use:

**For Example:**

1. *Proszę usiąść.*
   "Sit down, please."

2. *Proszę to przeczytać*.
   "Read that, please."

Bear in mind, though, that the sentence structure of all of the above examples differs from their English equivalents. In Polish you start the sentence with *proszę* ("please") and then you say what you're asking for using an infinitive form, whereas in English we can structure it either way.

You can formulate any request you want using this pattern, not only in a classroom but also throughout your whole stay in Poland.

LESSON NOTES

# Basic Bootcamp S1 #4 Counting from 1-100 in Polish

## CONTENTS

2 Polish
2 English
2 Vocabulary
2 Sample Sentences
3 Grammar
4 Cultural Insight

# 4



COPYRIGHT © 2013 INNOVATIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

## POLISH

1. A: Jeden, dwa, trzy, cztery, pięć, sześć, siedem, osiem, dziewięć, dziesięć.

## ENGLISH

1. A: One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten.

## VOCABULARY

| Polish | English | Class |
|---|---|---|
| jeden | one (1) | numeral |
| trzy | three (3) | numeral |
| dwa | two (2) | numeral |
| cztery | four (4) | numeral |
| pięć | five (5) | numeral |
| sześć | six (6) | numeral |
| osiem | "eight (8)" | numeral |
| dziewięć | nine (9) | numeral |
| dziesięć | ten (10) | numeral |
| siedem | seven (7) | numeral |

## SAMPLE SENTENCES

| | |
|---|---|
| **jeden rok** | **Mam tylko jeden złoty.** |
| For one year. | I only have one złoty. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Proszę jedno jabłko.**<br>One apple, please. | **Znam trzy języki obce.**<br>I know three languages. |
| **On ma trzy siostry.**<br>He has three sisters. | **Tak, byłem dwa razy.**<br>Yes, I've been twice. |
| **Proszę dwa jabłka.**<br>Two apples, please. | **Ona ma dwa koty.**<br>She has two cats. |
| **Herbata kosztuje cztery złote.**<br>Tea costs four złoty. | **cztery pory roku**<br>four seasons of the year |
| **Pięć złotych.**<br>It's 5 zloty. | **Mam pięć batoników.**<br>I have five chocolate bars. |
| **pięć dziewczyn**<br>five girls | **Proszę sześć kaw.**<br>Six coffees, please. |
| **sześć butelek wódki**<br>six bottles of vodka | **Ona ma osiem kotów.**<br>"She has eight cats." |
| **Kasia ma dziewięć lat.**<br>Kate is nine. | **Koty mają dziewięć żyć.**<br>Cats have nine lives. |
| **Mam tylko dziesięć minut.**<br>I only have ten minutes. | **Proszę dziesięć piw.**<br>Ten beers, please. |
| **Teresa ma siedem kotów.**<br>Teresa has seven cats. | **Ona kupiła siedem t-shirtów.**<br>She bought seven t-shirts. |

## GRAMMAR

**The Focus of This Lesson Is Learning Polish Numbers.**

***Jeden, dwa, trzy, cztery...***

**"One, two, three, four..."**

---

Even though numbers in Polish at first can seem quite difficult, in reality they are not that complicated. We will show you a system that will help you memorize Polish numbers. What we ask of you is perfect command of numbers one through ten. The rest will be very easy.

To be able to form numbers eleven through nineteen you simply have to add the part *-naście*, which stands for "teen," to the numbers one through nine (please bear in mind, though, that numbers one through nine undergo some small changes.) For example, while there is no change in *dwa* + *naście* = *dwanaście*, the following change occurs for the number "sixteen": *szes* + *naście* = *szesnaście.* Notice the change from *sześć* to *szes* in this example.

We have a very similar situation in creating multiples of ten. This time we have to add the following parts to the numbers two through nine:

1. *dzieścia* in *dwadzieścia* ("twenty")
2. *dzieści* in *trzydzieści* ("thirty") and *czterdzieści* ("forty")
3. *dziesiąt* in numbers *pięćdziesiąt* ("fifty") through *dziewięćdziesiąt* ("ninety")

Here are some more numbers we discussed in the lesson:

| **Number** | ***Polish*** |
|---|---|
| 25 | *dwadzieścia pięć* |
| 33 | *trzydzieści trzy* |
| 49 | *czterdzieści dziewięć* |
| 99 | *dziewięćdziesiąt dziewięć* |

## CULTURAL INSIGHT

## Learning Polish Numbers Is Critical

---

It would be wise of you to master the numbers before you go to Poland. Even though in many stores you will be able to see how much you have to pay, there will be places, like a farmer's market, where you will be lost without a working knowledge of Polish numbers. Poles say numbers very quickly, and more often than not, all those numbers sound very much alike to the untrained ear.

LESSON NOTES

# Basic Bootcamp S1 #5 Counting from 100-10,000 in Polish

## CONTENTS

2 Polish
2 English
2 Vocabulary
3 Sample Sentences
4 Grammar

# 5



COPYRIGHT © 2013 INNOVATIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

## POLISH

1. Marek: sto trzydzieści
2. Tomek: trzysta trzydzieści cztery
3. Marek: pięćset dwadzieścia
4. Tomek: sześćset siedemdziesiąt
5. Marek: tysiąc
6. Tomek: trzy tysiące czterysta
7. Marek: dziewięć tysięcy sto

## ENGLISH

1. Marek: 130
2. Tomek: 334
3. Marek: 520
4. Tomek: 670
5. Marek: 1,000
6. Tomek: 3,400
7. Marek: 9,100

## VOCABULARY

| Polish | English | Class |
|---|---|---|
| sto trzydzieści | "one hundred and thirty (130)" | numeral |
| trzysta trzydzieści cztery | "three hundred and thirty four" | numeral |
| pięćset dwadzieścia | "five hundred and twenty" | numeral |
| sześćset siedemdziesiąt | "six hundred and seventy" | numeral |
| tysiąc | "one thousand" | numeral |
| trzy tysiące czterysta | "three thousand and four hundred" | numeral |
| dziewięć tysięcy sto | nine thousand and one hundred | numeral |
| dziesięć tysięcy | "ten thousand" | numeral |

## SAMPLE SENTENCES

| | |
|---|---|
| **Tomek zapłacił sto trzydzieści złotych za butelkę szampana.**<br>"Tom paid 130 złoty for a bottle of champagne." | **Ta spódnica kosztuje trzysta trzydzieści cztery złote.**<br>"This skirt costs 334 złoty." |
| **Andrzej ma ponad pięćset dwadzieścia książek.**<br>"Andrew has over 520 books." | **Muszę zapłacić sześćset siedemdziesiąt złotych za czynsz.**<br>"I have to pay 670 złoty in rent." |
| **Ten kościół został zbudowany tysiąc lat temu.**<br>"This church was built one thousand years ago." | **Dzisiaj wygrałem trzy tysiące czterysta złotych na loterii.**<br>"Today I (male) won three thousand four hundred zloty in the lottery." |

| | |
|---|---|
| **Ten używany samochód kosztuje dziewięć tysięcy sto złotych.**<br>"This used car costs nine thousand, one hundred złoty." | **Dziesięć tysięcy papierowych żurawi.**<br>"One thousand paper cranes." |

## GRAMMAR

**The Focus of This Lesson Is to Learn Numbers Larger than One Hundred in Polish**

***Sto trzydzieśc***

**"130"**

---

**Numbers from One Hundred to One Thousand**

| Number | *Polish* |
|---|---|
| 100 | *sto* |
| 200 | *dwieście* |
| 300 | *trzysta* |
| 400 | *czterysta* |
| 500 | *pięćset* |
| 600 | *sześćset* |
| 700 | *siedemset* |
| 800 | *osiemset* |
| 900 | *dziewięćset* |
| 1,000 | *tysiąc* |

## Multiples of One Thousand up to Ten Thousand

| Number | *Polish* |
|---|---|
| 1,000 | *tysiąc* |
| 2,000 | *dwa tysiące* |
| 3,000 | *trzy tysiące* |
| 4,000 | *cztery tysiące* |
| 5,000 | *pięć tysięcy* |
| 6,000 | *sześć tysięcy* |
| 7,000 | *siedem tysięcy* |
| 8,000 | *osiem tysięcy* |
| 9,000 | *dziewięć tysięcy* |
| 10,000 | *dziesięć tysięcy* |

We are assuming that counting one to one hundred is not a problem for you anymore. Do you remember the part *-naście* for numbers eleven to nineteen and the parts *dzieścia, -dzieści, and -dziesiąt* for multiples of ten from the previous lesson? In this lesson, we will show you how to create multiples of one hundred. So let's start then.

To be able to create multiples of one hundred, add the following parts to the numbers two through nine:

1. *ście* in *dwieście* ("two hundred")
2. *sta* in *trzysta* ("three hundred") and *czterysta* ("four hundred")
3. *set* in numbers *pięćset* ("five hundred") to *dziewięćset* ("nine hundred")

Here are some numbers discussed in the lesson:

| Number | *Polish* |
|---|---|
| 130 | *sto trzydzieści* |
| 334 | *trzysta trzydzieści cztery* |
| 520 | *pięćset dwadzieścia* |
| 670 | *sześćset siedemdziesiąt* |
| 1,000 | *tysiąc* |
| 3,400 | *trzy tysiące czterysta* |
| 8,888 | *osiem tysięcy osiemset osiemdziesiąt osiem* |
| 9,100 | *dziewięć tysięcy sto* |

LESSON NOTES

# All About S1 #1
# Top 5 Reasons to Study Polish!

CONTENTS

2 Grammar

# 1



COPYRIGHT © 2013 INNOVATIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

# GRAMMAR

## The Focus of This Lesson Is the History of the Polish Language

---

### The Beginnings of the Polish Language and Its Country

Once upon a time, there was a group of languages called the Indo-European group. This group was very diverse, gathering together people who spoke such disparate languages as Persian, Greek, Latin, English, and many more-tribes from all corners of the world. Believe it or not, even though now it seems impossible, these languages shared and still, in fact, share some similarities, both in their grammar and vocabulary.

However, the tribes that spoke these languages started to disperse in all different directions. As a result of their movements, the Indo-European group ceased to exist as a whole, and new, smaller groups appeared, including the Slavic group. But, again, the tribes within this subgroup wanted to explore the unknown and settle new territories. Hence, the ties between the tribes started to weaken. So since history likes to repeat itself, between the fourth and the sixth centuries the Slavic group split into three smaller groups-groups that still exist today. They are the West Slavic, East Slavic, and the South Slavic groups.

You're probably wondering to which of these groups Polish belongs. Together with Czech, Slovak, and Sorbian, Polish forms the West Slavic group.

Now you're going to say, well, that explains the birth of Polish as a language, but what about the country?

Having somewhat common languages, the tribes settled various neighboring regions between the Baltic Sea and the Carpathian mountains. Toward the tenth century, one of the tribes, the Polanie, settled on the banks of the Warta River near the present-day city of Poznań. Very quickly, they established their dominance over the region. Their tribal chief, Piast, succeeded in uniting other tribes from the surrounding areas into one political unit and gave it the name *Polska* ("Poland") after its most dominant tribe. Soon after that, in 966, the first ruler of Poland, Duke Mieszko I, converted to Christianity, figuratively baptizing the entire nation. This historical moment is recognized as the official birth of the country.

### The Development of the Polish Language

Let's now have a look at how the Polish language developed throughout the following centuries.

The history of the Polish language can be separated into two distinct eras:

1. The first era goes back to the very beginnings of Polish as a language and continues until the year 1136. This era encompasses the evolution of the language before any system of writing was established. There is no evidence of any written documents in the Polish language until the year 1136, and thus all prior events are categorized into the pre-writing era of Polish. We know that Polish was the vernacular language commoners used in their everyday affairs; however, because of cultural influences from the Roman Catholic Church, Latin was the language used in matters of government and liturgy.

2. The year 1136 marks the beginning of the second major era in the history of the Polish language. This so-called written era begins with the first occurrences of actual Polish words within official documents and ends with the creation of entire texts in the Polish language.

Within this era, we can distinguish the following periods:

### *Period 1*

This first division within the written era goes from the year 1136 to the beginning of the sixteenth century. You're probably wondering why we stress the year 1136 so much. A Latin document called the "Papal Bull of Gniezno" written in 1136 contains the first evidence scholars have of Polish words actually being set to paper. Within the next three centuries, Polish sentences followed and whole Polish texts appeared.

### *Period 2*

Period 2 began in the sixteenth century and lasted until the first partition of Poland, which took place in 1772. The sixteenth century is especially important when discussing the history of the Polish language mainly because it is a century when a huge discovery-namely, the printing press-arrived in Poland, allowing linguists to finally attempt to standardize the thus far messy Polish spelling system. Many spelling treatises, new dictionaries, and grammar books appeared at this time. This so-called Golden Age of Polish language and culture formed the foundation for modern spelling. With additional changes throughout the next centuries, ambiguity was replaced with conformity and agreement of spelling and pronunciation.

### *Period 3*

The last period in the evolution of the Polish language begins with the first partition of Poland in 1772. All together, Poland was partitioned three times: first in 1772, again in 1793, with the final partition occurring in 1795 by the powers of Austria, Russia, and Prussia. After 1795, Poland disappeared from the map of Europe for over one hundred years and endured perhaps one of its roughest historical periods, struggling to survive under foreign oppression.

As you can imagine, the language itself also encountered many difficulties as a result of the political situation. On several occasions, the partitioning powers tried to eradicate Polish and replace it with either Russian or German. Luckily for Poland, their attempts were unsuccessful. However, their presence over such a long time influenced the Polish language with some regional features that can be still heard today. Take, for example, the word "potatoes." In southern Poland, the word used for "potatoes" is *ziemniaki,* whereas in Silesia, once a part of Germany, natives use the word *kartofle*-almost identical to the German *kartoffeln*.

When Poland regained its independence in 1918, Polish resumed its position as the official language of the state. World War II, while devastating for the nation, had little effect on the language itself.

Today's Polish is quite uniform, with some regional variations and dialects occurring in different parts of Poland. Also, in recent years Polish has borrowed a large number of English words, mainly in the fields of economics and computer science. With time, the Poles by and large have adjusted their spelling and pronunciation to Polish standards.

## Dialects in Poland

There are only a few dialects within the Polish language. While they differ slightly from standard Polish, native Polish speakers can still easily understand them. The differences among them are mainly based on vocabulary changes that developed throughout the years and on their regional pronunciation. The most significant dialects when it comes to number of speakers relate to the following regions in Poland:

- Greater Poland (spoken in western Poland)
- Lesser Poland (spoken in southern and southeast Poland)
- Mazovian (spoken in central and eastern Poland)

While these dialects may claim the largest number of speakers, their variation from standard Polish is rather minimal.

When it comes to significant dialectical differences, the most distinguishable but not so widely spread are the following dialects:

- The dialect from the Podhale region (Highlander's dialect) is widely used in the mountainous regions that border the Czech Republic and Slovakia.
- The Kashubian language is spoken in the northern part of Poland west of Gdańsk on the Baltic Sea. It is difficult for Polish speakers to understand. Since 2005, the Kashubian language has been considered a separate regional language.
- The Silesian dialect is spoken in the region of Silesia (west of the city Katowice), which was mainly influenced by the German language. It is also difficult for Polish speakers to understand.

As mentioned, while these dialects do not lay claim to as many speakers, they are much more difficult for natives to comprehend.

### Speakers of the Polish Language in Poland and Abroad

Polish is the official language of Poland, spoken by the roughly forty million inhabitants living within its borders. It is also widely used in countries such as Lithuania, Belarus, and Ukraine, where ethnic Poles form significant minorities. For example, in Vilnius County in Lithuania, Polish is the most frequently used minority language. Also there are still a lot of Polish speakers in Russia and Kazakhstan. This results mainly from forced migrations, resettlements, and border changes during and after World War II.

It is worth mentioning that Polish speakers also live in countries such as Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, France, Great Britain, and the United States. For example, in America, many people have Polish origin; however, they no longer speak Polish fluently.

### Why Polish Is Important to Know?

So why should you learn to speak Polish? The top five reasons are...

**5.** You can read Polish literature in its original form. Remember that there is always something lost in translation! A rich literary tradition exists in Poland, mainly rooted in its tragic

history.

**4.** You can gain a lot of lifetime friends in Poles. Poles love foreigners who try to learn their language and they will constantly shower you with a lot of compliments, even for trying to say only a few simple words!

**3.** The Polish language has the largest number of speakers within the West Slavic group!

**2.** With its infuriating grammar and complex rules of spelling, Polish offers a comprehensive mental workout sure to keep your mind razor sharp for years to come.

**1.** Knowing the language will help you better understand Poles and their unique mentality, their history, and their culture!

LESSON NOTES

# All About S1 #2 Cracking the Polish Writing System!

CONTENTS

2 Grammar

# 2



COPYRIGHT © 2013 INNOVATIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

# GRAMMAR

## The Focus of This Lesson Is the Polish Writing System

---

The Polish writing system uses the Latin alphabet, just like English, with some modifications. These modifications are diacritical signs that we use to represent sounds unique to the Polish language. They include:

1. an acute mark (For example, the letter *-ź* consists of the consonant *-z* and an acute mark above it. The acute mark, however, is not an accent; we use it to mark the softness of a particular consonant.)

2. a dot (For instance, the letter *-ż* consists of the letter *-z* and a dot above it. This forms a new letter with its own sound.)

3. a hook (For example, the vowel *-ą* consists of the letter *-a* with a little hook attached to it. The hook gives the vowel a nasal sound.)

Each of these diacritical marks influences the pronunciation of a particular letter.

Besides these diacritical marks, throughout the centuries Polish has gained a lot of consonant clusters, such as *-cz*, *-sz*, *-rz*, *-dz*, *-dź*, *-dż*, *-ch*, *-ci*, *-si*, *-zi*, *-dzi*, and *-ni*, which also serve to represent Polish sounds that were not present in Latin.

### The First Written Traces of the Polish Language and How They Led to Today's Writing System

Even though the Polish state began its existence in 966, for almost the next two hundred years no written documents in Polish exist-at least none we know of. The first written, and at the same time, the oldest traces of the Polish language occurred in the twelfth century. That evidence is a Latin document entitled *Bulla gnieźnieńska* ("Papal Bull of Gniezno"), which contains 410 Polish words-mainly names of villages and towns, as well as the personal names of their inhabitants. It allows us to understand in some respects the Polish phonetic system, vocabulary, and morpheme features in use at that time.

The next step in our journey is the discovery of the first complete Polish sentence. It was probably written around 1270 by the Cistercian monks of Henryków. It said *Daj, ać ja*

*pobruszę, a ty poczywaj*, which translates to "Let me grind and you rest." We can assure you that a lot of Poles would have problems translating this sentence because of the many changes that have since taken place within the writing system as well as the archaic vocabulary the writers used in this sentence.

When it comes to entire texts in Polish, the first one was written either at the end of the thirteenth century or at the beginning of the fourteenth century. It is the Polish religious song, and at the same time the first Polish anthem, called *Bogurodzica.* Some believe that Polish knights sang *Bogurodzica* before the Battle of Grunwald in 1410, a famous victory of the Polish nation over the Teutonic Knights.

From that time on, an ever-increasing number of texts and documents appear that were written entirely in Polish. These were mainly devotional and religious texts, such as translations of the Old Testament or sermons that monks wrote, monks being among the few who could perform such translations because of their education and fluency in Latin. However, since in Polish there were some sounds that Latin did not have, very often, they used the same Latin letter to represent many different sounds in Polish. As you can imagine, this must have caused a great deal of confusion.

Together with the arrival of the printing era in Poland, which took place at the beginning of the sixteenth century, printers needed greater standardization within the alphabet. The Golden Age of Polish literature and culture brought new dictionaries, grammar books, and treatises on spelling that helped unify the Polish writing system, a system still used today.

### Useful Tip

Knowing that Polish has many common vocabulary roots with other Slavic languages (Russian, Slovak, Ukrainian, etc.) will help you survive with limited knowledge of these languages in many parts of Europe, such as in Russian-speaking countries, as well as Poland's neighbors like Belarus and the Czech Republic. And if you ever consider learning another Slavic language, your knowledge of Polish will come in quite handy.

## The Polish Alphabet

The word "alphabet" refers to a writing system that has characters for representing both consonant and vowel sounds. The current Polish alphabet consists of nine vowels and twenty-three consonants, and thus it has thirty-two characters in total.

It also uses the diacritical marks and consonant clusters that we mentioned at the beginning of this lesson.

Below you will find the Polish alphabet. The vowels are shown in bold.

| Letter | Name | Letter | Name |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | *M m* | |
| ***A a*** | ***a*** | *N n* | *em* |
| ***Ą ą*** | ***ą*** | *Ń ń* | *en* |
| *B b* | *be* | ***O o*** | *eń* |
| *C c* | *ce* | ***Ó ó*** | ***o*** |
| *Ć ć* | *cie* | *P p* | ***o*** *kreskowane* |
| *D d* | *de* | *R r* | *pe* |
| ***E e*** | ***e*** | *S s* | *er* |
| ***Ę ę*** | ***ę*** | *Ś ś* | *es* |
| *F f* | *ef* | *T t* | *eś* |
| *G g* | *gie* | ***U u*** | *te* |
| *H h* | *ha* | *W w* | ***u*** |
| ***I i*** | ***i*** | ***Y y*** | *wu* |
| *J j* | *jot* | *Z z* | ***y*** |
| *K k* | *ka* | *Ź ź* | *zet* |
| *L l* | *el* | *Ż ż* | *ziet* |
| *Ł ł* | *eł* | | *żet* |

LESSON NOTES

# All About S1 #3
# Painless Polish Grammar!

CONTENTS

2 Grammar

# 3



COPYRIGHT © 2014 INNOVATIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

# GRAMMAR

## The Focus of This Lesson is Polish Grammar

---

In this lesson, we will try to briefly introduce you to-and hopefully help you begin to understand-Polish grammar. Grammar doesn't have to be cryptic and sinister if explained properly. By starting with some simple grammar basics, you will be able to form your utterances in a comprehensible way and rapidly improve your Polish.

Since the grammar of the Polish language is quite complex, before we start talking about it in more depth we would like to outline its most important characteristics. Polish belongs to the group of so-called inflected languages, which means that certain parts of speech will undergo either declension (nouns, adjectives, numerals, and pronouns) or conjugation (verbs). Polish recognizes two numerical groups, singular and plural, as well as three genders: masculine, feminine, and neuter. In Polish, there are three tenses: present, past, and future. Polish verbs also have a feature called "aspect," which refers to whether an action has been completed or not. In addition to that, there are three moods: indicative, imperative, and conditional. Lastly, Polish does not decline adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, particles, or exclamations, meaning they appear, mercifully, in only one form.

Simple, right?

### I. Declined Parts of Speech in Polish

Nouns, adjectives, numerals, and pronouns have several grammatical features, such as gender (either masculine, feminine, or neuter), number (singular or plural), as well as case (nominative, genitive, dative, accusative, instrumental, locative, and lastly, vocative).

### A. Nouns

In order to decline nouns and their modifiers-adjectives, numerals, and pronouns-you first have to know how to recognize the gender of a given noun.

Below you will find a table that will help you to determine the gender of Polish nouns.

| Masculine Nouns End in: | Feminine Nouns End in: | Neuter Nouns End in: |
|---|---|---|

**a consonant:**
*profesor*
("professor"),
*kot*
("cat"),
*stół*
("table")

**the vowel *-a*:**
*artysta*
("artist"),
*dentystka*
("dentist")

**the vowel *-a*:**
*kobieta*
("woman"),
*mapa*
("map"),
*łyżka*
("spoon")

**the vowel *-i*:**
*pani*
("ma'am"), *gospodyni*
("hostess")

**the vowel *-e*:**
*pole*
("field"),
*morze*
("sea"),
*słońce*
("sun")

**the vowel *-ę*:**
*prosię*
("piglet"),
*imię*
("name"),
*plemię*
("tribe")

**the vowel *-o*:**
*dziecko*
("child"),
*łóżko*
("bed"),
*metro*
("metro")

**the syllable *-um*:**
*muzeum*
("museum"),
*gimnazjum*
("gymnasium"),
*apogeum*
("apogee")

Once you know the gender of a particular noun, you can start declining it and its modifiers. We have mentioned that in Polish there are seven cases: nominative, genitive, dative, accusative, instrumental, locative, and vocative. Each of these cases has a specific role to

play, and we use them to express the meanings explained below.

## 1. Nominative

The nominative case represents the most basic form of a noun, and it is the form that is always presented in the dictionary. If a noun or a pronoun is the subject of a sentence, it will always appear in the nominative form. It's one of the most commonly used cases in the Polish language.

**For Example:**

1. ***Ten dom*** *jest duży*.
   "This house is big."

2. ***Ta kawa*** *jest mocna*.
   "This coffee is strong."

3. ***To dziecko*** *jest grzeczne*.
   "This child is polite."

## 2. Genitive

Polish also frequently uses the genitive case, which we use to express the following:

**Possessiveness:**
**For Example:**

1. *samochód* ***Tomasza***
   "Tom's car"

**Measurements:**
**For Example:**

1. *dwa kilo* ***nowych ziemniaków***
   "two kilos of new potatoes"

2. *paczka* ***mąki***
   "a package of flour"

**Dates and time, such as giving a date of birth:**
**For Example:**

1. *Urodziłam się* ***trzydziestego pierwszego sierpnia***.
   "I was born on August thirty-first."

**As well as to mark the direct object after a negated verb:**
**For Example:**

1. *Nie lubię* ***mleka.***
   "I don't like milk."

2. *Nie mam* ***kota.***
   "I don't have a cat."

There are also some verbs that require genitive usage only.

**For Example:**

1. *potrzebować* ("to need")
   *Potrzebuję* (+ gen.) ***nowego swetra****.*
   "I need a new sweater."

2. *słuchać* ("to listen to")
   *Słucham* (+ gen.) ***muzyki rockowej****.*
   "I am listening to rock music."

3. *uczyć się* ("to learn")
   *Uczę się* (+ gen.) ***języka polskiego****.*
   "I am learning the Polish language."

We also use the genitive form after such prepositions as:

***do*** **("to"):**
**For Example:**

1. *Idę do* ***szkoły****.*
   "I am going to school."

***z*** **("from"):**
**For Example:**

1. *Jestem z **Ameryki**.*
   "I am from America."

***bez*** **("without"):**
**For Example:**

1. *Proszę kawę bez **cukru**.*
   "Coffee without sugar, please."

### 3. Dative

The dative case mainly appears as the case the indirect object of a sentence takes.

**For Example:**

1. *Sprzedałam **mu** gazetę.*
   "I sold him a newspaper."
   For clarity, in this sentence, "newspaper" is the direct object, whereas "him" is the indirect object.

2. *Życzę **ci** dużo zdrowia.*
   "I wish you a lot of health."

3. *Pomagam **mamie** przy obiedzie*.
   "I am helping my mom with dinner."

### 4. Accusative

The accusative is definitely another case that, along with nominative and genitive, belongs to the most often applied cases. It has two main functions in a sentence:

**We use it as a direct object after transitive verbs:**
**For Example:**

1. *Czytam **książkę.***
   "I am reading a book."

2. *Tomek myje **zęby.***
   "Tom is brushing his teeth."

**The accusative is the implied case after most verbs:**
**For Example:**

1. *Ewa pije **sok**.*
   "Eva is drinking juice."

2. *Robię **kawę**.*
   "I am making coffee."

In better dictionaries, along with the entry of a verb, it should also present you with information about the case that a particular verb implies.

## 5. Instrumental

The instrumental case, you'll be happy to hear, is one of the easiest cases to master in the Polish language. We use it more often than the dative or vocative, but more seldom than the other four.

The instrumental case has the following usages:

**We use it to express that the subject of a sentence or phrase is something.** Simply remember that the instrumental case tells you who is who and what is what.

**For Example:**

1. *Aga jest **lekarką.***
   "Agnes is a doctor."

2. *Herbata jest **dobrym lekarstwem** na przeziębienie**.***
   "Tea is a good medicine for a cold."

**It has the function of an indirect object when expressing the usage of tools.**
**For Example:**

1. *Jem zupę* ***łyżką.***
   "I am eating soup with a spoon."

2. *Krzysiek jedzie* ***samochodem***.
   "Chris is driving the car."

3. *Lubię pisać* ***piórem***.
   "I like to write with a fountain pen."

**The verb *interesować się*, meaning "to be interested in,"** also implies the instrumental form.
**For Example:**

1. *Interesuję się* ***literaturą europejską****.*
   "I am interested in European literature."

2. *Adam interesuje się* ***sportem****.*
   "Adam is interested in sports."

**Also, the preposition *z*, meaning "with"** (compare to another meaning of the preposition *z* we use with the genitive case), requires the instrumental case.
**For Example:**

1. *Spotkałem się z* ***Basią.***
   "I met with Barbara."

2. *Proszę kawę z* ***mlekiem****.*
   "Coffee with milk, please."

## 6. Locative

The locative case is the only case that is always implied by a preposition, never by a verb. Along with the already introduced nominative, genitive, and accusative cases, locative case is one of the cases we use most often in Polish.

Its main role is to express location, and we use it with the following prepositions:

***na*, meaning "on" or "at":**
**For Example:**

1. *Książka jest na **stole**.*
   "The book is on the table."

2. *Jestem na **obiedzie**.*
   "I am at dinner."

***o*, meaning "at" or "about":**
**For Example:**

1. *Będę o **ósmej**.*
   "I will be there at eight."

2. *Często myślę o **mojej koleżance**.*
   "I often think about my friend."

***po*, meaning "after" or "around":**
**For Example:**

1. *Jest już po **północy**.*
   "It's already after midnight."

2. *Chodzę po **sklepie**.*
   "I am walking around the store."

***w*, with the translation "in":**
**For Example:**

1. *Jestem w **biurze**.*
   "I am in the office."

2. *Czy byłeś już w **Krakowie**?*
   "Have you already been in Cracow?"

**And the last preposition is *przy,* meaning "next to" and "along":**

**For Example:**

1. *Mieszkam przy **placu** Wszystkich Świętych.*
   "I live next to Plaza Wszystkich Świętych."

2. *Sofa stoi przy **ścianie**.*
   "The sofa is standing along the wall."

## 7. Vocative

The last case, the vocative, appears in:

**Greetings and farewells:**
**For Example:**

1. *Dzień dobry, **Tomku**.*
   "Good morning, Tom."

2. *Do zobaczenia, **Basiu**.*
   "See you, Barbara."

**Correspondence:**
**For Example:**

1. *Drogi **Stefanie**.*
   "Dear Steven."

2. *Szanow**ni Państwo**.*
   "Ladies and Gentlemen."

**Declination of masculine nouns**

| **English translation** | this dentist | my dog | old computer | tasty juice |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Nominative** | ten dentysta | mój pies | stary komputer | smaczny sok |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Genitive** | tego dentysty | mojego psa | starego komputera | smacznego soku |
| **Dative** | temu dentyście | mojemu psu | staremu komputerowi | smacznemu sokowi |
| **Accusative** | tego dentystę | mojego psa | stary komputer | smaczny sok |
| **Instrumental** | tym dentystą | moim psem | starym komputerem | smacznym sokiem |
| **Locative** | tym dentyście | moim psie | starym komputerze | smacznym soku |
| **Vocative** | dentysto | - | - | - |

**Declination of feminine nouns**

| **English translation** | this woman | my book | boring lesson | expensive coffee |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Nominative** | ta kobieta | moja książka | nudna lekcja | droga kawa |
| **Genitive** | tej kobiety | mojej książki | nudnej lekcji | drogiej kawy |
| **Dative** | tej kobiecie | mojej książce | nudnej lekcji | drogiej kawie |
| **Accusative** | tą kobietę | moją książkę | nudną lekcję | drogą kawę |
| **Instrumental** | tą kobietą | moją książką | nudną lekcją | drogą kawą |
| **Locative** | tej kobiecie | mojej książce | nudnej lekcji | drogiej kawie |
| **Vocative** | kobieto | - | - | - |

**Declination of neuter nouns**

| English translation | this child | my name | big animal | famous museum |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Nominative** | to dziecko | moje imię | duże zwierzę | słynne muzeum |
| **Genitive** | tego dziecka | mojego imienia | dużego zwierzęcia | słynnego muzeum |
| **Dative** | temu dziecku | mojemu imieniu | dużemu zwierzęciu | słynnemu muzeum |
| **Accusative** | to dziecko | moje imię | duże zwierzę | słynne muzeum |
| **Instrumental** | tym dzieckiem | moim imieniem | dużym zwierzęciem | słynnym muzeum |
| **Locative** | tym dziecku | moim imieniu | dużym zwierzęciu | słynnym muzeum |
| **Vocative** | - | - | - | - |

**Declination of plural nouns**

| English translation | these dogs | old computers | my books | big animals |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Nominative** | te psy | stare komputery | moje książki | duże zwierzęta |
| **Genitive** | tych psów | starych komputerów | moich książek | dużych zwierząt |
| **Dative** | tym psom | starym komputerom | moim książkom | dużym zwierzętom |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Accusative** | te psy | stare komputery | moje książki | duże zwierzęta |
| **Instrumental** | tymi psami | starymi komputerami | moimi książkami | dużymi zwierzętami |
| **Locative** | tych psach | starych komputerach | moich książkach | dużych zwierzętach |
| | | | | |

### B. Adjectives, Numerals, and Pronouns

If you would like to use adjectives, numerals, or pronouns in order to describe nouns, always make sure that you maintain the gender agreement between them.

**For Example:**

**Adjectives**:

1. *dobry profesor*
   "good professor" (because *profesor* is masculine, the adjective *dobry* needs to take the masculine form as well)

2. *dobra kawa*
   "good coffee" (*kawa* is feminine, hence the feminine form of *dobra*)

3. *dobre dziecko*
   "good child" (*dziecko* is neuter, and so is the form of *dobre*)

**Numerals**:

1. *jeden profesor*
   "one professor"

2. *jedna kawa*
   "one coffee"

3. *jedno dziecko*
   "one child"

**Pronouns**:

1. *nasz profesor*
   "our professor"
2. *nasza kawa*
   "our coffee"
3. *nasze dziecko*
   "our child"

## II. Verbs

The most basic form of a verb, the one you will find in the dictionary, is the infinitive. The infinitive form of a verb is easy to recognize by its ending, *-ć*....

**For Example:**

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| *pić* | "to drink" |
| *chcieć* | "to want" |
| *pisać* | "to write" |

or by the ending *-c.*

**For Example:**

1. *móc*
   "can," "to be able to"

In Polish, there are only three tenses: present, past, and future.

## A. Tenses in Polish

### 1. Present Tense

We form verbs in the present tense according to three conjugations, each of which is named after the endings in the first- and second-person singular:

**Conjugation *-m, -sz*, being the most regular and the easiest one:**
**For Example:**

***czytać*** ("to read")

**Singular**

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| *(ja) czyta-**m*** | "I read" |
| *(ty) czyta-**sz*** | "you read" |
| *on, ona, ono czyta-**Ø*** | "he, she, it reads" |

**Plural**

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| *(my) czyta-**my*** | "we read" |
| *(wy) czyta-**cie*** | "you read" |
| *oni, one czyta-**ją*** | "they read" |

**Conjugation of *-ę, -isz/ysz*, with some exceptions**; however, it is still quite straightforward.
**For Example:**

***myśleć*** ("to think")

**Singular**

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|

| | |
|---|---|
| *(ja) myśl-**ę*** | "I think" |
| *(ty) myśl-**isz*** | "you think" |
| *on, ona, ono myśl-**i*** | "he/she/it thinks" |

**Plural**

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| *(my) myśl-**imy*** | "we think" |
| *(wy) myśl-**icie*** | "you think" |
| *oni, one myśl-**ą*** | "they think" |

***tańczyć*** ("to dance")

**Singular**

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| *(ja) tańcz-**ę*** | "I dance" |
| *(ty) tańcz-**ysz*** | "you dance" |
| *on, ona, ono tańcz-**y*** | "he/she/it dances" |

**Plural**

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| *(my) tańcz-**ymy*** | "we dance" |
| *(wy) tańcz-**ycie*** | "you dance" |
| *oni, one tańcz-**ą*** | "they dance" |

**Conjugation of *-ę, -esz*, which is the most irregular, has many changes within the stem:**
**For Example:**

***brać*** ("to take")
**Singular**

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| *(ja) bior-**ę*** | "I take" |
| *(ty) bierz-**esz*** | "you take" |
| *on, ona, ono bierz-**e*** | "he/she/it takes" |

**Plural**

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| *(my) bierz-**emy*** | "we take" |
| *(wy) bierz-**ecie*** | "you take" |
| *oni, one bior-**ą*** | "they take" |

The most basic time expressions that we use with the present tense are *teraz* ("now") and *dzisiaj* ("today").

## 2. Past Tense

The past tense is much easier to form because all Polish verbs, regardless of their irregularities in the present tense, follow the same pattern.

In the past tense, however, we express gender through the ending of the verb, so this may cause some problems for students, especially at the beginning of their study. Let's have a look at the forms of the verb *być* ("to be") in the past tense, focusing especially on gender.

| **Singular** | **Masculine** | **Feminine** | **Neuter** |
|---|---|---|---|
| *ja* ("I") | *by-**łem*** ("I was") | *by-**łam*** ("I was") | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *ty* ("you") | *by-**łeś*** ("you were") | *by-**łaś*** ("you were") | |
| *on* ("he"), *ona* ("she"), *ono* ("it") | *by-**ł*** (he was") | *by-**ła*** ("she was") | *by-**ło*** ("it was") |

| Plural | Personal Masculine | Non-personal Masculine, Feminine, and Neuter |
|---|---|---|
| *my* ("we") | *by-**liśmy*** ("we were") | *by-**łyśmy*** ("we were") |
| *wy* ("you") | *by-**liście*** ("you were") | *by-**łyście*** ("you were") |
| *oni* ("they," meaning a group of people including men), *one* ("they," referring to a group of women) | *by-**li*** ("they were") | *by-**ły*** ("they were") |

The most popular time expression that we use with the past tense is *wczoraj* ("yesterday").

### 3. Future Tense

To form the compound future tense in Polish, you will first need the verb *być* ("to be") conjugated in the future tense.

Future tense of the verb *byc* ("to be"):

**Singular**

| *Polish* | "English" |
|---|---|
| *(ja) będ-**ę*** | "I will be" |

| | |
|---|---|
| *(ty) będzi-**esz*** | "you will be" |
| *on, ona, ono będzi-**e*** | "he/she/it will be" |

**Plural**

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| *(my) będzi-**emy*** | "we will be" |
| *(wy) będzi-**ecie*** | "you will be" |
| *oni, one będ-**ą*** | "they will be" |

To be able to create the future tense of other verbs, simply add the infinitive form to the future of the verb "to be."

**For Example:**

1. *Będę czytać.*
   "I will read."
2. *Będziesz pisać.*
   "You will write."
3. *Ona będzie oglądać telewizję.*
   "She will watch TV."
4. *Będziemy się uczyć języków obcych.*
   "We will study foreign languages."
5. *Będziecie pracować.*
   "You will work."
6. *Oni nie będą palić papierosów.*
   "They won't smoke cigarettes."

*Jutro*, meaning "tomorrow," is the most common time expression that we use with the future tense.

## B. Aspect of Polish Verbs

As we mentioned at the beginning of this lesson, verbs in the Polish language have a feature called aspect, which we break down into two categories: the imperfective aspect (for example, *pisać*, meaning "to write") and the perfective aspect (for example, *napisać*, also meaning "to write"). Each of these aspects refers to the state of an action of a particular verb.

We use the imperfective aspect to express:

**An action that we repeat on a regular basis:**
**For Example:**

1. *Codziennie piszę e-maile*.
   "I write e-mails every day."

**An action that is in progress:**
**For Example:**

1. *Właśnie piszę list.*
   "I am just writing a letter."

**The duration of an action**:
**For Example:**

1. *Wczoraj przez dwie godziny pisałem list.*
   "Yesterday, I was writing a letter for two hours."

**An action that has a very general character:**
**For Example:**

1. *W przyszłym roku będę pisać więcej listów.*
   "Next year I will write more letters."

In all of the above examples, we don't really have too many specifics as to whether the writing

is, was, or will be completed, hence the use of the imperfective verb *pisać* ("to write"). Imperfective verbs can form present, past, and the compound future tenses. (We introduced all these tenses above.)

We use the perfective aspect to express:

**An action that we have completed:**
**For Example:**

1. *W końcu napisałem list do Adama.*
   "I finally wrote a letter to Adam."

**An action that we will complete in the future:**
**For Example:**

1. *Jutro napiszę list do Adama.*
   "Tomorrow, I will write a letter to Adam."

In order to express that we completed or will complete the writing, we have to use the perfective aspect and the verb *napisać* ("to write"). Use of the perfective form of the verb implies that the doer of an action will definitely accomplish or complete the entire action. Perfective verbs will only appear in the past and future tenses. You know how to form the past tense in Polish, so just remember to use the perfective form of a verb instead of the imperfective.

To create the future tense of perfective verbs, you simply have to conjugate the perfective verbs the same way as in the present tense (using your knowledge of the three conjugations), and these will be your future forms. Do not add the verb "to be" in the future tense, it is not necessary.

**For Example:**

***przeczytać*** ("to read") perfective

**Singular**

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| *(ja) przeczyta-**m*** | "I will read" |

| | |
|---|---|
| *(ty) przeczyta-**sz*** | "you will read" |
| *on, ona, ono przeczyta-**Ø*** | "he/she/it will read" |

**Plural**

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| *(my) przeczyta-**my*** | "we will read" |
| *(wy) przeczyta-**cie*** | "you will read" |
| *oni, one przeczyta-**ją*** | "they will read" |

Just remember that in this case, when we use the perfective form *przeczytać*, we are implying that the reader will read something in its entirety or accomplish a certain goal: for example, an entire chapter.

Almost every English verb will have two counterparts in Polish: one imperfective and one perfective.

**For Example:**

| **Construction** | ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|---|
| Imperfective | *Czytać* | "to read" |
| Perfective | *przeczytać* | "to read" |
| Imperfective | *Robić* | "to do" |
| Perfective | *Zrobić* | "to do" |
| Imperfective | *Jeść* | "to eat" |
| Perfective | *zjeść* | "to eat" |

Some pairs can be very different.

**For Example:**

| Construction | *Polish* | "English" |
|---|---|---|
| Imperfective | *brać* | "to take" |
| Perfective | *wziąć* | "to take" |
| Imperfective | *widzieć* | "to see" |
| Perfective | *zobaczyć* | "to see" |

Some verbs, although very few, don't have a perfective aspect. They will only appear in the imperfective form.

**For Example:**

| *Polish* | "English" |
|---|---|
| *być* | "to be" |
| *mieć* | "to have" |
| *studiować* | "to study" |
| *wiedzieć* | "to know" |

## C. Moods in Polish

In the Polish language, verbs appear in the following moods:

**Indicative:**

**For Example:**

| *Polish* | "English" |
|---|---|
| *pracuję* | "I work" |
| *będę pisać* | "I will write" |

| | |
|---|---|
| *przeczytałem* | "I read |

**Imperative:**

**For Example:**

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| *pracuj!* | "work" |
| *pisz!* | "write" |
| *przeczytaj!* | "read" |

**Conditional:**

**For Example:**

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| *pracowałbym* | "I would work" |
| *pisałbym* | "I would write" |
| *przeczytałbym* | "I would read" |

## D. Active, Passive, and Reflexive Voice in Polish

In Polish, there are three forms of voices:

**Active voice:**

**For Example:**

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| *czytam* | "I read" |
| *przepisuję* | "I copy" |

| | |
|---|---|
| *gotuję* | "I cook" |

**Passive voice:**

**For Example:**

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| *jest czytany* | "is read" |
| *jest przepisany* | "is copied" |
| *jest gotowany* | "is cooked" |

**Reflexive voice:**

**For Example:**

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| *myję się.* | "I wash myself." |
| *ubieramy się.* | "We are dressing ourselves." |
| *uczę się.* | "I am teaching myself." |

## III. Uninflected Parts of Speech

Besides the parts of speech that we decline and conjugate, the Polish language also has a few words that always appear in the same form. The words that are not subject to declension or conjugation are:

**Adverbs**:
**For Example:**

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| *dobrze* | "well" |

| | |
|---|---|
| *źle* | "badly" |

**Prepositions:**

**For Example**:

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| *z* | "with" or "from" |
| *do* | "to" |
| *na* | "on," "at" |

**Conjunctions:**

**For Example**:

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| *więc* | "so" |
| *i* | "and" |
| *ponieważ* | "because |

**Exclamations:**

**For Example:**

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| *ach* | "ah" |
| *och* | "ah" |

**Particles:**

**For Example:**

1. *niech* - "Let/May" creates third person singular and plural, as well as, third person singular imperative forms (as in "Let me guess", "May the force be with you")

2. *czy* - "Does, Do, Did, Will etc..." beginning a question.

LESSON NOTES

# All About S1 #4
# Polish Pronunciation Made EASY!

CONTENTS

2 Grammar

# 4



COPYRIGHT © 2013 INNOVATIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

# GRAMMAR

## The Focus of This Lesson Is Polish Pronunciation

---

Polish pronunciation is not nearly as difficult as it seems. At the beginning it might be a little bit overwhelming since many sounds are different than in English. However, by listening and practicing those sounds, we will help you master your pronunciation. In no time you will become familiar with what once appeared daunting and impossibly foreign.

Don't forget, though, that there are also sounds in Polish that are very similar or, we could also say, identical to their counterparts in English. After all, it is not entirely foreign.

First, we will present you with the vowel system in Polish, and then we will move on to the Polish consonants, consonant clusters, and their pronunciation.

### I. Polish Vowels

In the Polish language, there are nine vowels that we can divide into groups as follows:

A. *Samogłoski ustne* ("oral vowels") with three subgroups:

1. *samogłoski przednie* ("front vowels")
2. *samogłoski środkowe* ("central vowels")
3. *samogłoski tylne* ("back vowels")

B. *Samogłoski nosowe* ("nasal vowels")

### A. *Samogłoski Ustne* ("Oral Vowels")

We produce *samogłoski ustne,* or in English "oral vowels," within the mouth area where the tongue, uvula, and lips take certain positions. There are seven oral vowels, which we classify according to the place of articulation.

#### 1. *Samogłoski przednie* ("Front Vowels")

*Samogłoski przednie* are characterized by the placement of the tongue toward the front of the

mouth. For example, try to pronounce the letter -*e* as in "yellow." You will notice that you produce the letter -*e* in the front part of your mouth, which means it is an anterior vowel. Now, just to see the difference, try to say aloud the letter -*o* as in "orange." You should notice that your tongue moves to the back of your mouth, making this letter a posterior vowel.

Here is a list of the anterior vowels in Polish:

| Letter | Phonetic Transcription | "English" Examples | *Polish* Examples |
|---|---|---|---|
| -*i* | [i] | "feet," "meet," "sea" | *Kino* ("cinema"), *minus* ("minus"), *minuta* ("minute") |
| -*y* | [1] | "myth," "big," "if" | *grypa* ("flu"), *my* ("we"), *dobry* ("good") |
| -*e* | [E] | "pen," "yes," "ten" | *wujek* ("uncle"), *document* ("document"), *elegancki* ("elegant") |

## 2. *Samogłoski Środkowe* ("Central Vowels")

To pronounce the *samogłoski środkowe* ("central vowels") properly, simply place your tongue in the middle area of your mouth. In Polish, there is only one central vowel, -*a,* which is represented by a wide-open sound.

| Letter | Phonetic Transcription | "English" Examples | *Polish* Examples |
|---|---|---|---|
| *-a* | [a] | "father," "cot," "body" | *tak* ("yes"), *pan* ("Mr.," "sir"), *adres* ("address") |

### 3. *Samogłoski Tylne* ("Back Vowels")

To produce this type of sound, place your tongue in the back of your mouth.

| Letter | Phonetic Transcription | "English" Examples | *Polish* Examples |
|---|---|---|---|
| *-u* | [u] | "moon," "dune" | *kultura* ("culture"), *studio* ("studio"), *luty* ("February") |
| *-o* | [O] | "moment," "slow" | *moda* ("fashion"), *popularny* ("popular"), *piwo* ("beer") |

In the Polish language, there is one additional vowel that we haven't mentioned thus far. It is the letter *ó.*

| Letter | Phonetic Transcription | "English" Examples | *Polish* Examples |
|---|---|---|---|

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *ó* | [u] | "moon," "dune" | *ból* ("pain"), *wróg* ("foe"), *lód* ("ice") |

As you have probably noticed, in our table we used the same English examples that we used with the vowel *-u.* The reason for that is that both *-u* and *-ó* have the same pronunciation. The only difference is in their spelling. The position of these vowels in words dictates the spelling rules. For example, the letter *-ó* mainly occurs when there is a *-o:-ó* alternation, as in *wr**ó**g: z wr**o**giem* ("foe": "with a/the foe") and *l**ó**d: z l**o**dem* ("ice": "with ice") and in the particle *-ów*, as in *Krak**ów*** ("Cracow") and *dla pan**ów*** ("for the gentlemen"), whereas the letter *-u* appears in other cases.

To sum it up, in the Polish language there is one sound [u] represented by two letters: *-u* and *-ó.*

### B. *Samogłoski Nosowe* ("Nasal Vowels")

Polish is the only language among all the other Slavic languages that still has nasal vowels. You can also find them in languages like French and Portuguese. In order to produce them, the air has to go mainly through the nose. For foreign ears, they may sound different at first, as the air vibrates mainly through the nose and produces a twangy sound. Their written forms are the letters *-ę* (it is basically a letter *-e* with a little hook attached to it) and *-ą* (*-a* with a hook.)

| Letter | Phonetic Transcription | *Polish* Examples |
|---|---|---|
| *-ę* | [E~] | *ręka* ("hand"), *zdjęcie* ("picture"), *pięć* ("five") |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *-ą* | [O~] | *mąż* ("husband"), *wąż* ("snake"), *mają* ("they have") |

Depending on the position of the nasal vowels, we either pronounce them nasally or simply as mouth vowels. We would like to show you some rules that will help you master their pronunciation.

| **When the vowels *-ę* and *-ą* are before the following letters...** | **...we pronounce them** | | **Examples** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **-ę** | **-ą** | **-ę** | **-ą** |
| *-f*, *-w*, *-s*, *-sz*, *-z*, *-ż*, *-ch* | [E~] | [O~] | *węch* ("smell"), *kęs* ("bite") | *wąż* ("snake"), *wąs* ("mustache") |
| *-l*, *-ł* | [E] | [O] | *kopnęli* ("they kicked"), *kichnęli* ("they sneezed") | *dotknął* ("he touched"), *wrzasnął* ("he yelled") |
| *-p*, *-b* | [Em] | [Om] | *tępy* ("blunt"), *zęby* ("teeth") | *skąpy* ("stingy"), *ząb* ("tooth") |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *-t*, *-d*, *-c*, *-dz*, *-cz* | [En] | [On] | *kręty* ("curvy"), *tędy* ("this way") | *zając* ("hare"), *pieniądze* ("money") |
| *-ć*, *-ci*, *-dź*, *-dzi* | [EJ] | [OJ] | *dziesięć* ("ten"), *pędził* ("he rushed") | *kącik* ("nook") |
| *-k*, *-g* | [EN] | [ON] | *ręka* ("hand"), *tęgi* ("fat," "big") | *mąka* ("flour"), *krąg* ("circle") |
| - at the end of the word | [E] or [E~] | [O~] | *widzę* ("I see"), *się* (reflexive pronoun) | *widzą* ("they see"), *chcą* ("they want") |

### Language Tip

To listen to these sounds or any others, go to the learning center and find a word with the grapheme that corresponds to the phonetic symbol you'd like to practice.

## II. Polish Consonants

Based on the type of articulation we use to produce the sound, Polish consonants are divided into the following groups:

1. *Spółgłoski zwarte* ("occlusive consonants")
2. *Spółgloski zwarto-szczelinowe* ("affricate consonants")
3. *Spółgłoski szczelinowe* ("fricative consonants")
4. *Spółgłoski półotwarte* ("sonorants")

Let's have a look at each of these consonant groups.

### A. *Spółgłoski Zwarte* ("Occlusive Consonants")

We produce these consonants by blocking the air within the vocal tract, then either quickly releasing or holding the air flow.

| Letter | Phonetic Transcription | "English" Examples | *Polish* Examples |
|---|---|---|---|
| *-p* | [p] | "pie," "pen," "pot" | *palec* ("finger"), *pomidor* ("tomato"), *pa* ("bye") |
| *-b* | [b] | "beach," "bed," "ball" | *banan* ("banana"), *boisko* ("field"), *broda* ("beard") |
| *-t* | [t] | "tool," "talent," "tea" | *tenis* ("tennis"), *ten* ("this"), *tabela* ("table") |
| *-d* | [d] | "doll," "dance," "do" | *dolar* ("dollar"), *dyskoteka* ("discotheque"), *dywan* ("carpet") |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *-k* | [k] | "cold," "clue," "club" | *karta* ("card"), *kalejdoskop* ("kaleidoscope"), *krokodyl* ("crocodile") |
| *-g* | [g] | "goal," "great," "give" | *galeria* ("art gallery"), *gotowy* ("ready"), *gest* ("gesture") |

### B. *Spółgłoski Zwarto-Szczelinowe* ("Affricate Consonants")

We initially articulate the consonants that belong to this group as occlusive sounds that we then follow with a release, changing them into fricative sounds.

| Letter | Phonetic Transcription | "English" Examples | *Polish* Examples |
|---|---|---|---|
| *-c* | [t͡s] | "coats," "eats," "tsar" | *cebula* ("onion"), *cal* ("inch"), *co* ("what") |

The affricate consonants characteristic to the Polish language are:

| Letter or Group of Letters | Phonetic Transcription | "English" Examples | *Polish* Examples |
|---|---|---|---|

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *-dz* | [dz] | "needs," "kids," "islands" | *dzban* ("pitcher"), *dzwon* ("bell") |
| *-cz* | [t͡ʃ] | "cheese," "cello," "nature" | *czek* ("check"), *czas* ("time") |
| *-dż* | [d͡ʒ] | "gin," "June," "judge" | *dżungla* ("jungle"), *dżokej* ("jockey") |
| *-ć/-ci* | [t͡ɕ] | We pronounce *-ć/-ci* more softly than *-cz.* | *ćwiczyć* ("to exercise"), *dać* ("to give"), *ciocia* ("aunt"), *ciemny* ("dark") |
| *-dź/-dzi* | [d͡ʑ] | We pronounce *-dź/-dzi* more softly than *-dż.* | *dźwigać* ("to carry heavy things"), *dźwięk* ("sound"), *dziwny* ("weird"), *dziecko* ("child") |
| | | | |

We pronounce the sounds *-ć* and *-ci* exactly the same way, as are the sounds *-dź* and *-dzi.* While their pronunciation is always identical, their spelling can vary and is dictated by the following rules:

**Rule 1:** The consonants with the acute mark appear at the end of the words or before another consonant.

**For Example:**

1. *kość*
   "bone"

2. *pisać*
   "to write"

**Rule 2:** We use the consonants with the letter *-i* when they occur before a vowel.

**For Example:**

1. *ciasto*
   "cake"

2. *dziewięć*
   "nine"

These rules apply to all consonants with acute signs and their variants with the letter *-i.*

### C. *Spółgłoski Szczelinowe* ("Fricative Consonants")

We produce these consonant sounds by forcing air through a narrow gap by placing two parts of the mouth together. Imagine that you are trying to produce a hissing sound like a snake: *sssss.* Both your upper and lower incisors are closed but there is still a narrow opening that allows air to escape.

| Letter | Phonetic Transcription | "English" Examples | *Polish* Examples |
|---|---|---|---|

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *-f* | [f] | "fun," "physics," "face" | *flet* ("flute"), *fajka* ("pipe"), *filozofia* ("philosophy") |
| *-w* | [v] | "vine," "vest," "visit" | *wdowa* ("widow"), *walizka* ("suitcase"), *widelec* ("fork") |
| *-s* | [s] | "soup," "snake," "summer" | *skóra* ("skin"), *scorpion* ("scorpio"), *sok* ("juice") |
| *-z* | [z] | "zoo," "zenith," "dissolve" | *zero* ("zero"), *zamek* ("castle/lock"), *za* ("behind") |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *-h/-ch* | [x] | "he,"<br>"half,"<br>"hook" | *handel*<br>("trade"),<br>*helikopter*<br>("helicopter"),<br>*honor*<br>("honor"),<br>*choinka*<br>("Christmas tree"),<br>*chleb*<br>("bread") |

The letters *-h* and *-ch* represent the same sound despite their different spelling. Polish uses the letter *-h* in words of foreign origin.

**For Example:**

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| *helikopter* | "helicopter" |
| *hokej* | "hockey" |
| *herbata* | "tea" |

The letter *-h* also appears in words that have *-h:-g* or *-h:-ż* alternation.

**For Example:**

1. *wa**h**adło:wa**g**a*
   "pendulum": "scale"

2. *dru**h**:dru**ż**yna*
   "boy scout": "team"

The group *-ch* occurs in other cases and at the end of words.

**For Example:**

| *Polish* | "English" |
|---|---|
| *pia**ch*** | "sand" |
| *kra**ch*** | "crash" |
| *w sna**ch*** | "in dreams |

Fricative consonants characteristic of the Polish language include the following:

| Letter or Group of Letters | Phonetic Transcription | "English" Examples | *Polish* Examples |
|---|---|---|---|
| *-sz* | [S] | "fish," "ocean," "she" | *sztuka* ("art"), *szewc* ("shoemaker") |
| *-ż/-rz* | [Z] | "beige," "genre," "vision" | *żyrafa* ("giraffe"), *żyto* ("rye"), *rzeka* ("river"), *rzęsa* ("eyelash") |
| *-ś/-si* | [C] | We pronounce *-ś/-si* more softly than *-sz.* | *świat* ("world"), *ktoś* ("someone"), *siedem* ("seven"), *się* (reflexive pronoun) |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *-ź/-zi* | [À] | We pronounce *-ź/-zi* more softly than *-ż/-rz.* | *źle* ("badly"), *źródło* ("spring"), *zielony* ("green"), *zima* ("winter") |

**Note**

It is worth mentioning that we again have two consonants with an acute sign, *-ś* and *-ź,* and their variants with the letter *-i, -si*, and *-zi.* The rules as to when to use *-ś/-si* or *-ź/-zi* are identical to the ones we already introduced above with *-ć/-ci*.

**Letter *-ż* vs. *-rz***

*-Ż* and *-rz* represent the same sound with a different spelling. Again, there are many rules that determine whether we write *-ż* or *-rz.* We will show you the most common ones. We write the letter *-ż* when there is a *-ż:-g* alternation.

**For Example:**

1. *książka: księga*
   "book": "book"

2. *mogę: możesz*
   "I can": "you can" (singular)

We use the group *-rz* when there is a *-rz: -r* alternation.

**For Example:**

1. *marzec: marca*
   "March": "of March"

2. *dobrze: dobry*
   "well": "good"

We also use *-rz* after the following consonants: *-p, -b, -t, -d, -k, -g, -ch, -j,* and *-w.*

**For Example:** *br**z**eg* ("coast"), *pr**z**yroda* ("nature"), and *kr**z**ak* ("bush").

### D. *Spółgłoski Półotwarte* ("Sonorants")

When producing sonorants, the airflow goes relatively freely through mouth or nose. There is only a partial closure. One of the sonorants is the letter *-m.* Try to hum a little bit. You should feel the air stream going through your nose.

| Letter | Phonetic Transcription | "English" Examples | *Polish* Examples |
|---|---|---|---|
| *-m* | [m] | "melody," "me," "match" | *moment* ("moment"), *meta* ("finish"), *miasto* ("city") |
| *-n* | [n] | "nothing," "nose," "novel" | *noc* ("night"), *niebo* ("sky"), *neon* ("neon") |
| *-l* | [l] | "love," "leg," "light" | *lawa* ("lava"), *lojalny* ("loyal"), *lato* ("summer") |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *-r* | [r] | It's a rolled -r. | *rower* ("bike"), *rum* ("rum"), *rosa* ("dew") |
| *-j* | [j] | "yellow," "you," "yoke" | *jem* ("I eat"), *jutro* ("tomorrow"), *jak* ("how") |

Sonorants characteristic to the Polish language include the following:

| **Letter or Group of Letters** | **Phonetic Transcription** | **"English" Examples** | ***Polish* Examples** |
|---|---|---|---|
| -ł | [w] | "wedding," "win," "walk" | *łatwy* ("easy"), *okrągły* ("round") |
| -ń/-ni | [J] | We pronounce *-ń/-ni* more softly than *-n,* close to the sound [-ney] in the word "money." | *dłoń* ("hand"), *słoń* ("elephant"), *niski* ("short"), *niebieski* ("blue") |

## Letters Q, V, and X

It is worth mentioning that the letters *-q*, *-v*, and *-x* are present in some words; however, they

only appear in words that were adopted into the Polish language but were never adapted to Polish spelling rules. Therefore, they have kept their original forms: for example, *quiz* and *vis-à-vis*. In some cases, two forms of the same word may appear. The word "fax" can be spelled *fax,* as it originally appears in English, or it may be spelled *faks*, adjusted to Polish spelling standards.

LESSON NOTES

# All About S1 #5
# 5 Most Important Phrases for Learning Polish!

CONTENTS

2 Grammar

# 5



COPYRIGHT © 2013 INNOVATIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

# GRAMMAR

**The Focus of This Lesson Is the Five Most Common Polish Phrases.**

---

To be able to survive in a foreign country where people speak a different language than yours, you will need to familiarize yourself with some emergency phrases that will help you function and satisfy your basic needs and in some situations save your skin!

Poland is no exception! Not only will using the five phrases in this lesson and following our tips help you break the ice, but it will also allow you to start on the right foot to establishing a friendly and respectful exchange! Poles will definitely appreciate your attempts at speaking the language-a language even they believe is often difficult to speak.

## Phrase One: *Jak się masz? Dobrze.* ("How are you?" "Well.")

---

After greeting and saying hello to someone, it would be nice of you to ask how he or she is doing. It's a matter of politeness and a sign that you care.

### The Question Jak się masz? and Its Formal Equivalent

While in Poland, you will often hear the question *Jak się masz?* [yak sheh mash?], meaning "How are you?" We only use *Jak się masz?* in familiar situations or in informal settings. For example, you could say it when speaking to your Polish colleague you've spent some time with outside of work or simply with a longtime friend.

If you happen to be in a formal setting, use the question *Jak się pan ma?* [yak sheh pan ma], meaning "How are you, sir?" or *Jak się pani ma?* [yak sheh pa-nee ma?] ("How are you, ma'am?"). For example, these questions are perfect when you're speaking to newly introduced co-workers or at a business meeting. Also, whenever you meet people much older than you, out of respect ask them how they are using the formal phrases outlined above.

The response to the question *Jak się masz?* or *Jak się pan/pani ma?* regardless of the setting is *Dobrze* [do-bshe] ("well" or "fine").

### Language Expansion

**Alternative questions for *Jak się masz?* ("How are you?)**

| *Polish* | Pronunciation | "English" |
|---|---|---|
| *Co słychać?* | [tso swy-hach?] | "How are you?" (informal) |
| *Co u pana słychać?* | [tso oo pa-na swy-hach?] | "How are you, sir?" (formal) |
| *Co u pani słychać?* | [tso oo pa-nee swy-hach?] | "How are you, ma'am?" (formal) |

**Alternative Answers for *Dobrze* ("Well")**

| *Polish* | Pronunciation | "English" |
|---|---|---|
| *Wszystko dobrze.* | [fshy-stko do-bshe] | "Everything is okay." |
| *Wszystko w porządku.* | [fshy-stko v po-zhon-dkoo] | "Everything is fine." |
| *Nic nowego.* | [neets no-ve-go] | "Nothing new." |

### Cultural Tip

It is worth mentioning that Poles can talk forever when asked how they are. They not only will tell you about their current life situation, but also about any health problems that they have been dealing with. The *Jak się masz*? question is definitely not a greeting like in English. If you are brave enough and you decide to ask this question, be ready for a long monologue.

### Phrase Two: *Proszę* ("Please")

---

This phrase is a must for anyone who has *trochę klasy* ("some courtesy"). Use *proszę* [pro-she] ("please") whenever you have a chance when dealing with Poles and you will see that it will make your life much easier. We use the phrase *proszę* both in formal and informal settings.

Besides the meaning of *proszę* that we have just introduced, we can also use *proszę* in several other situations. Let's have a look at them.

1. When you would like to address someone politely or attract someone's attention, you can, for example, say *Proszę Pani*, meaning "Excuse me, Miss," or *Proszę Państwa*, meaning "Ladies and Gentlemen."

2. When you want to say "you're welcome," use *proszę* and you're all set.

3. When someone knocks on the door, saying *proszę* means "Please come in."

4. Also, people widely use *proszę* at stores. For example, when the shop assistant addresses the customer, he or she can say *proszę*, meaning "Can I help you?"

5. If you did not understand something and you want the speaker to repeat it, it's absolutely proper to say *proszę?* meaning "Excuse me."

6. In a situation when you are giving something to someone, *proszę* means "Here you are."

### Language Expansion

Often, after you use *proszę,* comes the time to thank the person who helped you. To do so, just say "thank you," in Polish, which is *dziękuję* [jen-koo-yeh].

Even better, show your appreciation and break the old routine by using some alternative phrases for *dziękuję*.

| ***Polish*** | **Pronunciation** | **"English"** |
|---|---|---|
| *Dzięki.* | [jen-key] | "Thanks." (informal only) |
| *Dziękuję bardzo.* | [jen-koo-yeh bar-dzo] | "Thank you very much." (both formal and informal) |

### Phrase Three: *Przepraszam* ("I'm sorry")

---

There probably will be situations when you say or do something wrong or simply want to

apologize for something. Nobody is perfect, and we do make mistakes from time to time. Doing so, however, requires us to apologize and say that we are sorry.

The word *przepraszam* [pshe-pra-sham] means "I am sorry" and we can use it in formal settings as well as informal situations. The word *przepraszam* has also a secondary meaning to it, which is "excuse me."

The informal "I'm sorry" in Polish is *Sory.* This is not a mistake. It's the English "sorry" adapted to Polish spelling and pronunciation. With English becoming more and more popular in Poland, Poles have started to use English words instead of their Polish equivalents. As you can see, the word *sory* is one of them. You will hear it a lot while in Poland, especially when spending time with the younger generation of Poles.

### Language Expansion

Let's not assume that only you will be at fault. You should also know phrases like "that's okay" or "no problem," just in case someone has done something wrong to you. In such an instance, the phrases *Nic się nie stało* [nits sheh nye sta-wo] ("That's okay") and *Nie ma sprawy* [nye ma spra-vy] ("No problem") would be very appropriate.

## Phrase Four: *Pomocy* ("Help")

---

You never know what will happen from one day to the next. Some days are predictable, and others may require fast action on your part to aid in an emergency. In that case, you may need to ask for help.

To get immediate assistance and people's attention, just say *Pomocy* [po-mo-tsy], meaning "help." Poles are usually quite responsive and they will do their best to help you as fast as they can. However, if you are not in such an urgent situation and you would like a stranger to help you, for example, find your way, you can simply say *Przepraszam, potrzebuję pomocy* [pshe-pra-sham pot-che-boo-yeh po-mo-tsy], meaning "Excuse me, I need help." This way you will still catch the person's full attention and he or she will gladly help you with whatever questions you have.

## Phrase Five: *Nie wiem* ("I don't know")

---

While enjoying your stay in Poland and visiting cities and castles, someone might ask you one of the following questions: "Where are the restrooms?" or "Where is the closest restaurant?" More likely than not, since you're only a visitor, you won't know the answer.

A useful phrase to know in such a situation would be *Nie wiem* [nye viem], meaning "I don't know."

## Language Expansion

To give an explanation, you could add *Nie jestem stąd* [nye ye-stem stond], meaning "I am not from here."

LESSON NOTES

# All About S1 #6
# Can You Answer These 5 Questions About Poland?

CONTENTS

2 Grammar

# 6



COPYRIGHT © 2013 INNOVATIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

# GRAMMAR

**The Focus of This Lesson Is a Quiz on the Five Things You Need to Know about Poland.**

---

What do you know about Poland?

Test your knowledge! Through this mini-test, you will build your basic knowledge about *Polska* by quizzing yourself on five major areas about Poland:

1. Geography
2. Pop culture
3. Travel
4. Economics
5. Polish society

## 1. Geography Question

---

How many provinces are there in Poland?

1. 10
2. 16
3. 49

The correct answer is 2: 16. According to administrative reforms introduced in 1999, Poland is divided into sixteen provinces (*województwa*), also called "voivodships." Before that, Poland consisted of forty-nine provinces centered around major cities.

Currently, the largest and most populous province is the Mazovia province, which contains the capital of Poland, Warsaw. However, the province with the largest number of inhabitants

per square kilometer is Silesia, which has as its main city Katowice.

## 2. Pop Culture Question

---

Can you match the following personalities with their respective profession?

**Personalities:**

1. Robert Kubica
2. Ryszard Kapuściński
3. Zbigniew Brzeziński

**Professions:**

1. politician
2. journalist
3. sportsman

Robert Kubica is Poland's latest contribution to the world sports scene. The first Pole ever to compete in Formula One Racing, Kubica made his debut in 2006, and in his third race, the Italian Grand Prix, he secured a third-place finish. Despite an impressive overall fourth place finish in the 2008 Formula One rankings, Kubica fell to number fourteen in 2009. Poles are looking for a strong comeback in 2010.

Widely recognized as a master of his craft, Ryszard Kapuściński began his career in journalism as a young man covering events in India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan. Over the course of his career, he reported stories mainly from the third world-most often from Africa and Latin America-and earned a reputation for his insightful, literary style of journalism. Much of his work has been collected and is available in book form, and it has been translated into over thirty languages worldwide.

Many Americans will recognize Zbigniew Brzeziński as National Security Advisor to President Jimmy Carter from 1977 to 1981. While born in Poland, Brzeziński attended schools in both

the United States and Canada, and he has remained an influential figure in U.S. international politics, especially relations concerning the former Soviet Union. He has published many books and is a frequent guest on political talk shows in the United States.

### 3. Travel Question

---

Which Polish city is the most popular tourist attraction?

1. Warsaw
2. Cracow
3. Wrocław

The correct answer is 1: Warsaw. Based on a survey of the Polish government's Institute of Tourism, Warsaw is the most popular tourist destination in Poland. Situated almost in the heart of Poland, Warsaw attracts approximately 2.4 million tourists a year. Even though the city was totally destroyed during World War II, the Poles rebuilt it very quickly. The Poles used pre-war city plans to reconstruct the Old Town brick by brick exactly as it stood prior to the war. However, the Poles rebuild the remainder of the city using communist construction techniques, hence the abundance of massive, square, concrete apartment buildings hastily thrown up in an attempt to alleviate a post-war housing shortage. The most popular tourist attractions are the Palace of Culture and Science that Stalin donated as a gift to the nation, the magnificent Old Town, and the former Jewish ghetto.

### 4. Economy Question

---

What industry is Poland well known for?

1. glass
2. steel production
3. coal mining

Even though Poland was associated with more traditional heavy industries such as coal mining and steel production in the past, nowadays Poland's glass industry has come to the fore. While browsing in any home or craft store, you are likely to find a "Made in Poland" label on much of the glassware you find. In addition, Polish companies such as *Krosno* are earning a reputation worldwide for their production of glass products ranging from exquisite vases to intricately detailed stemware.

### 5. Polish Society Question

---

If there are three Poles stranded on a deserted island, how many political parties would they form?

1. 1
2. 3
3. 4

The correct answer is 3: they will probably form four political parties. This Polish joke illustrates how agreeable, or disagreeable, Poles can be. As you can see, it is very difficult for Poles to come to an agreement regarding almost anything. People say that every Pole is an individual with his own special solution for everything. Moreover, they always think that their solution is the best and the one and only acceptable plan. On the other hand, Poles have proven many times throughout their troubled and tragic history that in critical situations they can act together, mobilize themselves, and do great things. It is a widely held belief that Poles make great soldiers because of their willingness to die for their homeland, but it has oftentimes been their disagreements in peacetime that have been most troubling.

LESSON NOTES

# All About S1 #7
# Top 5 Polish Dishes!

CONTENTS

2 Grammar

# 7



COPYRIGHT © 2013 INNOVATIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

# GRAMMAR

**The Focus of This Lesson Is the Top Five Polish Foods.**

---

Throughout the centuries, many nations that have come and gone on the terrain of Poland, such as Belorussians, Ukrainians, Lithuanians, and Jews, have influenced Polish cuisine. Their past presence and resulting influences have enriched Polish cuisine both in its taste and in variety.

Polish food is very rich, filling, and heavy, which is not a big surprise considering the bone-chilling winters! We could easily describe Polish food as peasant food because of the huge abundance of potatoes, cabbage, and different meats in Polish cuisine. The portions are not small either. There is a saying that if a Pole is grouchy, he is probably hungry-hence, the big portions. Also a meal without a piece of meat is not really a meal for a hungry Pole.

It was really difficult for us to settle on only five representative dishes since there is much more that's worthy on the Polish table. However, we want you to know the staple dishes that you will encounter in every Polish house and every restaurant that serves Polish food.

Here we present the five dishes that you absolutely must try-and attempt to finish!-while staying in Poland. We can assure you that you won't regret it!

### *1. Pierogi*

---

*Pierogi* are almost like ravioli but a little bit bigger. They can be stuffed with meat, cabbage, mushrooms, and sauerkraut. There are also variations of *pierogi* for those with a sweet tooth. They can be filled with strawberries and prunes and topped with homemade whipped cream and some sugar.

### *2. Bigos*

---

Some consider *bigos* to be the Polish national dish. It's a hunter's stew made up of cooked cabbage, sauerkraut, dried mushrooms, and pieces of sausage, bacon, and ham, all mixed in tomato paste. If you hear a Pole saying "I am making *bigos* today," you should expect a huge

pot of *bigos* that could easily serve ten people. The amazing thing about *bigos* is that the more you reheat it, the better it tastes.

### *3. Gołąbki*

---

More cabbage is involved in this dish. *Gołąbki* consists of cabbage leaves that are stuffed with a mix of rice and meat and covered in tomato sauce. Since *gołąbki* are also very time-consuming to make, Poles usually make them in bulk.

### *4. Placki Ziemniaczane*

---

These are famous Polish potato pancakes. The recipe is very simple. Puree as many potatoes as you would like, add an egg, some flour, puree a small onion, and season with salt and pepper to taste, then fry the mixture in oil. When done, you can eat them with sour cream or sugar. Mmm, yummy.

### *5. Barszcz Biały,* also Known as *Żurek*

---

One of the most well-known Polish soups, *barszcz biały*, is a sour soup made from rye flour. Poles serve it with sausage, hard-boiled eggs, and potatoes. Many families eat a special *żurek* for breakfast on Easter morning. Watch out for the whole allspice!

## Useful Tips

Poles are very hospitable. If someone happens to invite you to a Polish house, your hosts will ask you at least several times to eat something. Don't even try to refuse. It is an exercise in futility. Try to eat as much as you can. This way you can express your appreciation for the food that was prepared for you. Otherwise, your hosts will think you don't like it and they might get offended.

When at the table, say the phrase *Smacznego* ("Enjoy your meal") before starting your meal.

Some must-knows while eating in Polish restaurants:

- In many restaurants, the price of the main entrée usually does not include side dishes such as potatoes and salads, so don't be surprised if the bill is a little higher than you expected. You can find prices for the side dishes in the *Dodatki* section.
- They never serve water automatically with the meal. If you would like some, you have to ask the waiter for it, and of course, they will charge you for it accordingly. Beer is sometimes cheaper!
- When paying at a restaurant with a bigger bill, don't say "Thank you" when the waiter comes to collect your payment as you won't see the change. In Poland, Poles take "thank you" to mean "keep the change," and the service staff will more likely assume that this is their tip and that you are being simply very generous. When paying, simply hand the waiter the check with your payment and say *proszę*.
- Remember to dress more elegantly when going to a higher-end restaurant.

## Top Five Bizarre Polish Foods

---

Here are the top five Polish foods for people who would like to experience something new and one of a kind...and who are not afraid to try it!

**Number five**: fried liver (*wątroba)*
**Number four**: tripe (*flaki*)
**Number three**: black pudding *(kiszka/kaszanka)*
**Number two**: head cheese (*salceson*)

**And the winner is**: jellied pigs' feet (*galareta*)

LESSON NOTES

# All About S1 #8
# Top 5 Things You Need to Know About Polish Society!

CONTENTS

2 Grammar

# 8



COPYRIGHT © 2013 INNOVATIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

# GRAMMAR

**The Focus of This Lesson Is the Top Five Things You Need to Know about Polish Society.**

## 1. Poland's Capital City and the History behind It.

---

The Polish capital, Warszawa ("Warsaw"), is situated near the geographic center of Poland. It is the largest city in Poland with respect to both population and geographic size. Warsaw counts approximately 1.7 million inhabitants and is undoubtedly the most cosmopolitan city in Poland, with very well-developed cultural and political life.

### The City's Past and Present

Warsaw became the official capital of Poland in 1596, when Polish King Zygmunt III Waza decided to move the capital from Cracow to Warsaw. In its history, Warsaw has encountered many tragic moments, including the Swedish invasion, known as the Deluge, and the final partition of the Polish nation in 1795. However, the single most destructive period for Warsaw was World War II. During the Nazi occupation, the Polish capital was totally destroyed. According to post-war statistics, around eighty percent of the city's buildings were obliterated and half of the population of Warsaw perished. Of all Polish cities, Warsaw and its citizens arguably suffered the most during the Second World War and its aftermath. After the war, its citizens tried to rebuild the "new" Warsaw to resemble as close as possible its "old" self. However, the damage was so immense that only the Old Town was restored to match pre-war plans. The rest of the capital's architecture was mainly designed to provide housing for those who survived the war and for newcomers. Using communist construction techniques, tall concrete blocks sprouted rapidly-quality often sacrificed for quantity. Since the fall of communism, Warsaw has changed markedly. With a growing number of new businesses, modern skyscrapers, and fast-developing cultural life, Warsaw has become the most popular attraction for tourists in Poland.

## 2. Family Life

---

Families in Poland generally still fall into the traditional mold. There is a small difference between urban and rural families: urban families tend to be smaller with one or two children, while in the villages there still exists a need for larger families, where children are often still expected to contribute to farm labor, and, in time, take over entirely.

It is not unusual for younger Poles to stay and live with their parents until they are well into their twenties or thirties or until they get married. Both the cost of living and real estate values in Poland are so high in comparison to most incomes that not many younger, single Poles can afford moving out and living on their own. It is also not uncommon for several generations along with their individual families to live under one roof.

Polish gender roles are still quite traditional, with men working and supporting the families and women taking care of the children and the house. However, this trend is slowly changing. More and more mothers want to climb the career ladder and dads are somewhat more willing to stay at home and take over their wives' responsibilities.

In recent years, however, a number of problems have arisen that Polish families and society must now face. One of them is a decreasing number of births. The main contributing factor to this decline in the birthrate is a delay in tying the knot among younger Poles. More and more, Poles are delaying starting their families until they have sufficiently established themselves in a career. Also, soon after Poland joined the European Union, a lot of young Poles left, looking for better paid jobs, hoping to start their families abroad.

### 3. Polish Economy

---

The Polish economy is considered to be one of the fastest-growing economies in Central Europe. Soon after the fall of communism, Poland's economy experienced massive privatization of previously state-owned companies. Also, as a result of new laws concerning the creation of new business entities, the private sector expanded quickly and now accounts for more than two-thirds of Poland's gross domestic product (GDP).

When it comes to industry, the most popular and profitable sectors remain machine building, iron and steel, coal mining, chemicals, ship building, food processing, and glass production.

Some well-known companies in Poland are:

1. PKN Orlen (Petrochemical corporation)
2. PZU (Insurance company)
3. Telekomunikacja Polska ("Polish Telecommunication")
4. Poczta Polska ("Polish Post")

5. Fiat (Polish branch of the Fiat Group)

With regard to export goods, Poland is known for exporting electrical and electrotechnical equipment, transport equipment, chemical products, machinery, and textiles.

Since its entry into the European Union, Poland has become one of the world's most popular outsourcing destinations, mainly because of its central location and well-educated, yet cheap by comparison, workforce.

## 4. Political System

---

Poland is a democratic parliamentary republic. The president is the official head of state and is elected popularly every five years. While his main role is to represent the nation in world affairs, one important political function that the president does posses is the power of veto over legislation parliament passes.

The Polish parliament consists of two chambers, the lower house, called the *Sejm*, with four hundred and sixty members, and the upper house, called the Senate, which has one hundred members. Parliamentary elections take place every four years. The Senate was only recently established in 1989, so it is a fairly new element in the government. Before that there was just a one-chamber parliament that consisted of the Sejm only.

The Prime Minister, who is the political head of government and of a multi-party system, is appointed by the president and confirmed by the Sejm. The Prime Minister, together with a council of ministers, represents the executive branch of the Polish government. As in many constitutional governments, the remaining powers are separated among the judiciary and legislative branches.

The political scene is mainly represented by two parties:

1. *Platforma Obywatelska* ("Civic Platform")

2. *Prawo i Sprawiedliwość* ("Law and Justice").

## 5. Generational Trends

Generally speaking, there is quite a gap between the older and the younger generation in Poland, especially in their attitudes toward work. The older generation shows a strong sense of loyalty to their employers and places work very high on their priority list. Very often, they stay with the same company for their entire lives. The younger generation is not that loyal. If dissatisfied with some aspects of their job, they often immediately look for a new workplace. They very often expect to be promoted quickly, regardless of their experience and the time spent with the company. Also, they have become very demanding as far as work benefits and conditions are concerned.

The older generation knows how to be patient; the younger generation should learn from that.

LESSON NOTES

# All About S1 #9
# Top 5 Important Dates During the Polish Calendar Year!

CONTENTS

2 Grammar

# 9



COPYRIGHT © 2013 INNOVATIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

## GRAMMAR

**The Focus of This Lesson Is the Top Five Important Dates During the Polish Calendar Year.**

---

Below we have listed the official Polish national holidays. On these days, schools, government institutions, banks, and most companies are officially closed.

| **Date** | ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|---|
| January 1 | *Nowy Rok* | "New Year's Day" |
| March/April | *Niedziela i Poniedziałek Wielkanocny* | "Easter Sunday and Easter Monday" |
| May 1 | *Święto pracy* | "Labor Day" |
| May 3 | *Święto Konstytucji Trzeciego Maja* | "Constitution Day" |
| May/June | *Boże Ciało* | "Corpus Christi" |
| August 15 | *Wniebowzięcie Najświętszej Marii Panny* | "The Assumption" |
| November 1 | *Wszystkich Świętych* | "All Saints' Day" |
| November 11 | *Święto Niepodległości* | "Independence Day" |
| December 24 and 25 | *Boże Narodzenie* | "Christmas" |

Now here we will present the most important holidays for Poles:

**The Fifth Most Important Holiday for Poles is Mother's Day.**

---

Even though Mother's Day is not a day off from work, it has become a highly celebrated holiday in Polish families. *Dzień Matki* ("Mother's Day") is always celebrated on the twenty-sixth day of May.

The Greeks originated this holiday by celebrating the goddess Rhea, the mother of all gods, every spring. In ancient Rome, in the fifth century before Christ, the pagan custom was to celebrate Matralia, a festivity honoring women and mothers.

In Poland, Mother's Day was celebrated for the first time in 1923 in Cracow. Since then, people have widely celebrated this day throughout the whole country, especially young children. Children meticulously prepare gifts at school such as cards, poems, and the like. Another traditional gift is a nice bouquet of flowers. Older children try to relieve their mothers from their everyday chores such as cleaning and cooking.

**The Fourth Most Important Holiday in Poland is New Year's Eve.**

---

There are many different ways Poles celebrate *Sylwester* ("New Year's Eve"). Many people host parties at their house, with fireworks and a sufficient amount of alcohol. Also, restaurants and clubs organize New Year's Eve celebrations; however, there is usually a fee associated with them. Ticket prices usually range from one hundred dollars to four hundred dollars per couple and attendees have to purchase tickets in advance. Most often, there is food and a bottle of champagne included in the price.

Most larger Polish cities host live concerts for New Year's Eve, usually in a market square or other central location. Just before midnight, Poles will do a common countdown and as soon as midnight strikes, friends and strangers wish each other *Szczęśliwego Nowego Roku* ("Happy New Year"). Seconds later, there is a spectacular display of fireworks. If you decide to celebrate New Year's Eve this way, be cautious. Some overzealous celebrants tend to spray champagne everywhere and toss the bottles about. Look out for fireworks from the crowd as well.

**The Third Most Important Holiday in Poland is All Saints' Day.**

---

We celebrate *Wszystkich Świętych* ("All Saints' Day") on the first day of November. People widely observe this holiday throughout the whole of Poland. It is a day when Poles visit cemeteries to pray and remember those who have passed away. They pay their respects with

flowers, beautiful wreaths, and an unbelievable amount of candles. At night, these lit candles people place throughout entire cemeteries look especially spectacular and amazing. Since it is a day off work, it is common for those who have moved away from their hometowns to return for this occasion to visit not only family, but also the graves of their lost loved ones. These celebrations extend to the following day in a lesser degree.

**The Second Most Important Holiday in Poland is Easter.**

---

Easter is definitely one of the most important holidays in Poland. Since it is a movable holiday, it can fall any day between the twenty-second day of March and the twenty-fifth day of April. It all starts with *Niedziela Palmowa* ("Palm Sunday"), which begins *Wielki Tydzień* ("Holy Week") for Christians. On Palm Sunday, Poles go to church with little palms usually made from willow branches or straw and decorated with colorful ribbons. In some parts of Poland, people make their own palms that can reach up to ten meters high. Some churches even hold a contest for the most beautiful handmade palm.

On *Wielka Sobota* ("Holy Saturday"), Poles prepare baskets filled with different foods, such as bread, sausage, eggs, horseradish, and salt and pepper, and then they go to church to have the baskets blessed. *Pisanki* ("decorated eggs") are very characteristic of Polish Easter. You can recognize *pisanki* by their intricate and colorful folk patterns. You can make them using hard-boiled eggs, or you can simply buy *pisanki* made of wood that could easily become a souvenir.

On *Niedziela Wielkanocna* ("Easter Sunday morning"), families go to church early and afterward they eat a solemn breakfast made from the food blessed on Saturday. Before the meal, some families share eggs, wishing each other all the best.

On *Poniedziałek Wielkanocny* ("Easter Monday"), also known as *Lany Poniedziałek* or *Śmigus-Dyngus* ("Wet Monday"), Poles sprinkle each other with water-sometimes it is really just a sprinkling, but many other times Poles "sprinkle" each other with buckets of water. Theories as to the source of this tradition vary, and time has only served to obscure its origins further. Some claim the practice traces its roots to a pagan ritual whereby a dousing with water symbolized the joy felt at the end of winter; others contend that a sprinkling with water is supposed to bring fertility and a quick marriage for young maidens.

**The Most Important Holiday in Poland is Christmas.**

Since Poland is mostly a Catholic country, Catholic celebrations play an important role in the lives of many Poles. The latest estimates count approximately ninety-five percent of Poles as Catholic. *Święta Bożego Narodzenia* ("Christmas") is definitely the most celebrated and the most observed holiday of all.

*Wigilia* ("Christmas Eve"), the twenty-fourth day of December, is the most celebrated day of the entire year in Polish homes. The most important event of this day is a solemn supper that, according to tradition, should begin when the first star appears in the sky. Before the meal, Polish families pray together and share *opłatek,* a special blessed Christmas wafer, wishing each other all the best. No meat is served on *Wigilia,* and the supper itself traditionally should consist of twelve dishes-representing the twelve apostles-including specialties of Polish cuisine such as carp and *barszcz czerwony* ("red borscht"). There is always one extra place set at the table for an unexpected guest, symbolizing an expectation of the coming of Jesus Christ and remembrance of those passed on.

After the supper, Polish families exchange gifts and sing Christmas carols. Just before midnight, Poles go to church for a midnight mass called *pasterka*. There are many beliefs associated with Christmas Eve and this special night. For example, some believe that at midnight animals speak with a human voice and the water in wells turns into wine.

Poles spend most of Christmas Day with immediate family. People go to church, eat, and relax. They reserve the second day of Christmas, the twenty-sixth day of December, for visits with extended family and close friends.

LESSON NOTES

# All About S1 #10
# Top 5 Polish Pop Culture Icons You Need to Know About!

CONTENTS

2 Grammar

# 10



COPYRIGHT © 2013 INNOVATIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

# GRAMMAR

**The Focus of This Lesson Is the Top Five Things You Need to Know about Pop Culture in Poland.**

---

In this lesson, we will try to introduce you to some of the most important elements that combine to create what we will refer to as Polish pop culture. From sports and music to film and politics, a long list of Poles have made valuable contributions to Polish history and society that make them worthy of memory both in Poland and the world.

## Number Five Pop Culture Must-Know: Popular Sports Figures

---

If you're interested in sports, you might be able to recognize some of the sports figures we introduce below. Even though Poland is a relatively small country, it has a great number of extraordinary sportsmen and women that are well-known beyond its borders and who have made important contributions to a wide range of sports disciplines.

### Ski Jumping

Adam Małysz is one of the world's most successful ski jumpers and Polish sportsman of recent memory. He has won a number of medals and several championships during his career, including a total of thirty-eight victories in World Cup competitions, and silver and bronze medals in the Salt Lake City Winter Olympics in 2002. With his last World Cup victory in 2007, in 2009, Małysz posted two second-place finishes and a third-place finish in Lillehammer.

### Weightlifting/Strong Man Competitions

Mariusz Pudzianowski, also known as Pudzian, is one of the leading and most easily recognized Polish sportsmen in the world today. Mariusz stands an impressive 6'1" and currently weighs in at 313 pounds. He has held the title of World's Strongest Man five times- more championships than any other competitor in history.

### Shot Put

During the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics, Tomasz Majewski won the gold medal in shot put.

During the 2009 World Championships in Berlin, he placed second, winning a silver medal.

### Swimming

One of the most renowned Polish swimmers is Otylia Jędrzejczak. She was an Olympic champion in Athens in 2004 in the two hundred meter butterfly. Also in 2004, she won two silver medals: one in the four hundred meter freestyle and another in the one hundred meter butterfly. On her twenty-fourth birthday, December 13, 2007, she broke the world record in the women's butterfly with a time of 2:03:53.

## Number Four Pop Culture Must-Know: Popular Music

---

Even though recent years brought a wave of Western influence to Polish popular music, the Polish music scene has been able to preserve a certain manner of "Polishness" and definitely has a lot to offer.

With rock/pop groups such as Lady Pank, Budka Suflera, O.N.A., Big Cyc, Elektryczne gitary, Myslovitz and vocalists such as Kasia Kowalska, Kayah, Ania Dąbrowska, and Ewelina Flinta, you can sample Polish rhythms that the whole country loves and hums.

Bands like Golec uOrkiestra or Brathanki offer a unique, particularly Polish sound, mixing pop rhythms with Polish folk music: their music is rich in folk elements such as foot stomping, whistling, and high-pitched singing. These groups also feature traditional instrumentation including violin, trumpet, accordion, and trombone.

If you are more of a hip-hop fan, check out the following bands: Mezo, Molesta Ewenement, and Paktofonika.

## Number Three Pop Culture Must-Know: Polish Men and Women Abroad

---

Throughout the centuries, Poland has produced its share of world-famous figures, such as Copernicus, Marie Curie-Skłodowska, Frederick Chopin, Solidarity hero Lech Wałęsa, and Pope John Paul II, who have left their mark on history. Today, however, the latest wave of Poles to achieve success abroad has been concentrated in more commercialized industries such as modeling and sports.

Often praised for their beauty, Polish models appear on both runways and magazine pages around the world. *Maxim* magazine recently voted Joanna Krupa, born in Warsaw but raised in the United States, as the "Sexiest Swimsuit Model in the World." She has appeared regularly in print media, on the big screen, and on television, and she was recently featured in the 2009 edition of America's "Dancing with the Stars."

Magdalena Wróbel, another Polish beauty, has appeared as a Victoria's Secret model as well as in the advertisements of the world's largest fashion designers and cosmetic companies.

As for successful Polish sportsmen who have taken their talents abroad, perhaps the most recognizable in Europe would be Jerzy Dudek. After spending several years filling the role of goalkeeper for both Feyenoord Rotterdam in the Netherlands and Liverpool in England, Jerzy has since changed his colors and now has played for Real Madrid since the 2007-2008 season. Dudek was also instrumental in helping Poland to secure the Euro 2012 competition jointly with Ukraine.

Mariusz Czerkawski has made his mark on the ice in the National Hockey League by playing for various teams from 1993 until 2006, when he returned to play two seasons in European hockey leagues. Mariusz retired in 2008 and is well-known for his nickname, the Polish Prince.

Since Poland's entry into the European Union, Poles have been much more active on the world's political stage. Jerzy Buzek, prime minister of Poland from 1997 to 2001, has been a member of the European Parliament since 2004, and he was recently elected its twenty-eighth president in July 2009.

While currently residing once again in Poland, Radosław Sikorski made an unsuccessful run for the position of Secretary General of NATO in 2009. He has also spent time as a professor in the United States. Currently, he is the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Poland.

### Number Two Pop Culture Must-Know: Poland's Movie Industry

---

Despite strict censorship and repression of the free press, Poland's years of communism ironically provided the most fruitful ground for Polish film directors, such as Andrzej Wajda and Roman Polański, who made their most remarkable pieces during this period.

Andrzej Wajda is still active professionally. He has created a long list of movies that have become staples of Polish filmography, such as *Człowiek z marmuru* ("Man of Marble") and

*Człowiek z żelaza* ("Man of Iron"), both made in the seventies and eighties. Wajda most recently directed the movie *Katyń* in 2007. He often finds the inspiration for his movies in tragic and painful events in Polish history. Wajda received an honorary Oscar in 2000 for his contributions to world cinema. His films are regularly nominated in the category of Best Foreign Language Film.

Roman Polański, although born in France, moved to Poland as a young child and later studied film and acting. He produced only one Polish feature-length film, *Nóż w wodzie* "Knife in the Water"), before leaving for the West, where he is perhaps best known for works such as "Chinatown" and "Rosemary's Baby." In 2002, he won an Academy Award for Best Director for his movie "The Pianist."

Another Polish director, who unfortunately died in 1996, is Krzysztof Kieślowski. His ten-part TV series *Dekalog* ("The Decalogue"), based on the Ten Commandments, as well as his trilogy *Trzy kolory: Niebieski, Biały, Czerwony* ("Three Colors: Blue, White, and Red"), brought him worldwide recognition and important international film awards for the latter.

Other film directors worth mentioning are Agnieszka Holland and Krzysztof Zanussi.

Since the fall of communism, Polish cinema more and more mirrors Western trends and has lately favored shallow romantic comedies and action films. Poles are still waiting for extraordinary film directors of the quality of those seen in past years.

## Number One Pop Culture Must-Know: Popular Television in Poland

---

Polish television has been experiencing a huge influx of foreign television series, mainly American, such as "Sex and the City," "Desperate Housewives," "CSI Miami," and "Prison Break." Also, TV game shows such as *Familiada* ("Family Feud"), *Jaka to melodia?* ("Name That Tune") and *Milionerzy* ("Who Wants to Be a Millionaire") are among the most-watched programs on Polish TV.

However, television producers have been successful in trying to come up with their own programs that would illustrate to some degree the lives of ordinary Poles that have to cope with problems of everyday life.

One of the most popular recent Polish series is *39 i pół* ("Thirty-nine and a Half"), a show that tells the story of an average guy, Dariusz, approaching the age of forty who is fighting through his midlife crisis.

*Samo życie* ("Just Life"), another Polish TV mini-series, centers on the daily newspaper of the same title, *Samo życie,* and its employees, who encounter everyday difficulties both in their professional and personal lives.

As for TV game shows, one of the recent successful ones is *Kocham cię Polsko* ("I Love You, Poland"). On the show, celebrities answer questions about Poland, its history, and its personalities, as well as Polish spelling.

LESSON NOTES

# All About S1 #11
# Top 5 Tools for Learning Polish!

CONTENTS

2 Grammar

# 11



COPYRIGHT © 2013 INNOVATIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

## GRAMMAR

**The Focus of This Lesson Is the Top Five Tools for Learning Polish.**

---

Learning a language requires a lot of commitment, and the right tools to do it wouldn't hurt either. We would like to help you improve your Polish skills as much as we can. That's why we've created a list of helpful learning tools that you can use as supplemental material while studying Polish.

Having access to diverse learning tools ranging from online dictionaries to pronunciation tools will allow you to not only immerse yourself deeper in the language but also achieve great results faster.

The top five tools for learning Polish are:

1. resource books
2. online dictionaries
3. spelling checks
4. songs and radio stations
5. pronunciation tools

### Tool One: Resource Books

---

There is certainly no shortage of resource books written especially for foreigners who want to study the Polish language. They range from very basic picture dictionaries to more complex publications for near-native speakers. The publisher Universitas in particular offers a wide selection of great resource books for those learning Polish as a second language. You can check to see what Universitas offers on its website at www.universitas.com.pl. Universitas marks the covers of all books it publishes for learners of the Polish language with the appropriate learning level for which they are meant to be used, ranging from A1 and A2 for beginners, through B1 and B2 for intermediate students, to C1 and C2 for those approaching

a native speaking level.

Below we present a short excerpt from the Common European Framework of Reference, which codifies language-learning progress and progression standards into levels, as mentioned above, ranging from A1 to C2, that will help you decide what your current level of ability is within a given language.

**Proficient user C2** - Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarize information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express himself/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.

**Proficient user C1:** Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts and recognize implicit meaning. Can express himself/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic, and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organizational patterns, connectors, and cohesive devices.

**Independent user B2:** Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialization. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.

**Independent user B1:** Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst traveling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics that are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes, and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.

**Basic user A2:** Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g., very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment, and matters in areas of

immediate need.

**Basic user A1 -** Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows, and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

## Tool Two: Online Dictionaries

---

There is a wide selection of online dictionaries available that will allow you not only to check a single word but also entire phrases all in one click of your mouse.

Check out the following websites:

1. www.ling.pl: It's one of the best Polish online dictionaries created thus far. Besides offering roughly one hundred and fifty thousand Polish-English entries, it also contains more advanced idioms and expressions. It is available in the following languages: English, French, Russian, German, Spanish, and, of course, Polish.

2. www.dict.pl: Another good website definitely worth pointing out. The creators of this dictionary came up with an excellent idea: every week they present a new group of words as their "words of the week" in Polish with their English equivalents. The words of the week are usually thematically connected to current events or an upcoming holiday.

3. www.univ.gda.pl: Offers a dictionary of Polish slang that will definitely come in handy while visiting Poland.

4. http://portalwiedzy.onet.pl/polszczyzna.html: For more advanced students, we recommend visiting this website. It offers a wide selection of Polish dictionaries such as "The Dictionary of Polish Antonyms and Synonyms," "The Dictionary of Polish Spelling," "The Dictionary of Correct Polish," and even "The Crossword Puzzle Dictionary." Simply type in the Polish word you're looking for in the search engine and it will search for this word in all the above-mentioned dictionaries.

## Tool Three: Spelling Check

---

Unfortunately, there are not too many programs that could help you check your Polish spelling. However, you can always install spelling check for Microsoft Windows on your computer. Also, the software OpenOffice.org offers such a tool.

## Tool Four: Songs and Radio Stations

---

Listening to songs and talk radio is one of the best ways to learn a foreign language. If you are able to understand songs in a foreign language, it means you have made quite a bit of progress. Being able to understand song lyrics is one of the most difficult tasks when it comes to mastering a new language. Tune your ear and get ready for a lot of fun. Maybe when visiting Poland you will have a chance to use your Polish skills and vocal attributes while singing some Polish karaoke. Also, talk radio can help you master some finer elements of the language, such as accent and intonation. As a beginning student, pick out single words that you recognize and then try to build an entire context around them. It's great practice for your pronouns too.

Look for CDs from performers such as Grzegorz Turnau, Justyna Steczkowska, Maryla Rodowicz, Irena Santor, Czesław Niemen, and Czerwone Gitary. Also, compilations of Polish songs from these singers would be a great idea for a learner of the Polish language to get a taste of each of their individual musical styles and varying levels of difficulty.

If you are a beginner, listen to a song with the lyrics in front of you and then try to look up the words you don't already know. This way you're getting to know new vocabulary and its pronunciation. On the other hand, if you are a more advanced student, listen to a song without the lyrics at first. Challenge yourself, checking how much you are able to understand before referring to the written lyrics.

For students of all levels, we strongly recommend the website www.radio.biz.pl that offers a wide variety of Polish radio stations that you can play on your PC or your laptop. Just click on the desired radio station and it will automatically open and begin to play. The most popular radio stations include RMF FM, Radio Zet, and also the public channels such as Jedynka and Dwójka.

There is also a great publication available under the title *Księżyc w butonierce* by Ewa

Lipińska that's meant for more advanced students. The whole book is based on the songs of Andrzej Sikorowski and his band Grupa pod budą. It has a lot of interesting exercises that help to improve your listening skills. There is also an accompanying CD with the book.

### Tool Five: Pronunciation Tools

---

Unfortunately, there aren't that many pronunciation tools available out there. You can listen to pronunciation of selected words on www.wiktionary.org. Besides the actual pronunciation, the website also offers information about declensions, conjugations, and syntax.

For newbies, we can recommend the website www.slavic-net.org. It is not a pronunciation tool per se. It's a website with different basic dialogues and simple vocabulary you can listen to. When you visit the website, just click on the Polish Flag or the abbreviation PL. On the next screen, click the word *Moduły* ("Modules") to access available topics. There are eleven topics organized thematically to choose from.

LESSON NOTES

# All About S1 #12
# Top 5 Polish Classroom Phrases!

CONTENTS

2 Grammar

# #12



COPYRIGHT © 2013 INNOVATIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

# GRAMMAR

**The Focus of This Lesson Is the Top Five Most Useful Phrases for Learning Polish.**

---

In today's lesson, we would like to introduce you to a set of very important Polish phrases that will especially come in handy in a classroom setting. Once taking a Polish class, you will be immediately and entirely immersed in Polish. The teacher usually won't speak even a single word in English, and he or she will expect you to follow and comprehend what's going on. Teachers want you to be totally engaged in the language so that you can understand it and begin speaking it as soon as possible. If you would like to ask your teacher to repeat something or write something down for you, it's best to ask in Polish. Your teacher will appreciate the fact that you know the appropriate phrases and that you put a lot of effort into it, and you will gain your teacher's respect right from the very beginning.

Let's have a look at some useful phrases.

**Phrase One: *Nie rozumiem* ("I don't understand")**

---

An absolute essential for beginner students! Imagine that your teacher says something in Polish and you don't have the slightest idea what it means. In such an instance, simply say *Nie rozumiem* [nyee ro-zu-myem], meaning "I don't understand." You can also add to the above phrase the word *przepraszam,* meaning "I'm sorry," to make the phrase even more polite. The whole phrase would be *Przepraszam*, *nie rozumiem*, meaning "I'm sorry. I don't understand."

**Phrase Two: *Proszę powtórzyć* ("Repeat, please")**

---

You think you're very close to understanding what the teacher was saying; however, you're still missing just a few words and you'd like to ask the teacher to repeat it. In such a situation, use the phrase *Proszę powtórzyć* [pro-sheh pof-too-zhich], meaning "Repeat, please."

If one repetition is not enough, try the phrase *Proszę powtórzyć jeszcze raz* [pro-sheh pof-too-zhich yesh-che raz], meaning "Repeat it once again, please." Hopefully, this phrase is going to help you with any doubts that you might have.

### Phrase Three: *Co to znaczy?* ("What does it mean?")

---

Well, you asked the teacher to repeat the sentence but you're still struggling with its meaning. It's time for another useful phrase that will help save your skin. Ask the teacher *Co to znaczy?* [tso toh znachy], meaning "What does it mean?" This way, you will know once and for all its meaning.

If you don't understand one or two words from the whole sentence, ask specifically for these particular words using the phrase *Co znaczy...?* ("What does...mean?") and then say the word you didn't catch. For example, let's say you don't know the meaning of the word *pies.* To find out its meaning, say *Co znaczy pies?* ("What does 'dog' mean?")

### Phrase Four: *Proszę to napisać* ("Write that down, please")

---

This time it's not about understanding what the teacher is saying. Instead, it's time to put the words and sentences on paper. You already know what they mean, so you just need the spelling so you can match the sounds with the way they're written. It's time for the phrase *Proszę to napisać* [pro-sheh toh na-pee-sach], meaning "Write that down, please."

You will have a chance to use this phrase not only when taking Polish classes but also outside of the classroom: for example, you might use it when hanging out with your Polish friends or when asking a total stranger to write down the name of a street for you.

### Phrase Five: *Jak się mówi po polsku...?* ("How do you say...in Polish?")

---

Now you're definitely making progress. It's time to get to know the question that will help you build up your vocabulary and expand your options while speaking.

Thanks to the question *Jak się mówi po polsku....?* [yak sheh moo-vee po pol-skoo], meaning "How do you say...in Polish?" you can ask for words and phrases that you would like to know, but for whatever reason haven't learned yet.

LESSON NOTES

# All About S1 #13
# Top 5 Polish Phrases Your Teacher Will Never Teach You!

CONTENTS

2 Grammar

# 13



COPYRIGHT © 2013 INNOVATIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

## GRAMMAR

**The Focus of This Lesson Is the Top Five Phrases Your Teacher Won't Teach You.**

---

It's one thing to study formal Polish in the safe environment of a classroom. However, stepping out into the world, where you're likely to encounter a brand of Polish much different than what you've heard in the classroom, demands that we present a list of the most essential Polish phrases you're not likely to learn from your teacher.

We would like you to get familiar with the top five Polish phrases that we think you'll be sure to hear on your trip in Poland, but may have some trouble finding in your dictionary. These will be all very casual phrases, so please only use them with your friends or people you know very well.

Enjoy!

### Phrase One: *No* ("Yes")

---

As you know, the equivalent of the English "yes" in Polish is *tak*. However, most Poles also widely use the word *no* [noh] as its very casual counterpart. It can be especially confusing for English speakers because it's written exactly the same way as the English "no," and to a certain degree, also sounds like the English "no." Thankfully, a minor difference in its pronunciation should help you recognize its frequent use in conversation. We pronounce the Polish *no* with a short *-o* at the end. We could consider the Polish *no* the rough equivalent of a casual "yeah" in English. We would like to stress once again that we should only use *no* in very familiar and unofficial situations. If you use it otherwise, people consider the word *no* rude and offensive. Expect to hear it often among family and friends.

### Phrase Two: *Spoko* ("No problem; Okay; Sure")

---

Another very casual phrase that you will hear on a regular basis is *spoko* [spo-koh]. It's derived from the word *spokojnie*, meaning "calmly" or "easy." However, since *spoko,* especially in recent years, has been one of the most popular phrases in common Polish usage, its meaning has expanded beyond that of the original "easy," and Poles now use the

word in an increasing number of situations. Today we translate *spoko* in its most basic form to mean "no problem," "sure," and "okay." You can also use this expression to describe a person, an event, or a thing.

**For Example:**

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| *spoko dziewczyna* | "great girl" |
| *spoko impreza* | "great party" |
| *spoko film* | "great movie" |

Luckily, you don't even have to worry about declining the word *spoko* since it only appears in this one form.
Even though people usually associate the use of this word with teenagers, Poles have noted that even some older people have adopted it in their vocabulary.

### Phrase Three: *Spadaj* ("Get lost")

---

Another phrase Poles frequently use in informal Polish is *spadaj* [spa-dye], which translates to "get lost." Again, it is strictly an informal phrase, so don't under any circumstances use it with strangers-unless you really mean it! Reserve it for your friends or people in whose company you feel comfortable. When we use this phrase among friends, it is very often a colorful and humorous way to express disagreement or displeasure. If we use it otherwise, people might misinterpret your intentions and moreover, get offended.

Depending on whom you're addressing, the expression *spadaj* can have two possible forms. It's either *spadaj* when you talk to one person only or *spadajcie* if you're addressing a group of people.

### Phrase Four: *Ale czad* ("Wow")

---

Another expression that you will hear in your travels throughout Poland is *ale czad* [ale chad] ("wow"). You can use this phrase when something great or exciting happened and you would

like to express your admiration. Saying *ale czad* with a lot of feeling in your voice will for sure do the trick.

On the other hand, when something embarrassing occurs, or, in a negative sense, something unbelievable occurs, the phrase *ale czad* will come in handy as well.

Derived from this expression is the adjective *czadowy*, which is a back formation from the word *czad* and has the following meanings: "great," "extra," and "stylish." If you see something that you really like, use *czadowy* to describe it.

**For Example:**

| *Polish* | "English" |
|---|---|
| *czadowa sukienka* | "great dress" |
| *czadowa impreza* | "great party" |
| *czadowy chłopak* | "great boy" |

### Phrase Five: *Kombinować* and Its Many Meanings

---

The word *kombinować* [kom-bee-noh-vach] is an integral word to know in Polish slang. Also, understanding its many meanings will help cast some light on a little bit of Polish history and Polish mentality.

Depending on the context, we can translate the verb *kombinować* as:

1. "to live by one's wits"; "to connive"
2. "to do illegal business"
3. "to put together, to combine"

You will most often hear people use it to mean to obtain or acquire something by perhaps less than legal means. When you must *kombinować* to get something that you want, it usually means that you cannot obtain the item you seek in any other way. Be careful, as people often

use the word to suggest illegal means such as bribery, trickery, or even force; however, we also use it as a colorful and humorous way to describe anything that might be difficult to find or afford.

The verb *kombinować* to some extent mirrors Polish mentality, although maybe to a lesser degree today than in the past; however, the characteristic is still present. In communist times, when people needed to get food rations and other necessary supplies to make a normal everyday existence, they very often had to *kombinować* in order to get them. Many items simply couldn't be purchased and Poles had to be resourceful in order to get their hands on what limited quantities existed. Apartments, for example, weren't simply bought and sold as we think of in western real estate; however, one was assigned an apartment by the government. To obtain such an official assignment from the government often required a good deal of *kombinowanie* ("conniving").

Nowadays, if a Pole uses the word *kombinować*, he's probably trying to solve a problem or get something that is simply difficult to find. It can be something very small, such as a package of cigarettes, but also something much bigger, such as money or electronic supplies.

*Kombinować* is an imperfective verb and has as its perfective counterpart *skombinować*. It belongs to the conjugation *-ę, -esz* with the first- and second-person forms *(ja) kombinuję* and *(ty) kombinujesz.*

LESSON NOTES

# All About S1 #14
# Top 5 Polish Language Mistakes You Should Never Make!

CONTENTS

2 Grammar

# 14



COPYRIGHT © 2013 INNOVATIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

# GRAMMAR

**The Focus of This Lesson Is the Top Five Mistakes Not to Make When Speaking Polish.**

---

Every language is unique. Its uniqueness lies in its history and evolution throughout the centuries, as well as the evolution of those who speak it. Every language has acquired certain features in its vocabulary, syntax, and grammar that are specific to that one particular language. As a result, these features, absent in other languages and completely foreign to new students of the language, are often much more difficult to master and require a greater measure of patience and resolve on the part of the student. Polish is certainly no exception to this rule.

In today's lesson, we would like to introduce you to some of those peculiar features of the Polish language that make the lives of many students and even native speakers miserable, features with which you will probably make a lot of mistakes in the beginning of your study. Don't let them discouraged you. Making mistakes is an unavoidable part of the learning process; however, the sooner you are aware of them, the faster improvement will come.

## Mistake Number One: Gender Agreement

---

Gender agreement errors are very common not only among beginning students, but also among more advanced ones. As you know from the third lesson, Painless Polish Grammar, every noun in Polish has a gender assigned to it. Knowing the gender of a noun is essential as it determines the forms of adjectives, pronouns, and numbers that describe this one particular noun.

Memorizing some simple rules will help you choose the right gender in the nick of time. Remember that the easiest way to recognize the noun's gender is to look at its nominative singular form (the form you will find in the dictionary.)

### Masculine Nouns

Masculine nouns usually end in a consonant.

**For Example**:

| Polish | "English" |
|---|---|
| *student* | "student" |
| *pies* | "dog" |
| *telefon* | "telephone" |

Remember, however, that there are also some masculine nouns that end in the vowel *-a.*

**For Example:**

| Polish | "English" |
|---|---|
| *artysta* | "artist" |
| *dentysta* | "dentist" |
| *kolega* | "friend," "colleague" |

These exceptions are words that usually describe masculine professions or roles males generally fill.

### Feminine Nouns

Feminine nouns take the ending *-a* in the nominative singular...

**For Example:**

| Polish | "English" |
|---|---|
| *kobieta* | "woman" |
| *lalka* | "doll" |
| *lampa* | "lamp" |

and the ending *-i*.

**For Example:**

| *Polish* | "English" |
|---|---|
| *pani* | "ma'am" |
| *gospodyni* | "hostess" |

## Neuter Nouns

We can easily recognize neuter nouns by the following endings in the nominative singular:

***-ę***
**For Example**:

1. *imię*
   "name"
2. *kurczę*
   "chick"

***-o***
**For Example:**

1. *krzesło*
   "chair"
2. *okno*
   "window"

***-e***
**For Example:**

1. *słońce*
   "sun"
   *morze*
   "sea"

**And -*um***
**For Example:**

1. *muzeum*
   "museum"

2. *liceum*
   "high school"

Let's have a look at how adjectives, pronouns, and numbers change their endings depending on the gender of the noun that they describe.

**Adjectives**:

1. *czysty pies*
   "clean dog"
   Since the noun *pies* is masculine, the adjective has to have a masculine ending too.

2. *czysta filiżanka*
   "clean cup"

*Filiżanka* is a feminine noun, hence the ending of *czysta.*

1. *czyste okno*
   "clean window"

"Window" is neuter and influences the ending of *czyste* accordingly.

**Pronouns**:

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| *mój pies* | "my dog" |
| *moja filiżanka* | "my cup" |
| *moje okno* | "my window" |

**Numbers:**

| *Polish* | "English" |
|---|---|
| *jeden pies* | "one dog" |
| *jedna filiżanka* | "one cup" |
| *jedno okno* | "one window" |

Remember, if you need to describe a noun using either an adjective, a pronoun, or a number, always make sure that the gender agrees.

## Mistake Number Two: Declension of Surnames, both Polish and Foreign

---

Declension is another element of the Polish language that can cause a great deal of difficulty and stress, especially when it comes to the declension of surnames. All Polish and most foreign names are declined according to the seven grammatical cases in the Polish language: nominative, genitive, dative, accusative, instrumental, locative, and vocative, which is rarely used, in both singular and plural. The declension of surnames is divided into two main groups: names that are declined like nouns, for example, Nowak, Bush, and Monet; and names that are declined like adjectives, for example, Brzozowski, Szczepańska, and Kennedy.

There are countless numbers of rules as to how to decline names including what declension type they belong to based on their endings and, in the case of foreign names, whether you should decline them using their original spellings or instead use the Polish equivalent or approximation.

Don't be disappointed, but besides directing you to a good dictionary or a resource book, there's nothing constructive we can recommend to help you cope with this issue. You can try to choose a couple of names that represent each declension group, memorize them, and then try to apply them accordingly. However, it's going to be very challenging and might be even discouraging.

Regarding great resources, we recommend *Polszczyzna na co dzień* published by Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN. This resource offers a great insight into the declension of

Polish personal names. Also, *Słownik odmian rzeczowników polskich* ("Polish Dictionary of Declensions of Polish Nouns") by S. Mędak is an indispensable source of help.

## Mistake Number Three: Aspect of Verbs in Polish

---

The aspect of verbs is one of the single most difficult features of the Polish language, making the lives of many students miserable and gloomy. The language uses this feature to express whether an action has been completed or will be completed in the future (perfective verbs, for example, *przeczytać*, meaning "to read") or whether an action is still in progress or is repeated on a regular basis (imperfective verbs, for example, *czytać*, also meaning "to read"). Compare the following two examples:

1. *Wczoraj przeczytałem całą książkę.*
   "Yesterday, I read a whole book."

2. *Wczoraj od ósmej do dziesiątej czytałem książkę.*
   "Yesterday, I was reading from eight o'clock to ten o'clock."

The problem is not only the fact that you have to decide whether an action is going to be completed or not (especially if you have to foresee the future) but also you have to remember that almost every English verb will have two counterparts in Polish (one imperfective and one perfective) that you have to memorize and use accordingly.

The only solution to this problem is to listen to people speak Polish as much as possible to observe certain patterns as to when to use imperfective and perfective verbs. Try to speak as much as you can yourself so that people can correct you in case you use the wrong aspect. Also, use the third All About lesson, Painless Polish Grammar, as a reference for this feature.

## Mistake Number Four: Pronouns *swój, swoja, swoje*

---

Besides regular possessive pronouns such as *mój* ("my"), *twój* ("your" singular), *jego* ("his"), *jej* ("her"), *nasz* ("our"), *wasz* ("your" plural), and *ich* ("their"), in Polish we also use the following pronouns: *swój* (masculine), *swoja* (feminine), and *swoje* (neuter.)

Use the pronouns *swój*, *swoja,* and *swoje* instead of the regular possessive pronouns ("my,"

"your," "his," etc.) when the subject of the sentence is also the owner of the object of the sentence.

Let's have a look at some examples so you'll find this easier to understand.

In the sentence *Mam swoje ciasto* ("I have my own cake"), the noun *ciasto* ("cake") is the object of the sentence and is also the possession of the subject. Therefore, we use the pronoun *swoje*. Using the regular possessive pronoun *moje* ("my") would be a mistake. We can use the pronoun *swoje* (also meaning "my") only.

Another example is the sentence *On przyniesie swoje filmy* ("He will bring his own movies"). If this sentence were to read *On przyniesie jego filmy*, it would mean instead "He will bring his movies," meaning that the subject will be bringing an unnamed third party's movies.

## Mistake Number Five: The Verbs *znać, wiedzieć*, and *umieć*

---

In Polish, there are three verbs, *znać*, *wiedzieć,* and *umieć*, that we could easily translate into the single English verb "to know." However, in Polish, each one of these verbs refers to a specific type of knowledge you possess: hence, we can't substitute one for another.

### When to Use *Wiedzieć?*

We generally use the verb *wiedzieć, wiem, wiesz* ("to know," "I know," "you know") to express our knowledge about facts concerning people, history, weather, and so forth.

**For Example:**

1. *Czy wiesz, ile Anna ma lat?*
   "Do you know how old Anna is?"

2. *Nie wiem, kiedy jest Festiwal Filmów Polskich.*
   "I don't know when the Festival of Polish Films is."

### When to Use *Znać?*

*Znać, znam, znasz* ("to know," "I know," "you know") has the following meanings:

**I. "to know a person"**

**For Example:**

1. *Znam Piotra.*
   "I know Peter."

2. *Ona zna Adama.*
   "She knows Adam."

**II. "to express a knowledge of foreign languages"**

**For Example:**

1. *Znam polski.*
   "I know Polish."

2. *Nie znam japońskiego.*
   "I don't know Japanese."

**III. "to convey familiarity with something"**

**For Example:**

1. *Znam tę piosenkę.*
   "I know this song."

2. *Nie znam tej historii.*
   "I don't know this story."

## When to Use the Verb *Umieć?*

We could also translate the verb *umieć, umiem, umiesz* ("to know," "I know," "you know") as "to be able to do something" or "to know how to do something."

**For Example**:

1. *Umiem grać na pianinie*.
   "I know how to play the piano."

2. *Oni nie umieją pływać.*

"They don't know how to swim."

LESSON NOTES

# All About S1 #15
# Top 5 Pet Phrases from the Polish Teachers!

CONTENTS

2 Grammar

# #15



COPYRIGHT © 2013 INNOVATIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

# GRAMMAR

**The Focus of This Lesson Is the Top Five Phrases from the PolishPod101.Team.**

---

On top of the phrases that we have already introduced so far, we would like to add another four that are frequently used in conversation, plus one more that does double duty as both a toast and "God bless you."

### Phrase One: To Znaczy ("It means," "This means")

---

In every language, there are certain phrases that people will sometimes use to hold someone's attention while they perhaps think over what they are going to say next. Often people use these phrases to combine individual thoughts together into longer utterances without standing silently. This way a speaker can maintain a certain flow to his or her story. The other reason for such a phrase is that it makes you sound like a native speaker-natural and relaxed.

The phrase *to znaczy* [toh zna-chy], meaning "it means" and "this means," has such a purpose. You will hear Poles using it between single sentences on a regular basis, just for the sake of saying it. Thinking of when English speakers use the phrase "I mean" when starting their sentences will help you understand the usage of the Polish *to znaczy*.

### Phrase Two: Więc ("So")

---

The Polish word *więc* [vients], with its English translation "so," is another popular request from students of Polish. Again, you can use this expression really any time you want, either at the beginning of a sentence or as a connector between two sentences.

It's worth pointing out that according to Polish grammar rules *więc* shouldn't start an utterance; however, in spoken language, just as in English, *więc* ("so") can often appear at the beginning of a sentence.

### Phrase Three: *W Każdym Razie* ("in any case," "in any event," "anyway")

While listening to Poles speaking, you will definitely encounter phrase number three, *w każdym razie* [v kazh-dym ra-zhie] ("in any case," "in any event," or "anyway), any number of times. Feel free to use it along with the phrases that we have presented thus far in this lesson.

It gives you another option to make your utterances more complex and well structured. If you've given a long explanation and want to finally cut to the chase, use *w każdym razie* to let the listener know that you're getting to the point.

### Phrase Four: *Dzięki Temu* ("Thanks to that")

The last phrase that we'll introduce in this lesson that you will frequently encounter in Polish conversations is *dzięki temu* [jen-key te-mu], which we translate as "thanks to that."

People who have studied Polish told us that for a very long time they didn't have a clue that *dzięki temu* means "thanks to that." They thought that it referred to something that happened in the past because of another usage of the word *temu*, which, as in the following example, can have the meaning "ago."

**For Example:**

1. *dziewięć lat temu*
   "nine years ago"

*Dzięki temu*, however, is just an expression we can usually use to convey a positive reason explaining why something occurred. It's an important expression to know when trying to explain cause and effect.

### Phrase Five: *Na Zdrowie* ("Cheers" and "God bless you")

As we mentioned in the introduction, we can use the phrase *na zdrowie* [na zdroh-vie], with its literal translation "to health," in two different scenarios.

One situation that requires you to say *na zdrowie* is when someone sneezes.

Another situation that you will hopefully experience more than once on your travels in Poland is when you toast within a group of Poles. Simply say *na zdrowie* using a cheerful voice and be sure to look everyone in the eyes when you touch glasses. Poles love to point out that Westerners don't look into their eyes when making a toast. This way they will know the toast is honest on your part and you really mean it.

LESSON NOTES

# Pronunciation S1 #1 So Many Polish Consonants, So Few Polish Vowels

CONTENTS

2 Grammar

# 1



COPYRIGHT © 2013 INNOVATIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

# GRAMMAR

**The Focus of This Lesson Is the Polish Vowel System.**

---

Along with languages like Russian and Czech, the Polish language belongs to the Slavic family of languages. The thirty-eight million inhabitants of Poland, approximately ten million Poles who live and work abroad in countries such as Russia, Lithuania, and Great Britain, and people who have Polish ancestry all speak the Polish language. For example, in the United States, the city of Chicago, Illinois counts more Polish speakers than any other city in the world except Warsaw, the capital of Poland.

Knowing Polish pronunciation is an essential first step in your mastery of the Polish language, so we'd like you to get off on the right foot from the very beginning. It will help you understand other Poles as well as it make it easier for them to understand you.

In this lesson, we will introduce you to standard Polish pronunciation-the pronunciation you will hear on the radio or television. You will be acquainted with pronunciation rules that will make your life much easier. Remember, though, that depending on where you are, the pronunciation, accent, and some vocabulary can change. These variations result from previous border changes and foreign influences that have come and gone throughout the history of Poland. For example, the word *ziemniaki* ("potatoes") in Silesia is *kartofle* (compare to German *kartoffeln*). The region of Silesia was under German influence for a very long time, and some linguistic influences remain today.

The Polish alphabet is based on the Roman alphabet, the same one that the English language uses. We pronounce a large group of sounds just like their English equivalents. On the other hand, Polish has a significant number of sounds that are very difficult for foreigners. Let's not waste our time, then. Let's get started.

The Polish alphabet has thirty-two letters. Among them, we have:

- Nine vowels
- Twenty-three consonants.

In this lesson, we will look at the nine vowels in detail, with many simple examples and pronunciation practice exercises.

We divide the Polish vowels into two groups as follows:

1. *Samogłoski ustne* ("oral vowels") with three subgroups:
   - *Samogłoski przednie* ("front vowels")
   - *Samogłoski środkowe* ("central vowels")
   - *Samogłoski tylne* ("back vowels")

2. *Samogłoski nosowe* ("nasal vowels")

## The Vowel Sounds

---

The terminology we just used may have confused some of you. Don't worry, though. It is not that complicated.

For example, when pronouncing the letter -*i* right after pronouncing the letter -*u*, you will notice your tongue slide from the front (the tip of your tongue should touch your front incisor) to the back of your mouth (now your tongue should be placed further back).

## Pronunciation Practice

---

Feel for the movement of your lips. Pronounce several times in a row the letters -*i,* -*u,* and -*a*. Stand up in front of a mirror and observe how your lips are moving and how they are changing their shape while producing those sounds.

You should see your lips stretched from side to side when saying -*i* as if you're saying the word "b**ee**" in English. Then when pronouncing -*u*, your lips should form a tight -*o* shape toward the front, like in the word "m**oo**n." Finally, when saying -*a*, your mouth should be wide open, such as in the word "f**a**ther."

## I. *Samogłoski ustne* ("Oral Vowels")

---

We produce *samogłoski ustne* or in English, "oral vowels," within the mouth area where the tongue, uvula, and lips take certain positions. There are seven oral vowels, which we classify according to the place of articulation.

### a. *Samogłoski przednie* ("Front Vowels")

---

*Samogłoski przednie* are characterized by the placement of the tongue toward the front of the mouth. For example, try to pronounce the letter -*e* as in "yellow." You will notice that we produce the letter -*e* in the front part of our mouth, which means it is an anterior vowel. Now, just to see the difference, try to say aloud the letter -*o* as in "orange." You should notice that the tongue moves to the back of your mouth, making this letter a posterior vowel.

Here is a list of the anterior vowels in Polish:

| Letter | Phonetic Transcription | "English" Examples | *Polish* Examples |
|---|---|---|---|
| -*i* | [i] | "feet," "meet," "sea" | *Kino* ("cinema"), *minus* ("minus"), *minuta* ("minute") |
| -*y* | [1] | "myth," "big," "if" | *grypa* ("flu"), *my* ("we"), *dobry* ("good") |
| -*e* | [E] | "pen," "yes," "ten" | *wujek* ("uncle"), *dokument* ("document"), *elegancki* ("elegant") |

### Pronunciation Practice *-e, -y,* and *-i*

Please listen and repeat the following words:

| -e | -y | -i |
|---|---|---|
| m***e***t | m***y***t | m***i***t |
| m***e*** | m***y*** | m***i*** |
| now***e*** | now***y*** | now***i*** |
| znan***e*** | znan***y*** | znan***i*** |

## b. *Samogłoski środkowe* ("Central Vowels")

To pronounce the *samogłoski środkowe* ("central vowels") properly, simply place your tongue in the middle area of your mouth. In Polish, there is only one central vowel, *-a,* which is represented by a wide-open sound.

| Letter | Phonetic Transcription | "English" Examples | *Polish* Examples |
|---|---|---|---|
| *-a* | [a] | "father," "cot," "body" | *tak* ("yes"), *pan* ("Mr.," "sir"), *adres* ("address") |

### Pronunciation Practice: Identifying a Central Vowel

Say several times the letter *-i* and the letter *-a.* Which one is a central vowel?

The first one is anterior and the second one is central. When pronouncing the letter -*i*, you should have your lips stretch from one side to another with the tongue in the front part of your mouth, whereas when saying the letter -*a*, your mouth should be wide open with the tongue placed in the middle section of your mouth.

### c. *Samogłoski tylne* ("Back Vowels")

---

To produce this type of sound, place your tongue in the back of your mouth.

| Letter | Phonetic Transcription | "English" Examples | *Polish* Examples |
|---|---|---|---|
| -*u* | [u] | "moon," "dune" | *kultura* ("culture"), *studio* ("studio"), *luty* ("February") |
| -*o* | [O] | "moment," "slow" | *moda* ("fashion"), *popularny* ("popular"), *piwo* ("beer") |

In the Polish language, there is one additional vowel that we haven't mentioned thus far. It is the letter -*ó.*

| Letter | Phonetic Transcription | English Examples | *Polish* Examples |
|---|---|---|---|

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *-ó* | [u] | "moon," "dune" | *ból* ("pain"), *wróg* ("foe"), *lód* ("ice") |

As you have probably noticed, in our table we used the same English examples that we used with the vowel *-u.* The reason for that is that both vowels *-u* and *-ó* have the same pronunciation. The only difference is in their spelling. The position of these vowels in words dictates the spelling rules. For example, the letter *-ó* mainly occurs when there is a *-o:ó* alternation like *wr**ó**g: z wr**o**giem* ("foe": "with a/the foe") or *l**ó**d: z l**o**dem* ("ice": "with ice") and in the particle *-ów*, e.g., *Krak**ów*** ("Cracow") or *dla pan**ów*** ("for the gentlemen"), whereas the letter *-u* appears in other cases.

To sum it up, in the Polish language there is one sound [u] represented by two letters: *-u* and *-ó.*

### Pronunciation Practice: Telling the Difference Between Anterior and Posterior Vowels

---

Listen and repeat these words several times: *pić/kuć/tyć.* What happens?

You should start in the front part of your mouth since the letter *-i* is a front vowel. Then your tongue should move to the back to pronounce the word *kuć* and than again to the front to say *tyć.*

## II. *Samogłoski nosowe* ("Nasal Vowels")

---

Polish is the only language among all the other Slavic languages that still has nasal vowels. You can also find them in languages like French and Portuguese. In order to produce them, the air has to go mainly through the nose. For foreign ears, they may sound different at first, as the air vibrates mainly through the nose and produces a twangy sound. Their written forms are the letters *-ę* (it is basically, a letter *-e* with a little hook attached to it) and *-ą* (*-a* with a hook.)

| Letter | Phonetic Transcription | *Polish* Examples |
|---|---|---|
| *-ę* | [E~] | *ręka* ("hand"),<br>*zdjęcie* ("picture"),<br>*pięć* ("five") |
| *-ą* | [O~] | *mąż* ("husband"),<br>*wąż* ("snake"),<br>*mają* ("they have") |

Depending on the position of the nasal vowels, we either pronounce them nasally or simply as mouth vowels. We would like to show you some rules that will help you master their pronunciation.

| When the vowel *-ę* is before the following letters... | ...we pronounce *-ę* | Examples |
|---|---|---|
| *-f*, *-w*, *-s*, *-sz*, *-z*, *-ż*, *-ch* | [E~] | *węch* ("smell"),<br>*kęs* ("bite") |
| *-l*, *-ł* | [E] | *kopnęli*<br>("they kicked"),<br>*kichnęli*<br>("they sneezed") |
| *-p*, *-b* | [Em] | *tępy* ("blunt"),<br>*zęby* ("teeth") |
| *-t*, *-d*, *-c*, *-dz*, *-cz* | [En] | *kręty* ("curvy")<br>*tędy* ("this way") |
| *-ć*, *-ci*, *-dź*, *-dzi* | [EJ] | *dziesięć* ("ten"),<br>*pędził* ("he rushed") |
| *-k*, *-g* | [EN] | *ręka* ("hand"),<br>*tęgi* ("fat, big") |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| at the end of the word | [E]<br>or<br>[E~] | *widzę* ("I see"),<br>*się* (reflexive pronoun) |

| **When the vowel *-ą* is before the following letters...** | **...we pronounce *-ą*** | **Examples** |
|---|---|---|
| *-f*, *-w*, *-s*, *-sz*, *-z*, *-ż*, *-ch* | [O~] | *wąż* ("snake"),<br>*wąs* ("mustache") |
| *-l*, *-ł* | [O] | *dotknął* ("he touched"),<br>*wrzasnął* ("he yelled") |
| *-p*, *-b* | [Om] | *skąpy* ("stingy"),<br>*ząb* ("tooth") |
| *-t*, *-d*, *-c*, *-dz*, *-cz* | [On] | *zając* ("hare"),<br>*pieniądze* ("money") |
| *-ć*, *-ci*, *-dź*, *-dzi* | [OJ] | *kącik* ("nook") |
| *-k*, *-g* | [ON] | *mąka* ("flour"),<br>*krąg* ("circle") |
| at the end of the word | [O~] | *widzą* ("they see"),<br>*chcą* ("they want") |

As you can see, there are many different ways to pronounce the nasal vowels *ę* and *ą*. In some positions, they keep their nasality: for example, before the letters *-f, -w, -s, -sz, -z, -ż,* and *-ch.* On the other hand, when they appear in front of *-l* or *-ł*, we pronounce the vowel *-ę* simply as *-e* and the vowel *-ą* as *-o.*

## Pronunciation Practice: Pronouncing the Nasal Vowels

Listen to the audio for the words from the rules table and repeat them several times.

It is also worth mentioning that nasal vowels that appear at the end of words play an important role in the Polish language because they are inflectional endings. Therefore, when speaking, make sure that you are pronouncing them clearly.

**For Example:**

Verbs:

| **Construction** | ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|---|
| First person singular | *pracuję* | "I am working." |
| Third person singular | *on pracuje* | "He is working." |
| Third person plural | *oni pracują* | "They are working." |

| **Construction** | ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|---|
| First person singular | *piszę* | "I am writing." |
| Third person singular | *on pisze* | "He is writing." |
| Third person plural | *oni piszą* | "They are writing." |

Nouns:

| **Construction** | ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|---|
| Nominative singular feminine | *książka* | "book" |
| Instrumental singular feminine | *książką* | "book" |
| Dative plural feminine | *książkom* | "books" |

| **Construction** | ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|---|

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Nominative singular feminine | *dziewczyna* | "girl" |
| Instrumental singular feminine | *dziewczyną* | "girl" |
| Dative plural feminine | *dziewczynom* | "girls" |

LESSON NOTES

# Pronunciation S1 #2 Polish Consonants and Their Shocking Number

CONTENTS

2 Grammar

# 2



COPYRIGHT © 2013 INNOVATIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

## GRAMMAR

**The Focus of This Lesson Is Mastering the Pronunciation of Polish Consonants.**

---

Since the phonetic system of the Polish language is very rich in consonants, we decided to introduce them in two separate lessons. In today's lesson, we will talk about the consonants that sound and that we pronounce in a similar way to those found in the English language. For example, *-p, -b,* and *-t*. In the next lesson, we will concern ourselves with those consonants that are characteristic to the Polish language. These consonant sounds specific to Polish resulted from a series of historic changes within the language and therefore can be more complicated for foreigners: for example, *-ć, -dź,* and *-dż*.

We divided the consonants into four groups as follows:

1. *Spółgłoski zwarte* ("occlusive consonants")
2. *Spółgloski zwarto-szczelinowe* ("affricate consonants")
3. *Spółgłoski szczelinowe* ("fricative consonants")
4. *Spółgłoski półotwarte* ("sonorants")

The above distinction is based on the type of articulation we use to produce the sound.

Now let's look more in depth at each of those groups.

### I. *Spółgłoski zwarte* ("Occlusive Consonants")

---

We produce these consonants by blocking the air within the vocal tract, then either releasing or holding the airflow.

| Letter | Phonetic Transcription | "English" Examples | *Polish* Examples |
|---|---|---|---|

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *-p* | [p] | "pie,"<br>"pen,"<br>"pot" | *palec* ("finger"),<br>*pomidor* ("tomato"),<br>*pa* ("bye") |
| *-b* | [b] | "beach,"<br>"bed,"<br>"ball" | *banan* ("banana"),<br>*boisko* ("field"),<br>*broda* ("beard") |
| *-t* | [t] | "tool,"<br>"talent,"<br>"tea" | *tenis* ("tennis"),<br>*ten* ("this"),<br>*tabela* ("table") |
| *-d* | [d] | "doll,"<br>"dance,"<br>"do" | *dolar* ("dollar"),<br>*dyskoteka* ("discotheque"),<br>*dywan* ("carpet") |
| *-k* | [k] | "cold,"<br>"clue,"<br>"club" | *karta* ("card"),<br>*kalejdoskop* ("kaleidoscope"),<br>*krokodyl* ("crocodile") |
| *-g* | [g] | "goal,"<br>"great,"<br>"give" | *galeria* ("art gallery"),<br>*gotowy* ("ready"),<br>*gest* ("gesture") |

## Pronunciation Practice: *-p* and *-b*

Please listen and repeat the following pairs of words.

| ***-p*** | ***-b*** |
|---|---|
| ***p****a****p****a* | ***b****a****b****a* |

| | |
|---|---|
| *ku**p**a* | *Ku**b**a* |
| ***p**iec* | ***b**iec* |

### Pronunciation Practice: *-t* and *-d*

Please listen and repeat the following groups of words.

| ***-t*** | ***-d*** |
|---|---|
| ***t**om* | ***d**om* |
| ***t**o* | ***d**o* |
| *wa**t**a* | *wa**d**a* |

### Pronunciation Practice: *-k* and *-g*

Please listen and repeat the following groups of words.

| ***-k*** | ***-g*** |
|---|---|
| *ro**k**u* | *ro**g**u* |
| *bo**k**u* | *Bo**g**u* |
| ***k**oni* | ***g**oni* |

## II. *Spółgłoski zwarto-szczelinowe* ("Affricate Consonants")

We initially articulate the consonants that belong to this group as occlusive sounds that are then followed by a release, changing them into fricative sounds.

| Letter | Phonetic Transcription | "English" Examples | *Polish* Examples |
|---|---|---|---|
| *-c* | [ʦ] | "coats,"<br>"eats,"<br>"tsar" | *cebula* ("onion"),<br>*cal* ("inch"),<br>*co* ("what") |

### Pronunciation Practice for the Consonant *-c*

Please read several times the following words:

| *Polish* | "English" |
|---|---|
| ***c**ena* | "price" |
| *mo**c*** | "power" |
| *ko**c*** | "blanket" |
| *no**c**ą* | "at night" |
| *mó**c*** | "to be able to," "can" |
| ***c**ały* | "whole" |

## III. *Spółgłoski szczelinowe* ("Fricative Consonants")

We produce these consonant sounds by forcing air through a narrow gap by placing two parts of the mouth together. Imagine that you are trying to produce a hissing sound like a snake, *sssss.* Both your upper and lower incisors are closed but there is still a narrow opening that allows air to escape.

| Letter | Phonetic Transcription | "English" Examples | *Polish* Examples |
|---|---|---|---|

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *-f* | [f] | "fun,"<br>"physics,"<br>"face" | *flet* ("flute"),<br>*fajka* ("pipe"),<br>*filozofia* ("philosophy") |
| *-w* | [v] | "vine,"<br>"vest,"<br>"visit" | *wdowa* ("widow"),<br>*walizka* ("suitcase"),<br>*widelec* ("fork") |
| *-s* | [s] | "soup,"<br>"snake,"<br>"summer" | *skóra* ("skin"),<br>*skorpion* ("scorpio"),<br>*sok* ("juice") |
| *-z* | [z] | "zoo,"<br>"zenith,"<br>"dissolve" | *zero* ("zero"),<br>*zamek* ("castle"/"lock"),<br>*za* ("behind") |
| *-h/-ch* | [x] | "he,"<br>"half,"<br>"hook" | *handel* ("trade"),<br>*helikopter* ("helicopter"),<br>*honor* ("honor"),<br>*choinka* ("Christmas tree"),<br>*chleb* ("bread") |

The letters *-h* and *-ch* represent the same sound despite their different spelling. We use the letter *-h* in words of foreign origin.

**For Example**:

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| *helikopter* | "helicopter" |

| | |
|---|---|
| *hokej* | "hockey" |
| *herbata* | "tea" |

Also, *-h* appears in words that have *h:g* or *h:ż* alternation.

**For Example:**

1. *wa**h**adło: wa**g**a*
   "pendulum: scale"

2. *dru**h**: dru**ż**yna*
   "boy scout: team"

The group *-ch* occurs in other cases and at the end of words.

**For Example:**

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| *pia**ch*** | "sand" |
| *kra**ch*** | "crash" |
| *w sna**ch*** | "in dreams" |

## Pronunciation Practice for the Letter *-f*

---

Please read several times the following words:

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| ***f**oka* | "seal" |
| ***f**otel* | "armchair" |

| | |
|---|---|
| ***f**iranka* | "curtain" |
| ***f**antazja* | "fantasy" |
| ***f**unt* | "pound" |
| ***f**utro* | "fur" |

## Pronunciation Practice for the Letter *-w*

Please read several times the following words:

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| ***w**iatr* | "wind" |
| ***w**idok* | "view" |
| ***w**ąski* | "narrow" |
| ***w**elon* | "veil" |
| ***w**ersja* | "version" |
| *mo**w**a* | "speech" |

## Pronunciation Practice *-s* and *-z*

Please listen and repeat the following groups of words:

| ***-s*** | ***-z*** |
|---|---|
| *ko**s**a* | *ko**z**a* |

| | |
|---|---|
| ma**s**a | ma**z**ak |
| ka**s**a | wa**z**a |

## IV. *Spółgłoski półotwarte* ("Sonorants")

---

When producing sonorants, the airflow goes relatively freely through your mouth or nose. There is only a partial closure. One of the sonorants is the letter *-m.* Try to hum a little bit. You should feel the air stream going through your nose.

| Letter | Phonetic Transcription | "English" Examples | *Polish* Examples |
|---|---|---|---|
| *-m* | [m] | "melody," "me," "match" | *moment* ("moment"), *meta* ("finish"), *miasto* ("city") |
| *-n* | [n] | "nothing," "nose," "novel" | *noc* ("night"), *niebo* ("sky"), *neon* ("neon") |
| *-l* | [l] | "love," "leg," "light" | *lawa* ("lava"), *lojalny* ("loyal"), *lato* ("summer") |
| *-r* | [r] | [none: it's a rolled *r*] | *rower* ("bike"), *rum* ("rum"), *rosa* ("dew") |
| *-j* | [j] | "yellow," "you," "yoke" | *jem* ("I eat"), *jutro* ("tomorrow"), *jak* ("how") |

### Pronunciation Practice for the Rolled *-r*

Please listen and repeat the following sentences:

1. ***R**oman nap**r**awia telewizo**r** a **R**enata ro**b**i he**r**batę.*
   "Roman is fixing the TV and Renata is making tea."

2. ***R**afał i Ju**r**ek wyb**r**ali się na koncer**t** g**r**upy **r**ockowej.*
   **"**Rafał and Jurek went to the rock concert."

3. ***K**arol, któ**r**y jest a**r**chitektem, wyg**r**ał konku**r**s na najlepszy p**r**ojekt.*
   "Karol, who is an architect, won the competition for the best project."

## Why Pronouncing Two Identical Consonants Separately Is So Important

While studying the Polish language, you will definitely come across words that have clusters of consonants in them. In this lesson, we would like you to get familiar with groups that consist of two identical consonants, such as in the example *le**kk**i* ("light"). In Polish, we have to pronounce both *-k*'s. Whenever you have two identical consonants standing next to each other, make sure you pronounce them. Not pronouncing both of those consonants can change the meaning of a word entirely.

**For Example:**

1. *le**kk**i* ("light") versus *le**k**i* ("medicine").

As you can see, there is a huge difference in the meaning of those two words.

Let's have a look at some more examples.

**For Example:**

1. *pa**nn**a* ("girl") versus *pa**n**a* ("mister's")

2. *po**dd**any* ("servant") versus *po**d**any* ("served")

3. *ra**nn**y* ("wounded") versus *ra**n**y* ("wounds")

## Letters *-q, -v,* and *-x.*

---

It is worth mentioning that the letters *-q*, *-v*, and *-x* are present in some words; however, they only appear in words that were adopted into the Polish language, but were never adapted to Polish spelling rules. Therefore, they have kept their original forms. For example, *quiz* and *vis-à-vis*. In some cases, two forms of the same word may appear. We can spell the word *fax* as *f-a-x,* as it originally appears in English, or we may spell it *f-a-k-s*, adjusted to Polish spelling standards.

LESSON NOTES

# Pronunciation S1 #3
# Very Polish Consonants

CONTENTS

2 Grammar

# 3



COPYRIGHT © 2013 INNOVATIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

# GRAMMAR

**The Focus of This Lesson Is Mastering the Pronunciation of Polish Consonants.**

---

As we mentioned in the previous lesson, there is an abundance of consonants in the Polish phonetic system. In this lesson, we are going to focus on consonants that over time acquired diacritical signs, such as an acute mark (for example, *-ś* and *-ć*) or a dot (for instance, *-ż* and *-dż*) as a result of several processes (palatalizations) within the language. It is worth mentioning that the acute mark is not an accent mark. We use it in the Polish language to mark the softness of a particular consonant.

We will divide those consonants using the same criteria as in the previous lesson.

Here are the groups:

1. *Spółgłoski zwarto-szczelinowe* ("affricate consonants")
2. *Spółgłoski szczelinowe* ("fricative consonants")
3. *Spółgłoski półotwarte* ("sonorants")

As you have probably noticed, we did not list the occlusive consonant group above. The reason for that is that there are no occlusive consonants within the sounds we will be working on in this lesson.

## 1. *Spółgłoski zwarto-szczelinowe* ("Affricate Consonants")

---

So far you have had a chance to practice only one affricate consonant, which was *-c*. We can find this sound in English words like "**ts**ar" and "coa**ts**."

However, the consonant *c* is not the only affricate. Let's have a look at some new affricates.

| Letter / Letters | Phonetic Transcription | "English" Examples | *Polish* Examples |
|---|---|---|---|

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *-dz* | [dz] | "needs,"<br>"kids,"<br>"islands" | *dzban* ("pitcher"),<br>*dzwon* ("bell") |
| *-cz* | [tʃ] | "cheese,"<br>"cello,"<br>"nature" | *czek* ("check"),<br>*czas* ("time") |
| *-dż* | [dʒ] | "gin,"<br>"June,"<br>"judge" | *dżungla* ("jungle"),<br>*dżokej* ("jockey") |
| *-ć/-ci* | [tɕ] | We pronounce *ć/ci* more softly than *cz.* | *ćwiczyć* ("to exercise"),<br>*dać* ("to give"),<br>*ciocia* ("aunt"),<br>*ciemny* ("dark") |
| *-dź/-dzi* | [dʑ] | We pronounce *dź/dzi* more softly than *dż.* | *dźwigać* ("to carry heavy things"),<br>*dźwięk* ("sound"),<br>*dziwny* ("weird"),<br>*dziecko* ("child") |

We pronounce the sounds [*ć*] and [*ci*] exactly the same way as the sounds [*dź*] and [*dzi*]. While their pronunciation is always identical, their spelling can vary and is dictated by the following rules:

- The consonants with the acute mark appear at the end of the words or before another consonant: for example, *kość* ("bone") or *pisać* ("to write").
- We only use the consonants with the letter *-i* when they occur before a vowel: for instance, *ciasto* ("cake") or *dziewięć* ("nine").

These rules apply to all consonants with acute signs and their variants with the letter *-i.* We

will discuss them in greater detail below.

## Pronunciation Practice: *-c* and *-dz*

---

Please listen and repeat the following pairs of words:

| ***-c*** | ***-dz*** |
|---|---|
| *no**c**e* | *no**dz**e* |
| *pra**c**ę* | *Pra**dz**e* |

Please read the following words several times:

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| *cho**dz**ę* | "I go," "I walk" |
| ***dz**banek* | "pitcher" |
| ***dz**wonek* | "bell" |
| *bar**dz**o* | "very" |
| *je**dz**ą* | "they eat" |
| *wie**dz**ą* | "they know" |

## Pronunciation Practice: *-cz* and *-dż*

---

Please read several times the following words:

***-cz*:**

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|

| | |
|---|---|
| ka**cz**ka | "duck" |
| **cz**ekolada | "chocolate" |
| me**cz** | "game" |
| **cz**as | "time" |
| po**cz**ta | "post office" |
| pa**cz**ka | "package" |

***-dż*:**

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| ***dż**em* | "jam" |
| ***dż**entelmen* | "gentleman" |
| ***dż**udo* | "judo" |
| ***dż**uma* | "plague" |

## Pronunciation Practice: *-ć/-ci* and *-dź/-dzi*

---

Please listen and repeat the following pairs of words:

| ***-ć/-ci*** | ***-dź/-dzi*** |
|---|---|
| *bu**ci**k* | *bu**dzi**k* |
| *sie**ci*** | *sie**dzi*** |
| ***ci**ało* | ***dzi**ało* |

## 2. *Spółgłoski szczelinowe* ("Fricative Consonants")

Along with the fricative consonants *-f, -w, -s, -z,* and *-h/-ch* that we introduced in the previous lesson, we would also like you to get familiar with the following fricatives.

| Letter / Letters | Phonetic Transcription | "English" Examples | *Polish* Examples |
|---|---|---|---|
| *-sz* | [S] | "fish," "ocean," "she" | *sztuka* ("art"), *szewc* ("shoemaker") |
| *-ż/-rz* | [Z] | "beige," "genre," "vision" | *żyrafa* ("giraffe"), *żyto* ("rye"), *rzeka* ("river"), *rzęsa* ("eyelash") |
| *-ś/-si* | [C] | We pronounce *ś/si* more softly than *sz.* | *świat* ("world"), *ktoś* ("someone"), *siedem* ("seven"), *się* (reflexive pronoun) |
| *-ź/-zi* | [À] | We pronounce *ź/zi* more softly than *ż/rz.* | *źle* ("badly"), *źródło* ("spring"), *zielony* ("green"), *zima* ("winter") |

## Consonants with an Acute Sign

We again have two consonants with an acute sign, *-ś* and *-ź,* and their variants with the letters *-i, -si*, and *-zi.* The rules as to when to use *-ś/-si* or *-ź/-zi* are identical to the ones we already introduced above with *-ć/-ci*.

**Letter *-ż* vs. *-rz*:**

*-Ż* and *-rz* represent the same sound with a different spelling. Again, there are many rules that determine whether we write *-ż* or *-rz.* We will show you the most common ones.

We write the letter *-ż* when there is a *-ż: -g* alternation: for example, *książka: księga* ("book: book") or *mogę: możesz* ("I can": "you can" (singular)).

We use the group *-rz* when there is a *-rz: -r* alternation: for instance, *marzec: marca* ("March": "of March") or *dobrze: dobry* ("well": "good"), or after the following consonants: *-p, -b, -t, -d, -k, -g, -ch, -j,* and *-w*.

**For Example:**

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| *brzeg* | "coast" |
| *przyroda* | "nature" |
| *krzak* | "bush" |

## Pronunciation Practice: *-sz* and *-ż/-rz*

---

Listen and repeat the following words:

| ***-sz*** | ***-ż/-rz*** |
|---|---|
| *dusza* | *duża* |
| *szyć* | *żyć* |
| *kusza* | *kurza* |

## Pronunciation Practice: *-ś/-si* and *-ź/-zi*

---

Listen and repeat the following words:

| ***-ś*/*-si*** | ***-ź*/*-zi*** |
|---|---|
| mi***si***a | mi***zi***a |
| Ka***si***a | Ka***zi***a |
| ***si***arka | ***zi***arka |

### 3. *Spółgłoski półotwarte* ("Sonorants")

---

The last group of consonants consists of the letters *m*, *n*, *l*, *r*, and *j* and two new consonants that we present in the table below.

| **Letter / Letters** | **Phonetic Transcription** | **"English" Examples** | ***Polish* Examples** |
|---|---|---|---|
| *-ł* | [w] | "wedding," "win," "walk" | *łatwy* ("easy"), *okrągły* ("round") |
| *-ń*/*-ni* | [J] | We pronounce *ń/ni* more softly than *n,* close to the sound "-ney" in the word "money." | *dłoń* ("hand"), *słoń* ("elephant"), *niski* ("short"), *niebieski* ("blue") |

### Pronunciation Practice: *-ł* and *-w*

---

Please read and repeat the following pairs of words:

| ***-ł*** | ***-w*** |
|---|---|
| ***ł***ata | ***w***ata |

| | |
|---|---|
| *by**ł**a* | *by**w**a* |
| *la**ł**a* | *la**w**a* |

## Pronunciation Practice: *-ń/-ni*

Please read and repeat several times the following words:

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| *pie**ń*** | "stump" |
| ***ni**c* | "nothing" |
| *pom**ni**k* | "monument" |
| *ko**ni**k* | "pony" |
| *ko**ni**ec* | "end" |
| *ko**ni**czyna* | "shamrock" |

## Pronunciation Practice for Consonant Cluster *-szcz*

Please read and repeat the following words:

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| ***szcz**upły* | "slim" |
| ***szcz**upak* | "pike (fish)" |
| ***szcz**ęśliwy* | "happy" |
| ***Szcz**ecin* | city in northern Poland |

| | |
|---|---|
| *chrzą**szcz*** | "beetle" |
| ***szcz**eniak* | "puppy" |
| ***szcz**ęście* | "happiness" |

## Pronunciation Practice for Consonant Cluster -*ść*

Please read and repeat the following words:

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| *wie**ść*** | "a piece of news" |
| *nie**ść*** | "to carry" |
| *ko**ść*** | "bone" |
| *wej**ść*** | "to enter" |
| *przyjemno**ść*** | "pleasure" |
| *li**ść*** | "leaf" |
| *pię**ść*** | "fist" |
| *ma**ść*** | "ointment" |
| ***ści**eżka* | "path" |
| ***ści**szyć* | "to turn the volume down" |

LESSON NOTES

# Pronunciation S1 #4 Voiced and Unvoiced Polish Consonants and Why Does It Matter?

CONTENTS

2 Grammar

# 4



COPYRIGHT © 2013 INNOVATIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

# GRAMMAR

**The Focus of This Lesson Is Recognizing the Difference between Voiced and Unvoiced Consonants.**

---

This is the last lesson in which we will talk about Polish consonants. This time, we will look at them from a different perspective. Thanks to our previous lessons, you are already able to produce every sound that you will find in the Polish language.

In this lesson, we will look at some rules that will help you put them together. We have a saying in Polish, *Czytaj, jak jest napisane,* which translates to "Read as it's written." What we mean by this is that every letter represents the same sound no matter what position it has in the word. Well, it is almost true, with some tiny exceptions. To be able to accomplish the goal of our lesson, first we have to introduce one very important distinction within the phonetic system of the Polish language. To do this, we will divide voiced consonants from their unvoiced counterparts.

The list below will help illustrate this distinction.

1. **Voiced: -***b*, -*w*, -*d*, -*z*, -*dz*, -*ż/-rz*, **-***dż*, **-***ź*, **-***dź*, **-***g*, **-***m*, **-***n*, **-***r*, **-***l*, **-***ł*, **-***j*
2. **Unvoiced**: -*p*, -*f*, -*t*, -*s*, -*c*, -sz, -*cz*, -*ś*, **-***ć*, **-***k*, **-***ch*/**-***h*

The distinction between voiced and unvoiced consonants is based on the vocal cords. If the vocal cords are together, the air stream cannot pass freely and it has to force its way through, causing the vocal cords to vibrate. Such sounds are voiced sounds.

If the vocal cords are apart, the airflow can move without any obstructions, producing in this manner unvoiced sounds.

Knowing which consonants are voiced and which ones are not will help you to understand Polish pronunciation. As you will see below, the pronunciation of one consonant can change depending on its position in relation to other neighboring consonants. In addition, the pronunciation of a consonant can change if it appears at the end of a word or at the boundary of words.

For your ease, in the examples below we decided not to use the phonetic alphabet. Instead,

we represent the letters undergoing a change in pronunciation by either their unvoiced or voiced equivalent. For example, we spell the word *wcale* as *fcale* because the voiced *w* is replaced by its unvoiced counterpart -*f.*

We collected the most important rules and include some appropriate examples below.

**Rule 1: We pronounce every voiced consonant appearing before an unvoiced one as unvoiced.**

---

Here are some examples of this rule.

We read *wtedy* ("then") as [*ftedy*] since -*w,* which we voice, appears in front of the unvoiced consonant -*t.* -*w* becomes unvoiced and we pronounce it like -*f.*

We read *dziadka* ("of grandfather") as [*dziatka*]. Again, we have a voiced -*d* occurring in front of the unvoiced -*k*, making -*d* an unvoiced consonant we pronounce like -*t*.

The same process takes place at the boundary of the words. Here are some examples.

We read *naród polski* ("Polish nation") as [*narót polski*]. The unvoiced -*p* from *polski* changed the voiced -*d* from *naród* to an unvoiced -*t*.

We most often pronounce unvoiced consonants that occur before voiced ones (look at point 3) as voiced.
For example, we pronounce *także* ("also") as [*tagże*]. The voiced -*ż* makes the unvoiced -*k* sound like -*g.* In addition, we pronounce *prośba* ("request") as [*proźba*].

Let's have a look at an example at the boundary of two words.

**For Example**:

1. *jak dobrze* ("how well") becomes [*jag dobrze*].

**Rule 2. We pronounce only the consonants -*w* and -*rz* (please remember, not -*ż*) as unvoiced both before and after an unvoiced consonant.**

---

Here are some examples of this rule.

**For Example:**

1. We pronounce *wpaść* ("to fall in") as [*fpaść*].
2. We pronounce *przykład* ("example") as [*pszykłat*].
3. We pronounce *ćwiczenie* ("exercise") as [*ćficzenie*].

### Rule 3. At the end of a word or if there is a longer pause, every voiced consonant becomes unvoiced.

---

Here are some examples of this rule.

**For Example:**

1. We read *kod* ("code") as [kot].
2. We read *lew* ("lion") as [lef].
3. We read *sad* ("orchard") as [sat].

## Pronouncing Consonant Groups

---

As you remember, there are also a lot of consonant groups in Polish. Sometimes these groups can be difficult to pronounce, which is why we simplified their pronunciation. It means that we do not pronounce one consonant from the group. Let's have a look at some of these rules.

I. We do not pronounce the letter *-ć* in the following numbers: *pięćdziesiąt* ("fifty"), *sześćdziesiąt* ("sixty"), *dziewięćdziesiąt* ("ninety"), *pięćset* ("five hundred"), *sześćset* ("six hundred"), and *dziewięćset* ("nine hundred").

II. In spoken language, we do not pronounce the letter *-ł* that occurs between two consonants

or at the end of the word after another consonant.

**For Example:**

1. We pronounce *jabłko* ("apple") as [*japko*].
2. We pronounce *mógł* ("he could") as [*mók*].

III. Also in spoken language, we do not pronounce the consonants -*t* and -*w* that appear between two consonants.

**For Example**:

1. We pronounce *chrzestny* ("godfather") as [*chszesny*].
2. We pronounce *pierwszy* ("first") as [*pierszy*].

LESSON NOTES

# Pronunciation S1 #5 ABCs of Polish Accent, Exceptions, and Accentuation of Groups of Words

CONTENTS

2 Grammar

# 5



COPYRIGHT © 2013 INNOVATIVE LANGUAGE LEARNING. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

## GRAMMAR

**The Focus of This Lesson Is the Accentuation of Single Words and Groups of Words in the Polish Language.**

---

By now, you know almost everything there is to know about Polish pronunciation. However, there is one more feature of the Polish language that we haven't had a chance to discuss thus far. Undoubtedly, it plays an important role in every language, and Polish is no exception. The feature we will be analyzing today more in depth is the Polish accentuation of single words as well as groups of words.

Let's jump right in.

### Polish Accentuation of Single Words

---

Polish accentuation is quite constant, and in most cases, the accent falls on the second-to-last syllable.

**For Example:**

| *Polish* | "English" |
|---|---|
| ***ksią**-żka* | "book" |
| *to-**re**-bka* | "purse," "bag" |
| *pra-**co**-wać* | "to work" |
| *dy-sku-**to**-wać* | "to discuss" |
| *prze-li-te-**ro**-wać* | "to spell" |

If a word has only one syllable, we stress the entire syllable.

**For Example:**

| *Polish* | "English" |
|---|---|
| *mam* | "I have" |
| *znam* | "I know" |
| *mistrz* | "champion," "master" |
| *chcę* | "I want" |
| *tak* | "yes" |

## Exceptions in Polish Accentuation

---

Like we have mentioned before, the accent in the Polish language is quite regular and falls on the penultimate syllable. However, there are some groups of words where the accent falls on either the third-to-last, fourth-to-last, or the last syllable. Let's have a quick look at them.

### The Third-To-Last Syllable Accent

---

I. The words that have foreign origin and end with the word part *-ika/-yka* keep their original accent on the third syllable from the end.

**For Example:**

| *Polish* | "English" |
|---|---|
| *ma-te-**ma**-ty-ka* | "mathematics" |
| *A-**me**-ry-ka* | "America" |
| *bo-**ta**-ni-ka* | "botanics" |
| *lin-**gwi**-sty-ka* | "linguistics" |

| | |
|---|---|
| *po-**li**-ty-ka* | "politics" |

II. We also accent the forms of the first- and second-person plural of the past tense on the third-to-last syllable.

**For Example:**

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| ***gra**-li-śmy* | "we played" |
| ***by**-li-śmy* | "we were" |
| ***gra**-li-ście* | "you (plural) played" |
| ***by**-li-ście* | "you (plural) were |

III**.** We also accent all the forms in singular and the third-person plural of the conditional on the third syllable from the end.

**For Example:**

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| *zro-**bi**-ła-bym* | "I (female) would do"/"I (female) would have done" |
| *na-ry-**so**-wał-byś* | "you (male, singular) would draw"/"you (male, singular) would have drawn" |
| ***czy**-tał-by* | "he would read"/"he would have read" |
| *na-u-**czy**-li-by* | "they would teach"/"they would have taught" |

IV. Some Polish numbers with the parts *-sta or -set* have the accent falling on the third syllable.

**For Example:**

| *Polish* | "English" |
|---|---|
| ***czte**-ry-sta* | "four hundred" |
| ***o**-siem-set* | "eight hundred" |
| ***dzie**-więć-set* | "nine hundred |

## The Fourth-To-Last Syllable Accent

The accent falls on the fourth syllable from the end in the first- and second-person plural of the conditional.

**For Example:**

| *Polish* | "English" |
|---|---|
| ***by**-li-by-śmy* | "we would be/ we would have been" |
| ***by**-li-by-ście* | "you (plural) would be"/"you (plural) would have been" |
| *czy-**ta**-li-by-śmy* | "we would read"/"we would have read" |
| *czy-**ta**-li-by-ście* | "you (plural) would read"/"you (plural) would have read" |

## The Accent on the Last Syllable

One-syllable nouns that we use to create compound words with the particles *arcy-, eks-,* and *wice-* retain the accent on the last syllable.

**For Example:**

| *Polish* | "English" |
|---|---|
| *ar-cy-**mistrz*** | "grand master" |
| *eks-**mąż*** | "ex-husband" |
| *wice-**król*** | "vice-king" |

## Accent Groups

---

In some instances, single-syllable words can form accent groups with other neighboring words. In these accent groups, we stress the following words:

I. The negation *nie* when it appears in front of a single-syllable word.

**For Example:**

| *Polish* | "English" |
|---|---|
| ***nie** chcę* | "I don't want to" |
| ***nie** wiem* | "I don't know" |
| ***nie** on* | "not him" |

II. Prepositions that occur before a one-syllable pronoun.

**For Example:**

| *Polish* | "English" |
|---|---|
| ***do** was* | "to you" |
| ***ze** mną* | "with me" |
| *be-**ze** mnie* | "without me" |

| | |
|---|---|
| *prze-**de** mną* | "in front of me" |
| ***przez** nią* | "because of her" |

III. Prepositions occurring before a single-syllable word.

**For Example:**

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| *wychodzić **za** mąż* | "to get married with a man" |
| *jechać **na** wieś* | "to go to the countryside" |

## Polish Words That We Do Not Accent

---

Let's see now which words from the accent groups we do not accent:

I. Single-syllable forms of personal pronouns such as *ci* ("you (singular)"), *cię* ("you (singular)"), *go* ("him"), *ich* ("them"), *jej* ("her"), and so on, as well as the reflexive pronoun *się*, that occur after verbs.

**For Example:**

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| ***pro**-szę cię* | "I am asking you" |
| *mó-**wi**-łem jej* | "I (male) told her" |
| *wi-**dzia**-łam go* | "I (female) saw him" |
| ***ko**-cham cię* | "I love you" |

II. The negation *nie* appearing before two-syllable or longer verbs.

**For Example:**

| ***Polish*** | **"English"** |
|---|---|
| *nie po-**ma**-gaj* | "don't help" |
| *nie **śpie**-waj* | "don't sing" |
| *nie **chce**-my* | "we don't want to" |
| *nie **ma**-my* | "we don't have" |

PolishPod101.com





Intro
1 Self Introduction: Basic Greetings in Polish
2 Basic Polish Sentence Structure
3 Useful Phrases for Learning Polish
4 Counting from 1-100 in Polish
5 Counting from 100-10,000 in Polish
6 Top 5 Reasons to Study Polish!
7 Cracking the Polish Writing System!
8 Painless Polish Grammar!
9 Polish Pronunciation Made EASY!
10 5 Most Important Phrases for Learning Polish!
11 Can You Answer These 5 Questions About Poland?
12 Top 5 Polish Dishes!
13 Top 5 Things You Need to Know About Polish Society!
14 Top 5 Important Dates During the Polish Calendar Year!
15 Top 5 Polish Pop Culture Icons You Need to Know About!
16 Top 5 Tools for Learning Polish!
17 Top 5 Polish Classroom Phrases!
18 Top 5 Polish Phrases Your Teacher Will Never Teach You!
19 Top 5 Polish Language Mistakes You Should Never Make!
20 Top 5 Pet Phrases from the Polish Teachers!
21 So Many Polish Consonants, So Few Polish Vowels
22 Polish Consonants and Their Shocking Number
23 Very Polish Consonants
24 Voiced and Unvoiced Polish Consonants and Why Does It Matter?
25 ABCs of Polish Accent, Exceptions, and Accentuation of Groups of Words


©2016 Innovative Language Learning, LLC (P)2015 Innovative Language Learning, LLC presented by japanesepod101.com