Country: Slovene
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Slovene

Official Language of Slovenia

By Lisa Salisbury
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**Slovenia**

A country in Central Europe touching the Alps and bordering the Mediterranean, Italy, Croatia, Hungary, Austria, and the Adriatic Sea.

**Slovene Language**

Native language of about 88% of Slovenia’s population

- 5 dialect bases incorporating 50 varying dialects
- Also spoken in parts of Italy, Austria, Hungary, and Croatia

Wikipedia, 2012

Ager, 2012
Dialects

- Slovene is an Indo-European language from South Slavic branch of the Slavic languages, like Serbian and Croatian.

- The spoken and written language is uniform and standardized.

- Dialects’ differ considerably in phonology, vocabulary and grammar.

- 46 clearly defined dialects, divided into six regional groups: Carinthian, Upper Carniolan, Lower Carniolan, Littoral, Rovte, Styrian and Pannonian.

Ager, 2012; Dular, 2001
Characteristics of Slovene

- Dual grammatical number
- 2 accentual norms: Pitch accent, Abundant inflection
- Tense-Verb distinction
- Flexible word order-adjusted for emphasis/stylistic reasons
- Stress can fall on any syllable of a word
- Pronounce every letter in words
- Second-person plural forms used for individuals as sign of respect
- Word endings express number, gender, and relationship between different words in sentence

Wikipedia, 2012; Komar, 2006
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>IPA</th>
<th>Letter</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>IPA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A, a</td>
<td>a</td>
<td>/a/</td>
<td>M, m</td>
<td>em</td>
<td>/m/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B, b</td>
<td>be</td>
<td>/b/</td>
<td>N, n</td>
<td>en</td>
<td>/n/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C, c</td>
<td>ce</td>
<td>/ts/</td>
<td>O, o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>/ɔ/, /o/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Č, č</td>
<td>če</td>
<td>/tʃ/</td>
<td>P, p</td>
<td>pe</td>
<td>/p/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D, d</td>
<td>de</td>
<td>/d/</td>
<td>R, r</td>
<td>er</td>
<td>/r/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E, e</td>
<td>e</td>
<td>/ɛ/, /e/, /ə/</td>
<td>S, s</td>
<td>es</td>
<td>/s/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F, f</td>
<td>ef</td>
<td>/f/</td>
<td>Š, š</td>
<td>eš</td>
<td>/ʃ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G, g</td>
<td>ge</td>
<td>/g/</td>
<td>T, t</td>
<td>te</td>
<td>/t/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H, h</td>
<td>ha</td>
<td>/x/</td>
<td>U, u</td>
<td>u</td>
<td>/u/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I, i</td>
<td>i</td>
<td>/i/</td>
<td>V, v</td>
<td>ve</td>
<td>/v/, /w/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J, j</td>
<td>je</td>
<td>/j/</td>
<td>Z, z</td>
<td>ze</td>
<td>/z/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K, k</td>
<td>ka</td>
<td>/k/</td>
<td>Ž, ž</td>
<td>že</td>
<td>/ʒ/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L, l</td>
<td>el</td>
<td>/l/, /w/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Phonology

- h pronounced /x/ save before voiceless consonants and after i when /h/
- lj pronounced /lj/ save before consonants, i and at the end of a word when /ʎ/
- l is pronounced as /u/ in past participles and sometimes in other words
- m is pronounced /ŋ/ before f and v
- n is pronounced /ɲ/ before g and k
- nj are pronounced /nj/ save before consonants, i and at the end of a word when /ɲ/
- Slovenian r is always rolled like in Spanish or Italian
- g and k are aspirated in short imperatives and interrogatives
- /w/ is pronounced before vowels as well as j, l and r, while /ʎ/ before consonants
- /ɔ/ is always pronounced before syllabic l, m, n, and r
- /ː/ denotes long vowel

Ager, 2012
Difficulties with English

Mispronunciations of English words due to:

Distinction between /I/ ad /i:/ is neutralized and instead of two individual sounds, a variant of the Slovene /i/ is pronounced, similar to schwa.

When /i:/ is followed by a voiceless consonant, vowel is reduced in length: <beat> to <bit>

Difference between the two vowels /æ/ and /e/ is neutralized and both end up sounding like the Slovene /ɛ/: <bed> to <bad> and <bet> to <bat>

/ɑː/, /ʌ/ tend to be neutralized to one sound, the Slovene /a/

No Standard Slovene counterpart for English /ʊ/, pronounced as /u:/

Komar, 2006
Slovene does not have the allophones [tr] or [ts]: <tree>, <cats>; thus producing these sounds in English might be difficult.

When 3 consonants occur in a sequence and central one is /t/ or /d/, latter is likely to disappear: <left wing> to /lef ‘wɪŋ/

/h/ disappears in the normal forms of pronouns and in the auxilliary verb have: <him> to /ɪm/

/v/ disappears in normal form of the word “of” before / /: <lots of them> to /’lɒts ə ðəm/

English sounds difficult to make due to tongue position: /æ/, /ŋ/, /h/, /ʊ/, /ð/
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Slovene</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language uses inflections to mark cases, therefore word order is liable to change</td>
<td>Word order is predominantly fixed (S-P-O)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nucleus need not fall on a lexical item, may also fall on a function word</td>
<td>Nucleus falls on last lexical item in word group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 basic tone groups: fall, rise, level tone</td>
<td>5 basic tone groups: fall, fall-rise, rise, rise-fall, level tone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sustarsic (n.d.), Komar, 2006
Culture Notes

- It is important to ask how a person is doing and really listen to their answer before moving on to the purpose of the conversation, if there is one.

- Slovenes are neither overly direct nor indirect in their communication style. The norm is somewhere in between.

- An arm’s length of personal space during conversation is usually the norm.

- To stay on the safe side, it’s best not to touch too much until you have established a good relationship.

Landers & Grossman, (n.d.)
Culture Notes cont’d

- Normally it’s appropriate and expected to have some eye contact with the person you’re talking to in order to show that you’re listening to her/him. However, constantly staring at someone’s eyes could be offensive.

- When interacting with good friends and family a normal amount of touching is usually acceptable, regardless of sex.

- Punctuality is in most cases valued and people normally do covet their time.

Landers & Grossman, (n.d.)
Resources


Resources continued


Images


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