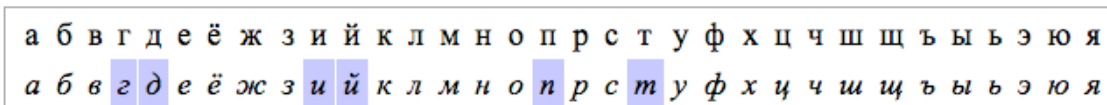


Labyrinth of Languages

Home Study Assignment #2

Comparing Russian with English: A Brief Look

Russian is written in the Cyrillic alphabet. Here are the lower-case letters, in printed and cursive form:



1. Below are names of some animals in Russian (*from www.russiandatabase.supanet.com*). Write each name in cursive next to the printed form.

	<i>Dog</i> собака	
<i>Cat</i> Кошка		
	<i>Rabbit</i> кролик	

2. English doesn't have very many endings for its verbs. For example, we have the word "play" and then we have "played", "plays", and "playing". That's it.
 - a. Can you think of any other form of the verb "play"?
 - b. Some English verbs are irregular. Give the forms of the verb "speak" that correspond to the forms of "play" listed above:
 - c. Of the three endings (-ed, -s, -ing), which ones change for irregular verbs in English?

- d. Can you think of any other form of the verb “speak”?
3. Russian has more verb forms than English. Here, for example, are six forms in the *present tense alone* of one verb!

Играть	To play
Я	играю
Ты	играешь
Он Она Оно	играет
Мы	играем
Вы	играете
Они	играют

If you read these across, starting in the second line, they mean “I play”, “you play”, “he/she/it plays”, “we play”, “you [plural] play”, and “they play.” If **ЛЮБИТ** means “to love,” make a good guess about the meaning of the forms **ЛЮБИШЬ** and **ЛЮБИМ**.

4. There are also more forms of nouns in Russian than in English. In English we have plurals and possessives—and that’s it. Give an example of an English noun with an *irregular* plural:
5. Russian also has plurals and possessives...and a lot more! For example, the website <<http://learnrussian.elanguageschool.net>> gives these sentences:

Igor hits Ivan. Игорь бьёт Ивана.

Ivan hits Igor. Иван бьёт Игоря.

(I don’t know why they have to use hitting as an example...) Notice that “Igor” changes from **Игорь** to **Игоря**, and Ivan changes from **Ивана** to **Иван**. You will need to know that the letter **я** is pronounced “ya”, so we basically have an “-a” ending in one word of each sentence. Based on these examples, can you make a guess about when the “-a” seems to be added to a noun in Russian? (No, it’s not when it’s the last word, as **Игоря бьёт Иван** would also mean “Ivan hits Igor”!)