



POLISH

A PROFILE

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CONTENTS

- 1) Background
- 2) Recent Economic migration
- 3) Populations & distributions
- 4) Dialects
- 5) Grammar
- 6) Phonology/Stress
- 7) Polish orthography
- 8) Brief Vocabulary
- 9) Polish Food
- 10) Religious Demography
- 11) Reference

POLISH

BACKGROUND

In the 16th century Polish travellers came as traders and diplomats. In the 18th century some Polish Protestants settled as religious refugees due to the counter reformation in Poland. In the 19th century, due to the collapse of the November Uprising of 1831 against the Russian Empire, many Polish fighters came to the UK in search of political sanctuary.

After the First World War Poles settled in large numbers in London – many from the London Polish Prisoner of War camps in Alexandra Palace and Feltham. During the Second World War the majority of the Poles came to the United Kingdom as political émigrés during German and Soviet occupation of Poland. In 1940, with the fall of France, the exiled Polish President, Prime Minister and government transferred to London, along with at least 20,000 soldiers. Many other Poles based themselves in other parts of the United Kingdom and in practice London became the nerve centre and military headquarters of the Polish liberation movement.

When the Second World War ended, a Communist government was installed in Poland. Most Poles felt betrayed by their wartime allies and were extremely reluctant to return home. A significant number of Poles were professionals (lawyers, judges, engineers), yet only doctors and pharmacists had their qualifications recognised. As a result the majority of Poles worked in building and construction, coal mining and other forms of manual labour, as well as in the hospitality industry. However, the Poles were very entrepreneurial and set up a number of businesses such as clock, watch and shoe repairs – many of which are still operating today.

The relaxation of travel restrictions to and from Poland saw a steady increase in Polish migration to the United Kingdom in the 1950s. Brixton, Earls Court and Lewisham were a few of the London areas where they settled.

The Polish Government in London was not dissolved until 1991, when a freely elected president took office in Warsaw. The Polish people fought hard to combat communism, and for their right to liberty. Previously a base to fight against the communist regime in Poland, London came to be seen as an important centre to foster business and political relations

RECENT ECONOMIC MIGRATION

Since the expansion of the EU on 1 May 2004, the UK has granted free movement to workers from the new member states. There are restrictions on the benefits that members of eight of these accession countries can claim, which are covered by the Worker Registration Scheme. Most of the other European Union member states have exercised their right for temporary immigration control (which must end by 2011) over entrants from these accession states, although some are now removing these restrictions.

The Polish magazine *Polityka* has launched a 'Stay With Us' scheme offering young academics a £5,000 bonus to encourage them to stay at home. Rapid economic growth at home, falling unemployment and the rising strength of the zloty have, by the autumn of 2007, reduced the economic incentive for Poles to migrate to the UK. Labour shortages in Poland's cities and in sectors such as construction, IT and financial services have also played a part in stemming the flow of Poles to the UK. According to the August 2007 Accession Monitoring Report, fewer Poles migrated in the first half of 2007 than in the same period in 2006. Launched on 20 October 2007, a campaign by the British Polish Chamber of Commerce, 'Wracaj do Polski' encourages Poles living and working in the UK to return home.

POPULATIONS & DISTRIBUTION

Following the recent migrations, several towns and cities in the UK now have a significant number of Polish inhabitants. However many towns and cities in the UK have long established and relatively large Polish communities, most notably in London, Birmingham, Bradford and Manchester. Other established communities exist in many other locations such as Leeds, Sheffield, Leicester, Nottingham, Slough, Reading and Melton Mowbray.

The main hub of the London Polish community is Hammersmith in West London, as well as Ealing, Enfield and Haringey. The activities revolve around the Polish Social and Cultural Centre (POSK) on King Street. Polish newspapers and food shops are increasingly apparent following Poland's entry into the European Union in May 2004.

DIALECTS

"Standard" Polish is still spoken somewhat differently in different regions of the country, although the differences between these broad "dialects" are slight. There is never any difficulty in mutual understanding, and non-native speakers are generally unable to distinguish among them easily. The differences are slight compared to different dialects of English, for example. The regional differences correspond mainly to old tribal divisions from around a thousand years ago; the most significant of these in terms of numbers of speakers are Great Polish (spoken in the west), Lesser Polish (spoken in the south and southeast), Mazovian (Mazur) spoken throughout the central and eastern parts of the country, and Silesian spoken in the southwest. Mazovian shares some features with the Kashubian language.

GRAMMAR

Nouns and adjectives

The Polish gender system, like Russian and almost all the other Balto-Slavic languages, is complex, due to its combination of three categories: gender (masculine, feminine, neuter), personhood (personal versus non-personal) and animacy (animate versus inanimate). Personhood and animacy are relevant within the masculine gender but do not affect the feminine or neuter genders. The resulting system can be presented as comprising five gender classes: personal masculine, animate (non-personal) masculine, inanimate masculine, feminine, and neuter. These classes can be identified based on declension patterns, adjective-noun agreement, and pronoun-antecedent agreement.

Gender	Nominative singular		Accusative singular		Nominative plural		Meaning
	Adjective	Noun	Adjective	Noun	Adjective	Noun	
Personal masculine	nowy	student	nowego	studenta	nowi	studenci	"new student(s)"
Animate masculine	nowy	pies	nowego	psa	nowe	psy	"new dog(s)"
Inanimate masculine	nowy	stół	nowy	stół	nowe	stoły	"new table(s)"
Feminine	nowa	szafa	nową	szafę	nowe	szafy	"new wardrobe(s)"
Neuter	nowe	krzesło	nowe	krzesło	nowe	krzesła	"new chair(s)"

The gender classes are characterized by the following inflectional properties (with rare exceptions):

1. Personal masculine: accusative = genitive (both singular and plural), distinctive nominative plural ending
2. Animate (non-personal) masculine: nominative singular ending in a consonant (nouns), accusative singular = genitive singular, accusative plural = nominative plural
3. Inanimate masculine: nominative singular ending in a consonant (nouns), accusative = nominative (singular and plural)
4. Neuter: nominative singular in "-o" or "-e", genitive singular in "-a" (nouns), accusative = nominative (singular and plural)
5. Feminine: dative singular = locative singular, accusative plural = nominative plural.

VERBS

Polish verbs are inflected according to gender as well as person and number, but the tense forms have been simplified through elimination of three old tenses (the aorist, imperfect, and past perfect). The so-called Slavic perfect is the only past tense form used in common speech. In Polish, one distinguishes between

- three tenses (present, past and future)
- three moods (indicative, imperative and conditional)
- three voices (active, passive and reflexive).

Aspect is a grammatical category of the verb, and almost all Polish verbs have two aspects, in each tense. One imperfective (often translated as a progressive tense in English with -ing, for example 'was going', 'is going', "will be going") and one perfective (often translated as a simple tense in English, for example 'went', 'go' 'will go').

The tenses include:

construction	(for perfective verbs)	(for imperfective verbs)	example imperfective	example perfective
verb+ć	infinitive	infinitive	robić	zrobić
verb+suffix	future simple tense	present tense	robicie	zrobicie
past participle+suffix	past perfective tense	past imperfective tense	robiliście	zrobiliście
(this suffix can be moved)			coście robili / co robiliście	coście zrobili / co zrobiliście

Movable suffixes (those of the past tenses) are usually attached to the verb or to the most accented word of a sentence, like question preposition.

WORD ORDER

Basic word order in Polish is SVO, however, as it is a synthetic language, it is possible to move words around in the sentence, and to drop the subject, object or even sometimes verb, if they are obvious from context.

These sentences mean more or less the same ("Alice has a cat"), but different shades of meaning are emphasized by selecting different word orders. In increasing order of markedness:

- Ala ma kota - Alicia has a cat
- Ala kota ma - Alicia does have (own) a cat (and has not borrowed it)
- Kota ma Ala - The/a cat is owned by Alicia
- Ma Ala kota - Alicia really does have a cat
- Kota Ala ma - It is just the cat that Alicia really has
- Ma kota Ala - The relationship of Alicia to the cat is one of ownership (and not temporary possession)

However, only the first three examples sound natural in Polish, and others should be used for special emphasis only, if at all.

If a question mark is added to the end of those sentences they will all mean "does Alicia have a cat?"; an optional 'czy' could be added to the beginning (but native speakers do not always use it).

If apparent from context, the subject, object or even the verb, can be dropped:

- Ma kota - can be used if it is obvious who is the person talked about
- Ma - short answer for "Czy Ala ma kota?" (as in "Yes, she does")
- Ala - answer for "Kto ma kota?" (as in "Alicia does")
- Kota - answer for "Co ma Ala?" (as in "The cat")
- Ala ma - (as in "Alicia does [have one]") answer for "Kto z naszych znajomych ma kota?" ("Who among our acquaintances has a cat?")

Note the interrogative particle "czy", which is used to start a yes/no question, much like the French "est-ce que". The particle is not obligatory, and sometimes rising intonation is the only signal of the interrogative character of the sentence: "Ala ma kota?".

There is a tendency in Polish to drop the subject rather than the object as it is uncommon to know the object but not the subject. If the question were "Kto ma kota?" (Who has a/the cat?), the answer should be "Ala" alone, without a verb.

In particular, "ja" (I) and "ty" (you, singular), and their plural equivalents "my" (we) and "wy" (you, plural), are almost always dropped, much like the respective Spanish pronouns.

VOWELS

The Polish vowel system is relatively simple with only six oral and two nasal vowels. All Polish oral vowels are monophthongs, which are shown to the right. The /ɨ/ and /i/ have largely complementary distributions. Except for after labial consonants, which can be followed by both /ɨ/ and /i/, /i/ is usually pronounced after an alveolo-palatal consonant (/ʃ/, /tʃ/, /j/, or /j/) and /ɨ/ appears elsewhere (see #Soft vs. hard consonants below). In some phonological descriptions of Polish that phonemically distinguish labials with palatalization, /ɨ/ and /i/ can be treated as allophones. Vowels /ɨ/ and /i/ also rhyme in Polish poetry.

Similar allophony, though finer, applies to certain other vowels. Next to the soft consonant and especially between two soft consonants, /ɛ/ is often near-close ([e]) and /a/ is more front (that is, cardinal [a] rather than [ä]).^[1] These distinctions are not represented in the spelling and native speakers are mostly not aware of the differences.

Example words		
Polish script	IPA	Example
i	/i/	<i>miś</i> ('teddy bear')
e	/ɛ/	<i>ten</i> ('this one')
y	/ɨ/	<i>mysz</i> ('mouse')
a	/a/	<i>kat</i> ('executioner')
u / ó	/u/	<i>bum</i> ('boom')
o	/ɔ/	<i>kot</i> ('cat')

Before all stops and affricates, nasal vowels are pronounced as an oral vowel + nasal consonant homorganic with the following stop or affricate (*kaŃ* pronounced as [kɔnt], *gęba* pronounced as [ɲgɛmba], etc.). At the end of the word, nasal ę is by the majority of speakers pronounced as non-nasal e (less common is the pronunciation with slight nasality, full nasality is considered unnatural). Practically, nasal vowels survived in pronunciation only before fricatives and — as for ą — at the end of the word.

Unlike those in French, nasal vowels in Polish are asynchronous, which means that each nasal vowel is pronounced as an oral vowel followed by a nasal semivowel, or a nasal vowel followed by a nasal semivowel, for example *ą* is [ɔw̃] or [ɔ̃j] rather than [ɔ̃]. For the sake of simplicity these asynchronous nasal vowels will be henceforth represented as ordinary (synchronous) nasal vowels.

Polish nasal vowels				
Polish script	IPA	Description	English approximation	Polish example
ę	/ɛ̃/	nasal open-mid front unrounded	nasal e as in <i>ben</i>	<i>węże</i> ('snakes')
ą	/ɔ̃/	nasal open-mid back rounded	nasal o (not a), as in <i>long</i>	<i>wąż</i> ('snake')

The length of a vowel is not phonemic in Polish, which means that how long a vowel is pronounced does not change the meaning of a word.

CONSONANTS

The Polish consonant system is more complicated and its characteristic features are the series of affricates and palatal consonants that resulted from four Proto-Slavic palatalizations and two further palatalizations which took place in Polish and Belarusian. Retroflexes and voiced affricates are often marked by digraphs. Palatal consonants (known in Slavic grammatical tradition as "soft" consonants) are marked either by an acute accent or followed by an *i*. Voice is phonemic.

Polish consonants ^[2]								
	Bilabial	Labio-dental	Dental/Alveolar	Retroflex ¹	Palatal ²	Velar		Glottal
						palatalized ²	plain	
Nasal	m		n		ɲ		ŋ	
Plosive	p b		t d			k ^j g ^j	k g	
Affricate			t͡s d͡z	t͡ʂ d͡ʐ	t͡ɕ d͡ʑ			

Fricative		f v	s z	ʃ ʒ	ɕ ʐ		x (χ)	(h) ³
Trill			r					
Approximant			l		j		w	

1. The retroflex consonants are also transcribed with /ʃ/, /ɕ/, etc. However, laminal retroflex is more accurate.^[3]
2. /k^j/ and /g^j/ are less commonly transcribed as /c/ and /ɟ/. /ɲ/, /t͡ɕ/, /d͡ʐ/, /ɕ/, and /ʐ/ are alveolo-palatal

STRESS

In Polish the stress falls generally on the penultimate (second to last) syllable, for example *zrobił* ('he did'), *zrobili* ('they did').

Exceptions in cultivated speech include:

- verbs in first and second person plural past tense, for example *zrobiliśmy* ('we did') - the stress is on the third syllable from the end
- verbs in conditional, for example *zrobiłbym* ('I would do') - stressed on the third syllable from the end
- verbs in first and second person plural conditional, for example *zrobilibyśmy* ('we would do') - the stress is on the fourth syllable from the end

some words borrowed from Latin (for example *matematyka*, *fizyka*) are also stressed on the antepenultimate (third syllable from the end), although this has been falling out of use during the last 50 years.

POLISH ORTHOGRAPHY

The Polish alphabet is based on the Latin alphabet but uses diacritics, such as the *kreska* (graphically similar to acute accent), the *kropka* (overdot), and the ogonek. It was the only major Slavic language written in the Latin alphabet that did not adopt a version of the Czech orthography, the latter which dates back to the 14th Century while the Polish script date back as early as 1136 AD.

VOCABULARY

Personal pronouns

Singular	Plural
ja - I	my - we
ty - you	wy - you (Plural)
on - he ona - she ono - it	oni - they (group of people, including at least one male) one - they (group of female persons or group not involving persons)

Numerals

jeden - one	dwa - two
trzy - three	cztery - four
pięć - five	sześć - six
siedem - seven	osiem - eight
dziewięć - nine	dziesięć - ten
jedenaście - eleven	dwanaście - twelve
trzynaście - thirteen	czternaście - fourteen
piętnaście - fifteen	szesnaście - sixteen
siedemnaście - seventeen	osiemnaście - eighteen

dziewiętnaście - nineteen	dwadzieścia - twenty
dwadzieścia jeden - twenty-one	dwadzieścia dziewięć - twenty-nine
trzydzieści - thirty	czterdzieści - forty
pięćdziesiąt - fifty	sześćdziesiąt - sixty
siedemdziesiąt - seventy	osiemdziesiąt - eighty
dziewięćdziesiąt - ninety	sto - one hundred
pięćset - five hundred	tysiąc - one thousand
milion - one million	miliard - one billion

Chronology

czas	time
sekunda	second
minuta	minute
godzina	hour
dzień	day
tydzień	a week
miesiąc	month

rok	year
dziesięciolecie <i>or</i> dekada	decade
wiek <i>or</i> stulecie	a century
tysiąclecie	a millennium
styczeń	January
luty	February
marzec	March
kwiecień	April
maj	May
czerwiec	June
lipiec	July
sierpień	August
wrzesień	September
październik	October
listopad	November
grudzień	December

Weather

bardzo zimno	very cold
deszczowo	rainy
słonecznie	sunny
mokro	wet
pochmurnie	cloudy
wietrznie	windy
sucho	dry
gorąco	hot
duszno	muggy
żar leje się z nieba	it's boiling hot

Seasons

wiosna	Spring
lato	Summer
jesień	Autumn
zima	Winter

Environment

słoń	elephant
koń	horse
kot	cat
pies	dog
krowa	cow
wilk	wolf
świnia	pig
mucha	fly
osa	wasp
pszczola	bee
niedźwiedź	bear
ślimak	snail
jeż	hedgehog
komar	mosquito
sowa	owl
ptak	bird

ryba	fish
rekin	shark
pająk	spider
wieloryb	whale
motyl	butterfly
drzewo	tree
kwiat	flower
jezioro	lake
las	forest
morze	sea
niebo	sky
łąka	meadow
rzeka	river

Direction

lewo	left
prawo	right

góra	up
dół	down
przód	front
tył	back

Common phrases

Polska	Poland
Polak (m)/ Polka (f)	Pole (Polish person)
polski *	Polish
Cześć	Hi/Hello
Miłego dnia	Have a nice day
No exact equivalent Dzień dobry is used	Good Morning/Afternoon (good day)
Dobry wieczór	Good Evening
Do widzenia	Good bye (See you later)
Dziękuję	Thank you
Przepraszam	I'm sorry/Excuse me
Do zobaczenia/Na razie(informal)	See you later

Do jutra	See you tomorrow
Dobranoc	Good night
Dobra robota!	Good job!
Bardzo dobra robota!	Very good job!
Nieźle!	Nice (not too bad)
Nie ma mowy!	No way! (literally "there is no talk of it")
Jak leci?	What's up? (literally "how is it flying?")
Bardzo mi miło	Nice to meet you
Ile to kosztuje?	How much does this cost?
Jedno jabłko poproszę	One apple please
Siema	Hi/Hello (Slang)

Locations

dom	house/home
lotnisko	airport
dworzec	train station
szkoła	school

sklep	shop/store
zamek	castle
plaża	beach
miasto	city/town
wieś	village, country-side
kino	cinema/theater
kościół	church
rynek	market square
więzienie	prison/jail
poczta	post office
szkoła	school
cmentarz	cemetery
ulica	street

POLISH FOOD

Polish Cuisine (Polish: *kuchnia polska*) is a mixture of Slavic and foreign culinary traditions. Born as a mixture of various culinary traditions, both of various regions of Poland and surrounding cultures, it uses a fair variety of ingredients. It is rich in meat, especially pork, cabbage (for example in the dish bigos), and spices, as well as different kinds of noodles and dumplings, the most notable of which are the pierogi. It is related to other Slavic cuisines in usage of *kasza* and other cereals, but was also under the heavy influence of Turkic, Germanic, Hungarian, Jewish, French, Italian or colonial cuisines of the past. Generally speaking, Polish cuisine is substantial.

Poles allow themselves a generous amount of time to enjoy their meals, with some meals taking a number of days to prepare in their entirety.

A lunch on a special occasion is usually composed of three courses, starting with a soup, such as barszcz (beet) or żurek (sour rye meal mash), followed perhaps in a restaurant by an appetizer of salmon or herring (prepared in either cream, oil, or vinegar). Other popular appetizers are various meats, vegetables or fish in aspic. The main course may be sandwiches with lots of meat, including, ham, pork and so on. or kotlet schabowy (breaded pork cutlet). Meals often conclude with a dessert such as ice cream (*lody*), makowiec (poppy seed cake), or drożdżówka, a type of yeast cake. Other Polish specialities include chłodnik (a chilled beet or fruit soup for hot days), golonka (pork knuckles cooked with vegetables), kolduny (meat dumplings), zrazy (stuffed slices of beef), salceson and flaczki (tripe). ==National cuisine==

RELIGIOUS DEMOGRAPHY

Percentage of Polish citizens who say that they actively participate in religious ceremonies (denomination not mentioned): 68 percent.

- Number of Polish citizens who consider themselves Roman Catholics: 36,600,000 or 95 percent of the population.
- Number of Polish citizens who are Jewish but not necessarily religious: between 10,000 and 30,000.

Number of Polish citizens of other denominations:

- 554,860 Orthodox Church members;
- 122,982 Jehovah's Witnesses;
- 110,380 Uniates;
- 87,291 Lutherans (Augsburg);
- 25,904 Old Catholic Mariavits;
- 23,969 members of the Polish-Catholic Church;
- 17,966 Pentecostals;
- 6,720 Seventh-day Adventists;
- 5,894 Baptists;
- 5,438 members of the New Apostolic Church;
- 5,123 members of the Muslim Religious Union;
- 5,043 Hare Krishnas;
- 4,349 Methodists;
- 4,100 members of the Church of Christ;
- 3,980 Lutherans (Reformed);
- 3,011 Catholic Mariavits;
- 1,222 members of the Union of Jewish Communities;
- 950 members of the Eastern Old Ceremonial Church;
- 180 members of the Karaims Religious Union.

REFERENCES

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