

Fundamentals of Modern Belarusian

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While living in several former republics of the USSR, I learned to speak Russian, the *lingua franca* of CIS countries. Russian is spoken by the majority of adults in the CIS, and has served me well wherever I have traveled in the former Soviet Union. Russian is the dominant language in Belarus. Nevertheless, Belarusian still holds a prominent position in Belarusian society as a symbol of Belarusian identity and nationalism. Many government documents are printed only in Belarusian and most street signs are in Belarusian. Every schoolchild is required to learn the language, and almost all Belarusians can speak it at least to some extent. A knowledge of Belarusian is valuable to anyone who spends any amount of time in Belarus.

This book was written with the assumption that the reader is already moderately familiar with either Russian or Ukrainian. Little explanation is given of noun gender and cases, or verb aspect and tenses. The reader should consult either a Russian or Ukrainian grammar for more details on these principles. I have attempted, in this book, to thoroughly describe those parts of Belarusian grammar that differ from Russian or Ukrainian.

There is great variation in the Belarusian language from region to region, and any attempt to make an authoritative description of the Belarusian language will be plagued by this fact. I have strived to make this work as consistent as possible with the standard Belarusian used in most literature. To this end, I have set forth the most common declensions, conjugations, and vocabulary.

To my comrades of the Vitebskaya Banda

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Chapter 1

Spelling Rules

It is important to understand Belarusian spelling, which can be quite complex and more difficult than Russian. Most of the complexity of Belarusian morphology is a result of spelling rules. This problem is aggravated by the competition between two existing orthographies, or sets of spelling rules, called *Tarashkevitsa* and *Narkamouka*. *Tarashkevitsa* is older and more phonetically descriptive. *Narkamouka* was instituted by the Soviets and is more modern. I will refer to them simply as the “Classical” and “Modern” orthographies. I have chosen to use the Modern orthography throughout this work. I have noted in this chapter those ways in which the two differ.

1.1 Vowels

Belarusian has 10 letters representing vowel sounds. They can be divided into two categories, non-iotized vowels and their iotized counterparts. The letters in the second column represent the same sounds as the vowels in the first, but with an initial “y” sound. When a consonant precedes a vowel of the second column, it is palatized.

| | |
|---|---|
| а | я |
| о | ё |
| у | ю |
| ы | і |
| э | е |

1.2 Invariably Non-palatized Consonants

The letters **д**, **ж**, **р**, **т**, **ч**, and **ш** are never palatized, they cannot be followed by any letter from the second column. In a situation where a word’s morphology would normally place an iotized vowel after a **д** or a **т**, those consonants are changed to **дз** or **ц** respectively. In a situation where an iotized vowel would normally follow a **ж**, **р**, **ч**, or **ш**, that vowel is changed to its non-iotized counterpart. The consonants **г**, **к**, **х** are never followed by the letter **ы**. In a situation where an **ы** would normally occur, it is changed to an **і** if following one of these three letters.

| | | | |
|------------------|------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| б <u>я</u> да | <i>misery</i> | у б <u>я</u> дз <u>е</u> | <i>in misery</i> |
| га <u>р</u> а | <i>mountain</i> | на га <u>р</u> ы | <i>on the mountain</i> |
| мя <u>ж</u> а | <i>boundary</i> | на мя <u>ж</u> ы | <i>on the boundary</i> |
| пі <u>р</u> ог | <i>pastry</i> | піра <u>г</u> і | <i>pastries</i> |
| ра <u>ст</u> уць | <i>they grow</i> | ра <u>ст</u> це | <i>it grows</i> |

1.3 Stress and the vowels о, э, and ё

The letters о, э, and ё normally only exist when stressed. When unstressed, the letters о and э change to а. The letter ё usually changes to a е, but sometimes it also changes to a я. See 1.4 for more details on spelling rules that effect е. Care must be taken when stress shifts to a different syllable.

| | | |
|----------------|----------------|------------------|
| Sing. | Pl. | |
| во <u>л</u> | ва <u>л</u> ы | <i>ox</i> |
| са <u>с</u> на | со <u>с</u> ны | <i>pine tree</i> |
| сто <u>л</u> | ста <u>л</u> ы | <i>table</i> |

There are exceptions, all of which are loan words.

| | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| ра <u>д</u> ыё | <i>radio</i> |
| тэ <u>л</u> евізар | <i>television</i> |
| эка <u>н</u> оміка | <i>economy</i> |

1.4 Conversion of е to other vowels

Any е or ё, which immediately precedes the accent, is changed to я.

| | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| ад <u>з</u> ець | <i>to dress(per.)</i> | ад <u>з</u> яваць | <i>to dress(imp.)</i> |
| в <u>е</u> цер | <i>wind</i> | в <u>я</u> тры | <i>winds</i> |

Exceptions to this include семнаццаць, *seventeen*, as well as many loan words from other languages.

| | |
|------------------------------------|------------------|
| се <u>м</u> нацц <u>а</u> ць | <i>seventeen</i> |
| бе <u>н</u> зі <u>н</u> | <i>gasoline</i> |
| се <u>з</u> о <u>н</u> | <i>season</i> |
| э <u>л</u> ек <u>т</u> ро <u>н</u> | <i>electron</i> |

1.5 Conversion of о to ы

In words with the accent on the last syllable, it is common for a preceding syllable -ро- to change to -ры-.

| | | | |
|----------------|-----------------|---------------------------|------------------|
| бро <u>в</u> ы | <i>eyebrows</i> | бры <u>в</u> о | <i>eyebrow</i> |
| гро <u>м</u> | <i>thunder</i> | гры <u>м</u> е <u>ц</u> ь | <i>to rumble</i> |
| кро <u>в</u> ь | <i>blood</i> | кры <u>в</u> і | <i>of blood</i> |

1.6 The apostrophe

In Belarusian, this letter fills the function of the Russian letter **ъ**. It only occurs following a consonant, and preceding an iotized vowel. Having no sound of its own, its function is to separate the sound of the vowel following it from the consonant preceding it. This is either to prevent the consonant from being palatized, or to conform to spelling rules because the preceding consonant is invariably non-palatized.

| | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| аб'я <u>в</u> іць | <i>to declare</i> |
| п'я <u>н</u> ы | <i>intoxicated</i> |
| сур'ё <u>з</u> ны | <i>serious</i> |

1.7 Assimilation

Belarusian, like Russian, de-voices its consonants. Voiced consonants followed by unvoiced consonants are pronounced as unvoiced. Unvoiced consonants followed by voiced consonants are pronounced voiced. Consonants at the end of words are pronounced as unvoiced.

Belarusian has assimilation with respect to palatization. If a consonant is palatized, an immediately preceding consonant is also palatized, provided it is one of the eligible consonants. Only the consonants **дз, з, л, н, с,** and **ц** are eligible to be palatized in this way. The Classical orthography represents this palatization by placing a **ь** between the two palatized consonants. For the purposes of both assimilation and pronunciation, the letter combination **дз** is treated as a single letter. The consonants **б, в, м,** and **ф** are not palatized this way, but if they are followed by an iotized vowel, consonants that precede one of these letters can be palatized by assimilation. The invariably non-palatized consonants cannot be palatized, and will prevent those consonants preceding them from being palatized by assimilation. See section 1.2 for more on invariably non-palatized consonants. The pronunciation of a word does not change depending on which orthography is used to write it. Both the Modern and the Classical forms of a word are pronounced exactly the same.

| Modern | Classical | |
|-----------------|----------------------------|-----------------|
| дз <u>в</u> еры | дз <u>ь</u> в <u>ь</u> еры | <i>door</i> |
| ё <u>с</u> ць | ё <u>с</u> ць | <i>there is</i> |
| п <u>е</u> сня | п <u>е</u> сьня | <i>song</i> |

1.8 Rules for в, у, and ў

If the letter у occurs after a vowel, even if the vowel ends the previous word, it is written as an ў. This letter is pronounced like the English 'w'.

| | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Пайшла ў хлеў. | <i>She went into the shed.</i> |
| Стаіць у хляве. | <i>She is standing in the shed.</i> |
| Гэты хлеб увесь. | <i>This is all the bread.</i> |
| Гэта ўсё, што ёсць. | <i>That's all there is.</i> |
| Увайшлі яны ў хату. | <i>They went into the house.</i> |
| Я ўвайшоў у хату. | <i>I went into the house.</i> |

The letter в cannot occur, unless it is immediately followed by a vowel, otherwise, it must change to аў. The letter ў can precede iotized vowels, but is changed to а в if it precedes a non-iotized vowel. When preceding an iotized vowel, it is not always clear whether the consonant should be а в or an ў.

| | | | |
|--------|---------------|-----------|------------------------|
| любоў | <i>love</i> | любоўю | <i>with love</i> |
| справа | <i>affair</i> | спраў | <i>of the affairs</i> |
| хлеў | <i>shed</i> | за хлявом | <i>behind the shed</i> |
| хлеў | <i>shed</i> | у хляве | <i>in the shed</i> |

Belarusian words cannot normally begin with an о. Many words which would otherwise begin with an о instead have the letter в added to the beginning. If the о changes to an а due to an accent shift, the initial в often drops off.

| | | | |
|--------|----------------|-------|---------------|
| возера | <i>lake</i> | азёры | <i>lakes</i> |
| вокны | <i>windows</i> | акно | <i>window</i> |

There are exceptions to this rule, but they are all loan words.

| | | | |
|-------|-------------------------|-------|-------------------------|
| одум | <i>profound thought</i> | ордэн | <i>ceremonial order</i> |
| опера | <i>opera</i> | ордер | <i>warrant</i> |
| орган | <i>organ</i> | | |

Chapter 2

Noun Declension

Because of the complex nature of Belarusian spelling rules, I have attempted to give exhaustive examples of the different declensions. Most of the declensions are slight variations of one of the few basic declensions, differing only because of the manifestation of spelling rules. It should be noted that it is extremely common for a noun with accented endings in the singular to have unaccented endings in the plural, and vice-versa. Careful attention must also be paid to the points raised in **Chapter 3**.

2.1 Masculine nouns ending in a non-palatized consonant

Most masculine nouns with accented endings decline like стол, *table*.

| | Sing. | Pl. |
|--------|------------------|--------------------|
| Nom. | стол | стол <u>ы</u> |
| Acc. | стол | стол <u>ы</u> |
| Gen. | стол <u>а</u> | стол <u>о</u> ў |
| Dat. | стол <u>у</u> | стол <u>а</u> м |
| Instr. | стол <u>ом</u> | стол <u>а</u> мі |
| Prep. | на стол <u>е</u> | на стол <u>а</u> х |

| | |
|-------|-----------------|
| вугал | <i>corner</i> |
| лоб | <i>forehead</i> |

Most masculine nouns with unaccented endings decline like план, *plan*.

| | | |
|--------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Nom. | план | план <u>ы</u> |
| Acc. | план | план <u>ы</u> |
| Gen. | план <u>а</u> | план <u>а</u> ў |
| Dat. | план <u>у</u> | план <u>а</u> м |
| Instr. | план <u>ам</u> | план <u>а</u> мі |
| Prep. | у план <u>е</u> | у план <u>а</u> х |

| | |
|---------|--------------|
| аўтобус | <i>bus</i> |
| клас | <i>class</i> |

Masculine nouns with accented endings in **-д** or **-т** decline like *суд*, *judgment*. The final consonant becomes either **ц** or **дз** for the prepositional singular.

| | Sing. | Pl. |
|--------|----------|----------|
| Nom. | суд | суды |
| Acc. | суд | суды |
| Gen. | суда | судоў |
| Dat. | суду | судам |
| Instr. | судом | судамі |
| Prep. | на судзе | на судах |

| | |
|------|-------------|
| куст | <i>bush</i> |
| ліст | <i>leaf</i> |

Masculine nouns with accented endings in **-г**, **-к**, or **-х** decline like *пірог*, *pastry*.

| | | |
|--------|----------|-----------|
| Nom. | пірог | пірагі |
| Acc. | пірог | пірагі |
| Gen. | пірага | пірагоў |
| Dat. | пірагу | пірагам |
| Instr. | пірагом | пірагамі |
| Prep. | у пірагу | у пірагах |

| | |
|-----|-------------|
| бок | <i>side</i> |
| мех | <i>sack</i> |

Masculine nouns with unaccented endings in **-г**, **-к**, or **-х** decline like *гук*, *sound*.

| | | |
|--------|--------|--------|
| Nom. | гук | гукі |
| Acc. | гук | гукі |
| Gen. | гуку | гукі |
| Dat. | гуку | гукам |
| Instr. | гукам | гукамі |
| Prep. | у гукі | у гукі |

| | |
|-------|---------------|
| луг | <i>meadow</i> |
| страх | <i>fear</i> |

Masculine nouns with unaccented endings in **-д** or **-т** decline like **погляд**, *outlook*. This declension is just like for **план** except the final consonant becomes **ц** or **дз** for the prepositional singular.

| | Sing. | Pl. |
|--------|------------|------------|
| Nom. | погляд | погляды |
| Acc. | погляд | погляды |
| Gen. | погляду | поглядаў |
| Dat. | погляду | поглядам |
| Instr. | поглядам | поглядамі |
| Prep. | у поглядзе | у поглядах |

асфальт *asphalt*

Masculine nouns with accented endings in **-ж**, **-р**, **-ц**, **-ч**, or **-ш** decline like **двор**, *yard*.

| | | |
|--------|----------|-----------|
| Nom. | двор | двары |
| Acc. | двор | двары |
| Gen. | двара | двароў |
| Dat. | двару | дварам |
| Instr. | дваром | дварамі |
| Prep. | на двары | на дварах |

нож *knife*
канец *end*
мяч *ball*
кош *basket*

Masculine nouns with unaccented endings in **-ж**, **-р**, **-ц**, **-ч**, or **-ш** decline like **катэдж**, *cottage*.

| | | |
|--------|-----------|------------|
| Nom. | катэдж | катэджы |
| Acc. | катэдж | катэджы |
| Gen. | катэджа | катэджаў |
| Dat. | катэджу | катэджам |
| Instr. | катэджам | катэджамі |
| Prep. | у катэджы | у катэджах |

ровар *bicycle*
харч *food*
палец *finger*
аркуш *sheet of paper*

2.2 Masculine nouns ending in -ь or -й

Most nouns of this group with accented endings decline like пень, *stump*.

| | Sing. | Pl. |
|--------|----------------|-----------------|
| Nom. | п <u>ень</u> | п <u>ні</u> |
| Acc. | п <u>ень</u> | п <u>ні</u> |
| Gen. | п <u>ня</u> | п <u>нѐй</u> |
| Dat. | п <u>ню</u> | п <u>ням</u> |
| Instr. | п <u>нѐм</u> | п <u>нѐмі</u> |
| Prep. | на п <u>ні</u> | на п <u>нях</u> |

| | |
|---------------|---------------|
| аг <u>онь</u> | <i>fire</i> |
| руч <u>ай</u> | <i>stream</i> |

Nouns of this group with unaccented endings decline like партфель, *briefcase*.

| | | |
|--------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Nom. | парт <u>ф</u> ель | парт <u>ф</u> ел <u>і</u> |
| Acc. | парт <u>ф</u> ель | парт <u>ф</u> ел <u>і</u> |
| Gen. | парт <u>ф</u> ел <u>я</u> | парт <u>ф</u> ел <u>я</u> й |
| Dat. | парт <u>ф</u> ел <u>ю</u> | парт <u>ф</u> ел <u>я</u> м |
| Instr. | парт <u>ф</u> ел <u>ем</u> | парт <u>ф</u> ел <u>я</u> мі |
| Prep. | у парт <u>ф</u> ел <u>і</u> | у парт <u>ф</u> ел <u>я</u> х |

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------------|
| ау <u>т</u> амаб <u>і</u> ль | <i>automobile</i> |
| га <u>й</u> | <i>grove</i> |

2.3 Neuter nouns ending in -о or -а

Most neuter nouns ending in -о decline like крылоо, *wing*.

| | | |
|--------|----------------|-----------------|
| Nom. | крыло <u>о</u> | крыл <u>ы</u> |
| Acc. | крыло <u>о</u> | крыл <u>ы</u> |
| Gen. | крыла <u>а</u> | крыла <u>й</u> |
| Dat. | крылу <u>у</u> | крыла <u>м</u> |
| Instr. | крыло <u>м</u> | крыла <u>мі</u> |
| Prep. | крыле <u>у</u> | крыла <u>х</u> |

| | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| акно <u>о</u> | <i>window</i> |
| письмо <u>о</u> | <i>letter</i> |

Most neuter nouns ending in **-a** decline like кола, *wheel*.

| | Sing. | Pl. |
|--------|-----------------|------------------|
| Nom. | ко <u>ла</u> | ко <u>лы</u> |
| Acc. | ко <u>ла</u> | ко <u>лы</u> |
| Gen. | ко <u>ла</u> | ко <u>ла</u> ў |
| Dat. | ко <u>лу</u> | ко <u>лам</u> |
| Instr. | ко <u>лам</u> | ко <u>ла</u> мі |
| Prep. | на ко <u>ле</u> | на ко <u>лах</u> |

дрэва *tree*

Neuter nouns ending with **д** or **т** as the final consonant decline like крыло or кола, except the final consonant becomes **ц** or **дз** respectively for the prepositional singular.

| Nom. | Prep. | |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| гня <u>зд</u> о | гня <u>зд</u> э | <i>nest</i> |
| ж <u>ы</u> та | ж <u>ы</u> це | <i>rye</i> |
| ле <u>т</u> а | ле <u>т</u> це | <i>summer</i> |

Neuter nouns ending in **-га**, **-ка**, or **-ха** decline like воблака, *cloud*.

| | | |
|--------|---------------------|----------------------|
| Nom. | во <u>б</u> лака | во <u>б</u> лакі |
| Acc. | во <u>б</u> лака | во <u>б</u> лакі |
| Gen. | во <u>б</u> лака | во <u>б</u> лакаў |
| Dat. | во <u>б</u> лаку | во <u>б</u> лакам |
| Instr. | во <u>б</u> лакам | во <u>б</u> лакамі |
| Prep. | на во <u>б</u> лаку | на во <u>б</u> лаках |

рэха *echo*

Neuter nouns ending in **-жо**, **-ро**, **-цо**, **-чо**, or **-шо** decline like вядро, *bucket*.

| | | |
|--------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Nom. | в <u>я</u> дро | в <u>я</u> дры |
| Acc. | в <u>я</u> дро | в <u>я</u> дры |
| Gen. | в <u>я</u> дра | в <u>я</u> драў |
| Dat. | в <u>я</u> дру | в <u>я</u> драм |
| Instr. | в <u>я</u> дро <u>м</u> | в <u>я</u> дра <u>мі</u> |
| Prep. | на в <u>я</u> дры | на в <u>я</u> драх |

ружжо *gun*
яйцо *egg*
плячо *shoulder*

Neuter nouns ending in **-жа, -ра, -ца, -ча, or -ша** decline like **акенца**, *small window*.

| | Sing. | Pl. |
|--------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Nom. | акен <u>ц</u> а | акен <u>ц</u> ы |
| Acc. | акен <u>ц</u> а | акен <u>ц</u> ы |
| Gen. | акен <u>ц</u> а | акен <u>ц</u> аў |
| Dat. | акен <u>ц</u> у | акен <u>ц</u> ам |
| Instr. | акен <u>ц</u> ам | акен <u>ц</u> амі |
| Prep. | на акен <u>ц</u> ы | на акен <u>ц</u> ах |

| | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| м <u>о</u> ра | <i>sea</i> |
| абліч <u>ч</u> а | <i>countenance</i> |
| падстрэ <u>ш</u> ша | <i>eaves</i> |

2.4 Neuter nouns ending in **-ё** or **-е**

Neuter nouns ending in **-ё** decline like **жыццё**, *life*.

| | Sing. | Pl. |
|--------|------------------|--------------------|
| Nom. | жыцц <u>ё</u> | жыцц <u>і</u> |
| Acc. | жыцц <u>ё</u> | жыцц <u>і</u> |
| Gen. | жыцц <u>я</u> | жыцц <u>я</u> ў |
| Dat. | жыцц <u>ю</u> | жыцц <u>ям</u> |
| Instr. | жыцц <u>ём</u> | жыцц <u>ямі</u> |
| Prep. | на жыцц <u>і</u> | на жыцц <u>я</u> х |

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------------|
| галл <u>ё</u> | <i>piece of firewood</i> |
| пачуцц <u>ё</u> | <i>sense</i> |

Neuter nouns ending in **-е** decline like **пакаленне**, *generation*.

| | | |
|--------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Nom. | пакал <u>ен</u> не | пакал <u>ен</u> ня |
| Acc. | пакал <u>ен</u> не | пакал <u>ен</u> ня |
| Gen. | пакал <u>ен</u> ня | пакал <u>ен</u> няў |
| Dat. | пакал <u>ен</u> ню | пакал <u>ен</u> ням |
| Instr. | пакал <u>ен</u> нем | пакал <u>ен</u> нямі |
| Prep. | у пакал <u>ен</u> ні | у пакал <u>ен</u> нях |

| | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| выкл <u>юч</u> энне | <i>exception</i> |
|---------------------|------------------|

2.5 Neuter nouns ending in –мя

There are seven nouns of this group. They decline like стрэмя, *stirrup*. Many of these nouns have no plural form.

| | Sing. | Pl. |
|--------|-----------|--------------|
| Nom. | стрэмя | страмёны |
| Acc. | стрэмя | страмёны |
| Gen. | стрэмя | страмёнаў |
| Dat. | стрэмяю | страмёнам |
| Instr. | стрэмам | страмёнамі |
| Prep. | аб стрэмі | аб страмёнах |

| | |
|--------|--------------------|
| бярэмя | <i>armful</i> |
| вымя | <i>udder</i> |
| племя | <i>tribe</i> |
| полымя | <i>flame</i> |
| семя | <i>seed</i> |
| цемя | <i>top of head</i> |

2.6 Neuter nouns ending in –я

Nouns of this type decline like цяля, *calf*. All are animate and represent animal young.

| | | |
|--------|-----------|------------|
| Nom. | цяля | цяляты |
| Acc. | цяля | цялят |
| Gen. | цяляці | цялят |
| Dat. | цяляці | цялятах |
| Instr. | цялям | цялятамі |
| Prep. | аб цяляці | аб цялятах |

| | |
|--------|---------------|
| парася | <i>piglet</i> |
| жарабя | <i>foal</i> |

2.7 Feminine nouns ending in –а

Most nouns of this group with accented endings decline like сцяна, *wall*.

| | Sing. | Pl. |
|--------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Nom. | сця <u>на</u> | сц <u>е</u> ны |
| Acc. | сця <u>н</u> у | сц <u>е</u> ны |
| Gen. | сця <u>н</u> ы | сц <u>е</u> н |
| Dat. | сця <u>н</u> е | сц <u>е</u> нам |
| Instr. | сця <u>н</u> ой | сц <u>е</u> намі |
| Prep. | на сця <u>н</u> е | на сц <u>е</u> нах |

| | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| гала <u>в</u> а | <i>head</i> |
| сас <u>н</u> а | <i>pine tree</i> |

Most nouns of this group with unaccented endings decline like галіна, *branch*.

| | | |
|--------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Nom. | галі <u>н</u> а | галі <u>н</u> ы |
| Acc. | галі <u>н</u> у | галі <u>н</u> ы |
| Gen. | галі <u>н</u> ы | галі <u>н</u> |
| Dat. | галі <u>н</u> е | галі <u>н</u> ам |
| Instr. | галі <u>н</u> ай | галі <u>н</u> амі |
| Prep. | на галі <u>н</u> е | на галі <u>н</u> ах |

| | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| бу <u>л</u> ьба | <i>potatoe</i> |
| кра <u>м</u> а | <i>store</i> |

Nouns of this group with **д** or **т** as the final consonant decline like сцяна or галіна, except the final consonant becomes **ц** or **дз** respectively for the prepositional singular.

| | | |
|-----------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Nom. Sing. | Dat. & Prep. | |
| плі <u>т</u> а | плі <u>ц</u> е | <i>slab</i> |
| хат <u>а</u> | хат <u>ц</u> е | <i>home</i> |
| ва <u>д</u> а | ва <u>дз</u> е | <i>water</i> |
| бяс <u>е</u> да | бяс <u>е</u> дзэ | <i>discussion</i> |

Nouns of this group with the accented endings **-га**, **-ка**, or **-ха** decline like **нага**, *leg*. The ending changes to **-зе**, **-цэ**, or **-це** respectively, for the prepositional and dative singular.

| | Sing. | Pl. | |
|--------|------------------|---------------------------|-------------|
| Nom. | на <u>г</u> а | но <u>г</u> і | |
| Acc. | на <u>г</u> у | но <u>г</u> і | |
| Gen. | на <u>г</u> і | но <u>г</u> | |
| Dat. | на <u>з</u> е | на <u>г</u> а <u>м</u> | |
| Instr. | на <u>г</u> ой | на <u>г</u> а <u>м</u> і | |
| Prep. | на на <u>з</u> е | на на <u>г</u> а <u>х</u> | |
| | Nom. | Prep. & Dat. | |
| | стра <u>х</u> а | стра <u>с</u> е | <i>roof</i> |
| | ру <u>к</u> а | ру <u>ц</u> э | <i>arm</i> |

Nouns of this group with the unaccented endings **-га**, **-ка**, or **-ха** decline like **дарога**, *road*. The ending changes to **-зе**, **-цы**, or **-це** respectively, for the prepositional and dative singular.

| | | | |
|--------|--------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Nom. | даро <u>г</u> а | даро <u>г</u> і | |
| Acc. | даро <u>г</u> у | даро <u>г</u> і | |
| Gen. | даро <u>г</u> і | даро <u>г</u> | |
| Dat. | даро <u>з</u> е | даро <u>г</u> а <u>х</u> | |
| Instr. | даро <u>г</u> ай | даро <u>г</u> а <u>м</u> і | |
| Prep. | на даро <u>з</u> е | на даро <u>г</u> а <u>х</u> | |
| | Nom. | Prep. & Dat. | |
| | скру <u>х</u> а | скру <u>с</u> е | <i>sadness</i> |
| | зо <u>р</u> ка | зо <u>р</u> цы | <i>star</i> |

Nouns of this group with the accented endings **-жа**, **-ра**, **-ча**, **-ца** or **-ша** decline like **мяжа**, *boundary*.

| | Sing. | Pl. | |
|--------|---------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| Nom. | мя <u>ж</u> а | ме <u>ж</u> ы | |
| Acc. | мя <u>ж</u> у | ме <u>ж</u> ы | |
| Gen. | мя <u>ж</u> ы | ме <u>ж</u> а <u>ў</u> | |
| Dat. | мя <u>ж</u> ы | ме <u>ж</u> а <u>м</u> | |
| Instr. | мя <u>ж</u> ой | ме <u>ж</u> а <u>м</u> і | |
| Prep. | на мя <u>ж</u> ы | на ме <u>ж</u> а <u>х</u> | |
| | га <u>р</u> а | <i>mountain</i> | |
| | ка <u>л</u> ан <u>ч</u> а | <i>observation tower</i> | |
| | ду <u>ш</u> а | <i>soul</i> | |

Nouns of this group with the unaccented endings –жа, -ра, -ча, -ца or –ша decline like ма́ра, *dream*.

| | Sing. | Pl. |
|--------|----------|-----------|
| Nom. | ма́ра | ма́ры |
| Acc. | ма́ру | ма́ры |
| Gen. | ма́ры | ма́раў |
| Dat. | ма́ры | ма́рам |
| Instr. | ма́рай | ма́рамі |
| Prep. | на ма́ры | на ма́рах |

| | |
|---------|-----------------|
| вежа | <i>spire</i> |
| ра́ніца | <i>morning</i> |
| ану́ча | <i>rag</i> |
| ка́ша | <i>porridge</i> |

2.8 Feminine nouns ending in –я

Nouns of this group with accented endings decline like зямля́, *land*.

| | | |
|--------|-----------|------------|
| Nom. | зя́мля | зе́млі |
| Acc. | зя́млю | зе́млі |
| Gen. | зя́млі | зе́мляў |
| Dat. | зя́млі | зе́млям |
| Instr. | зя́млёй | зе́млямі |
| Prep. | на зя́млі | на зе́млях |

| | |
|--------|---------------|
| сям'я́ | <i>family</i> |
|--------|---------------|

Nouns of this group with unaccented endings decline like лі́нія, *line*.

| | | |
|--------|-----------|------------|
| Nom. | лі́нія | лі́ніі |
| Acc. | лі́нію | лі́ніі |
| Gen. | лі́ніі | лі́ніяў |
| Dat. | лі́ніі | лі́ніям |
| Instr. | лі́ніяй | лі́ніямі |
| Prep. | на лі́ніі | на лі́ніях |

| | |
|---------|---------------|
| ку́ля | <i>bullet</i> |
| па́ртыя | <i>party</i> |

2.9 Feminine nouns ending in -ь or consonant

There are a couple of points that must be noted for these nouns. If the final consonant is preceded by a vowel, it is doubled in the instrumental singular. If the genitive plural ending is accented, it will be -ей or -эй, otherwise it will be -аў or -яў.

Nouns of this group with the ending -ь decline like *связь*, *connection*.

| | Sing. | Pl. |
|--------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Nom. | с <u>в</u> язь | с <u>в</u> язі |
| Acc. | с <u>в</u> язь | с <u>в</u> язі |
| Gen. | с <u>в</u> язі | с <u>в</u> язяў |
| Dat. | с <u>в</u> язі | с <u>в</u> язям |
| Instr. | с <u>в</u> яззю | с <u>в</u> язямі |
| Prep. | на с <u>в</u> язі | на с <u>в</u> язях |

| | |
|-----------------|-------------|
| рад <u>а</u> ць | <i>joy</i> |
| сол <u>ь</u> | <i>salt</i> |

Nouns of this group with the endings -ж, -р, -ч, or -ш decline like *ноч*, *night*.

| | | |
|--------|-----------------|------------------|
| Nom. | но <u>ч</u> | но <u>ч</u> ы |
| Acc. | но <u>ч</u> | но <u>ч</u> ы |
| Gen. | но <u>ч</u> ы | нач <u>э</u> й |
| Dat. | но <u>ч</u> ы | нач <u>а</u> м |
| Instr. | но <u>ч</u> чу | нач <u>а</u> мі |
| Prep. | у но <u>ч</u> ы | у нач <u>а</u> х |

| | |
|-----------------|----------------------|
| вупр <u>а</u> ж | <i>bridled horse</i> |
| мыш | <i>mouse</i> |

Chapter 3

Additional Points on Noun Declension

3.1 Accusative form of animate nouns

The accusative form of plural animate nouns is identical the genitive, not the nominative case. Adjectives describing these nouns take the genitive ending.

Пастух збірає свайх кароў.

The herdsman gathers his cows.

Туды дзяўчат пасылалі.

That's where we sent the girls.

Прасіў у яго, не за сябе, за двух
маленькіх дзетак.

*I asked him, not for myself, but for two
little kids.*

The accusative case is identical to the genitive for singular masculine animate nouns as well. Corresponding adjectives take the genitive ending.

Яна прыдбае новага мужа.

She will get a new husband.

Ён перажываў за старэйшага брата.

He was worried about his older brother.

Паважанага пешахода ігнаруюць і
прыгнятаюць пошлыя вадзіцелі.

*The respected pedestrian is ignored and
oppressed by common drivers.*

3.2 Masculine genitive singular endings а/я versus у/ю

There are two groups of masculine nouns. One of these groups has genitive singular endings of а and я, the other group has genitive singular endings of у, and ю. There is no easy way to tell to which group any given noun belongs.

Nouns with the genitive singular endings -а or -я are typically words that can be described in English with the word “many.” These nouns are often concrete, countable objects.

- Nouns denoting people, animals, and body parts
- Units of measurement and currency
- Geographical concepts

брата

of the brother

малатка

of the hammer

грама

of the gram

пальца

of the finger

дня

of the day

перашыйка

of the isthmus

кантынэнта

of the continent

рубля

of the ruble

каня

of the horse

чалавека

of the person

Nouns with the genitive singular endings –y or –ю are typically words that are used in the partitive sense. In other words, some portion of a whole is implied. Typically, such words represent more abstract ideas. They can usually be described in English with the word “much.” If a word in English cannot have an article like “the” applied to it, it will have the –y or –ю genitive ending in Belarusian.

- Nouns that denote a group, gathering, or collection of other things
- Natural phenomena, characteristics, actions, and spatial directions
- Emotions, senses, and abstract concepts
- Substances and other nouns that can be described in English by the word “much”

| | | | |
|---------|--------------------------|--------|--------------------|
| выгляду | <i>of the glance</i> | роду | <i>of the type</i> |
| дажджу | <i>of rain</i> | сну | <i>of sleep</i> |
| жалю | <i>of pity</i> | страху | <i>of fear</i> |
| колеру | <i>of color</i> | усходу | <i>of the east</i> |
| набору | <i>of the collection</i> | халаду | <i>of the cold</i> |
| натоўпу | <i>of the crowd</i> | цукру | <i>of sugar</i> |

3.3 Genitive plural endings

It is often very difficult to predict the genitive plural endings of nouns. The genitive plural form must be memorized for every feminine noun, and for masculine nouns ending in –ь.

Feminine nouns ending in –а or –я are the most problematic.

| | | | | | |
|--------|-------|------------------------|-------|--------|------------------------|
| вежа | вежаў | <i>of the spires</i> | зямля | земляў | <i>of the lands</i> |
| галава | галоў | <i>of the heads</i> | крама | крамаў | <i>of the shops</i> |
| галіна | галін | <i>of the branches</i> | лінія | ліній | <i>of the lines</i> |
| зорка | зорак | <i>of the stars</i> | сям'я | сем'яў | <i>of the families</i> |

Masculine nouns ending in –ь also have this issue.

| | | | | | |
|-------|--------|----------------------|--------|--------|----------------------|
| госць | гасцей | <i>of the guests</i> | локаць | локцяў | <i>of the elbows</i> |
| конь | коней | <i>of the horses</i> | пень | пнёў | <i>of the stumps</i> |

Some nouns can have either ending.

| | | |
|-------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| мяжа | меж or межаў | <i>of the boundaries</i> |
| сасна | сосен or соснаў | <i>of the pine-trees</i> |
| хата | хат or хатаў | <i>of the cottages</i> |

3.4 Irregular prepositional endings

Many masculine and neuter nouns with unaccented endings whose final consonant *г* or *х*, have irregular prepositional singular endings. The final consonant morphs into **з** or **ц** respectively.

| | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| бе <u>ра</u> г | на бе <u>ра</u> зе | <i>on the shore</i> |
| ве <u>р</u> х | на ве <u>р</u> се | <i>on top</i> |
| ка <u>ж</u> ух | у ка <u>ж</u> у <u>се</u> * | <i>in the leather jacket</i> |
| лу <u>г</u> | на лу <u>г</u> зе | <i>in the field</i> |
| нач <u>ле</u> г | на нач <u>ле</u> зе | <i>in the lodgings</i> |
| па <u>ро</u> г | на па <u>ро</u> зе | <i>on the threshold</i> |
| сне <u>г</u> | на сне <u>г</u> зе | <i>on the snow</i> |
| сто <u>г</u> | на сто <u>г</u> зе | <i>on the haystack</i> |

*The form *у кажуху* is equally common.

The following masculine and neuter nouns have irregular prepositional forms.

| | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| бра <u>т</u> | аб бра <u>т</u> у | <i>about the brother</i> |
| го <u>р</u> б | на го <u>р</u> бу | <i>on the hump</i> |
| ме <u>ч</u> | на мя <u>ч</u> ы | <i>on the sword</i> |
| по <u>ст</u> | на па <u>ст</u> у | <i>at the watch-post</i> |
| хо <u>д</u> | на ха <u>д</u> у | <i>in motion</i> |
| гну <u>зд</u> о | у гну <u>зд</u> э | <i>in the nest</i> |
| мала <u>к</u> о | у мала <u>к</u> э | <i>in milk</i> |
| рэ <u>х</u> а | у рэ <u>с</u> е | <i>in the echo</i> |

3.5 Feminine Instrumental Ending Variation

There exists a variation of the instrumental ending for feminine nouns ending in *-а* or *-я*. This alternate ending is created by replacing the final *-й* with a *-ю*. This variation is common, but is non-standard and should be avoided by the non-native speaker. This variation extends to adjectives and pronouns as well.

| | |
|--|--|
| Бабу <u>л</u> я то <u>ль</u> кі га <u>ла</u> вою па <u>кі</u> вала. | <i>The old lady just shook her head.</i> |
| Я пай <u>д</u> у з та <u>бо</u> й ра <u>з</u> ам. | <i>I will go together with you.</i> |
| З пэ <u>ў</u> наю перас <u>ц</u> яро <u>г</u> ай ў ду <u>ш</u> ы, Бу <u>ра</u> у пераступі <u>ў</u> і другі па <u>ро</u> г. | <i>With definite caution in his soul, Burau crossed the second doorway also.</i> |

3.6 Gender and declension disagreement

Masculine animate nouns ending in **-а** or **-я** do not decline like other masculine nouns. If the accent falls on the ending, the word declines exactly as though it were feminine. If the accent falls on the stem, the word has feminine endings for the nominative, accusative, and genitive singular cases, but has masculine endings for all remaining cases. Note the examples of **бацька**, *father*, and **тата**, *dad*.

| | Sing. | Pl. | Sing. | Pl. |
|--------|-----------|------------|---------|--------|
| Nom. | бацька | бацькі | тата | таты |
| Acc. | бацьку | бацькоў | тату | татаў |
| Gen. | бацькі | бацькоў | таты | татаў |
| Dat. | бацьку | бацькам | тату | татам |
| Instr. | бацькам | бацькамі | татам | татамі |
| Prep. | аб бацьку | аб бацьках | аб таце | татах |

| | |
|--------|----------------|
| сабака | <i>dog</i> |
| слуга | <i>servant</i> |
| суддзя | <i>judge</i> |

3.7 Declension misfits

Some nouns do not fit well in the normal declension patterns. These include the neuter noun **дзіця**, *child*, and the feminine nouns **любоў**, *love*, and **кроў**, *blood*.

| | | | | |
|--------|------------|-----------|-----------|---------|
| Nom. | дзіця | дзеці | любоў | кроў |
| Acc. | дзіця | дзяцей | любоў | кроў |
| Gen. | дзіцяці | дзяцей | любові | крыві |
| Dat. | дзіцяці | дзецям | любові | крыві |
| Instr. | дзіцём | дзецьмі | любоўю | крывёй |
| Prep. | аб дзіцяці | аб дзецях | аб любові | у крыві |

There are many nouns, mostly foreign words, which do not decline. They have the same form, regardless of case or number.

| | |
|------|---------------|
| маці | <i>mother</i> |
| пані | <i>Mrs.</i> |

Chapter 4

Irregular Plurals

4.1 Words with no plural form

Many words have only a singular form. Most of these words have no plural in English either. Included are things like substances, proper nouns, and ideas.

| | | | |
|--------|---------------|----------|------------------|
| бульба | <i>potato</i> | сонца | <i>sun</i> |
| вецер | <i>wind</i> | спакой | <i>stillness</i> |
| ліха | <i>evil</i> | сярэзіна | <i>middle</i> |

Most neuter nouns ending in *-мя* have no plural form.

| | | | |
|--------|---------------|------|--------------------|
| бярэмя | <i>armful</i> | семя | <i>seed</i> |
| вымя | <i>udder</i> | цемя | <i>top of head</i> |
| полымя | <i>flame</i> | | |

4.2 Words with no singular form

Many words have only a plural form.

| | | | |
|----------|----------------------|-----------|--------------------------|
| абцугі | <i>pincers</i> | каноплі | <i>hemp</i> |
| акуляры | <i>eyeglasses</i> | кпіны | <i>laughter</i> |
| арэлі | <i>child's swing</i> | крупы | <i>porridge</i> |
| выбары | <i>election</i> | людзі | <i>people</i> |
| грошы | <i>money</i> | нетры | <i>depths</i> |
| грудзі | <i>chest</i> | паводзіны | <i>behavior</i> |
| джунглі | <i>jungle</i> | прысмакі | <i>hors d'oeuvres</i> |
| дзверы | <i>door</i> | сані | <i>sled</i> |
| дровы | <i>firewood</i> | суткі | <i>twenty-four hours</i> |
| забабоны | <i>superstition</i> | шахматы | <i>chess</i> |
| зносіны | <i>relations</i> | штаны | <i>pants</i> |

4.3 Irregular plurals

The plural forms of these words have different stems than the singular forms.

Masc.

| Sing. | | Pl. | Gen. Pl. |
|-------|------------------|------------------|--------------------------|
| пан | <i>gentleman</i> | пан <u>о</u> ве | пан <u>о</u> ў |
| сусед | <i>neighbor</i> | сусед <u>з</u> і | сусед <u>з</u> яў |
| чорт | <i>devil</i> | ч <u>э</u> рці | ч <u>э</u> рц <u>э</u> й |

Neut.

| | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| во <u>к</u> а | <i>eye</i> | во <u>ч</u> ы | ва <u>ч</u> э <u>й</u> |
| ву <u>х</u> а | <i>ear</i> | ву <u>ш</u> ы | ву <u>ш</u> э <u>й</u> |
| зе <u>р</u> не | <i>grain</i> | зе <u>р</u> ня <u>т</u> ы | зе <u>р</u> ня <u>т</u> |
| ка <u>л</u> е <u>н</u> а | <i>knee</i> | ка <u>л</u> е <u>н</u> і | ка <u>л</u> е <u>н</u> я <u>ў</u> |
| не <u>б</u> а | <i>sky/heaven</i> | не <u>б</u> э <u>с</u> ы | не <u>б</u> э <u>с</u> а <u>ў</u> |

Fem.

| | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| дзе <u>ў</u> чы <u>н</u> а | <i>girl</i> | дзе <u>ў</u> ч <u>э</u> т <u>ы</u> | дзе <u>ў</u> ч <u>э</u> т |
| ку <u>р</u> ы <u>ц</u> а | <i>chicken</i> | ку <u>р</u> ы | ку <u>р</u> э <u>й</u> |

4.4 Nouns ending in -ін

These animate nouns denote types of people. Other than the nominative plural ending, the rest of the plural endings are the same as for other nouns. The genitive plural ending is **-аў** and is unaccented.

| Masc. | Fem. | | Pl. |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
| гара <u>д</u> жа <u>н</u> і <u>н</u> | гара <u>д</u> жа <u>н</u> ка | <i>townsperson</i> | гара <u>д</u> жа <u>н</u> е |
| грама <u>д</u> зя <u>н</u> і <u>н</u> | грама <u>д</u> зя <u>н</u> ка | <i>citizen</i> | грама <u>д</u> зя <u>н</u> е |
| мешча <u>н</u> і <u>н</u> | мяшча <u>н</u> ка | <i>aristocrat</i> | мяшча <u>н</u> е |
| палача <u>н</u> і <u>н</u> | палача <u>н</u> ка | <i>courtier</i> | палача <u>н</u> е |
| селя <u>н</u> і <u>н</u> | сяля <u>н</u> ка | <i>villager</i> | сяля <u>н</u> е |
| славя <u>н</u> і <u>н</u> | славя <u>н</u> ка | <i>slav</i> | славя <u>н</u> е |
| хрысція <u>н</u> і <u>н</u> | хрысція <u>н</u> ка | <i>christian</i> | хрысція <u>н</u> е |
| тата <u>р</u> ы <u>н</u> | тата <u>р</u> ка | <i>tatar</i> | тата <u>р</u> ы |

Chapter 5

Adjective Declension

Adjectives generally match the gender and case of the noun they describe. As mentioned in **Section 3.1**, the accusative case of animate masculine nouns and plural nouns is identical to the genitive case. Consistent with this, adjectives describing these nouns also have accusative endings identical with the genitive case.

5.1 Non-palatized stem adjectives

These adjectives with accented endings decline like *малады*, *young*.

| | Masc. | Neut. | Fem. | Pl. |
|--------|------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| Nom. | малады | маладо <u>е</u> | малада <u>я</u> | малады <u>я</u> |
| Acc. | малады (-о <u>га</u>) | маладо <u>е</u> | маладу <u>ю</u> | малады <u>я</u> (-ы <u>х</u>) |
| Gen. | маладо <u>га</u> | маладо <u>га</u> | маладо <u>й</u> | малады <u>х</u> |
| Dat. | маладо <u>му</u> | маладо <u>му</u> | маладо <u>й</u> | малады <u>м</u> |
| Instr. | малады <u>м</u> | малады <u>м</u> | маладо <u>й</u> | малады <u>мі</u> |
| Prep. | аб малады <u>м</u> | аб малады <u>м</u> | аб маладо <u>й</u> | аб малады <u>х</u> |

These adjectives with unaccented endings decline like *чырвоны*, *red*.

| | | | | |
|--------|---------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|
| Nom. | чырво <u>ны</u> | чырво <u>нае</u> | чырво <u>ная</u> | чырво <u>ныя</u> |
| Acc. | чырво <u>ны</u> (-а <u>га</u>) | чырво <u>нае</u> | чырво <u>ную</u> | чырво <u>ныя</u> (-ы <u>х</u>) |
| Gen. | чырво <u>нага</u> | чырво <u>нага</u> | чырво <u>най</u> | чырво <u>ных</u> |
| Dat. | чырво <u>наму</u> | чырво <u>наму</u> | чырво <u>най</u> | чырво <u>ным</u> |
| Instr. | чырво <u>ным</u> | чырво <u>ным</u> | чырво <u>най</u> | чырво <u>нымі</u> |
| Prep. | аб чырво <u>ным</u> | аб чырво <u>ным</u> | аб чырво <u>най</u> | аб чырво <u>ных</u> |

Adjectives with accented endings of *-гі*, *-кі*, or *-хі* decline like *другі*, *second*.

| | | | | |
|--------|-------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|
| Nom. | дру <u>гі</u> | дру <u>гое</u> | дру <u>гая</u> | дру <u>гія</u> |
| Acc. | дру <u>гі</u> (-о <u>га</u>) | дру <u>гое</u> | дру <u>гую</u> | дру <u>гія</u> (-и <u>х</u>) |
| Gen. | дру <u>гога</u> | дру <u>гога</u> | дру <u>гой</u> | дру <u>гіх</u> |
| Dat. | дру <u>гому</u> | дру <u>гому</u> | дру <u>гой</u> | дру <u>гім</u> |
| Instr. | дру <u>гім</u> | дру <u>гім</u> | дру <u>гой</u> | дру <u>гімі</u> |
| Prep. | аб дру <u>гім</u> | аб дру <u>гім</u> | аб дру <u>гой</u> | аб дру <u>гіх</u> |

Adjectives, with unaccented endings of *-гі, -кі, or -хі*, decline like *хуткі, fast*.

| | | | | |
|--------|--------------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| Nom. | хуткі | хуткае | хуткая | хуткія |
| Acc. | хуткі (-ага) | хуткае | хуткую | хуткія (-іх) |
| Gen. | хуткага | хуткага | хуткай | хуткіх |
| Dat. | хуткаму | хуткаму | хуткай | хуткім |
| Instr. | хуткім | хуткім | хуткай | хуткімі |
| Prep. | аб хуткім | аб хуткім | аб хуткай | аб хуткіх |

5.2 Palatized stem adjectives

Adjectives, whose stem ends in a palatized consonant, decline like *апошні, last*.

| | | | | |
|--------|---------------|------------|------------|---------------|
| | Masc. | Neut. | Fem. | Pl. |
| Nom. | апошні | апошняе | апошняя | апошнія |
| Acc. | апошні (-яга) | апошняе | апошнюю | апошнія (-іх) |
| Gen. | апошняга | апошняга | апошняй | апошніх |
| Dat. | апошняму | апошняму | апошняй | апошнім |
| Instr. | апошнім | апошнім | апошняй | апошнімі |
| Prep. | аб апошнім | аб апошнім | аб апошняй | аб апошніх |

5.3 Adjective ending variation

The adjectives declined above have the most current and accepted endings, but variations do exist. One common variation replaces the final *-й* of the feminine prepositional ending with a *-ю*. See **Section 3.5** for more on how this variation affects nouns. Another variation replaces the final *-й* of the feminine genitive ending with a *-е*. Although these variations do exist, they are non-standard and should be avoided by the non-native speaker.

5.3 Short adjectives

The use of short adjectives is much more rare in Belarusian than in Russian, being used almost exclusively for the neuter third person impersonal. As in Russian, such adjectives are only used predicatively. The neuter form of the short adjective is identical to the adverb. See **Chapter 29** for more on adverb formation.

Only a very few adjectives can take a short form for anything other than the third person impersonal. These include *гатовы, ready*, and *рады, glad*. The word *павінен*, which translates as *should*, has no long form and can only be used as a short adjective.

The forms of the most common short adjectives are given below, along with some examples.

| Masc. | Neut. | Fem. | Pl. |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| гато <u>ў</u> | гато <u>ва</u> | гато <u>ва</u> | гато <u>вы</u> |
| паві <u>н</u> ен | паві <u>н</u> на | паві <u>н</u> на | паві <u>н</u> ны |
| рад | ра <u>д</u> а | ра <u>д</u> а | ра <u>д</u> ы |

Будзь гатоў! — Заўжды гатоў!
Я рада, што пакінуў.
Яна павінна адразу сказаць ім.

Be prepared! — Always prepared!
I am glad that he left.
She should immediately tell him.

Было маркотна, калі ён не прыйшоў.
Мы дужа працавалі, каб усё
было зроблена ў час.

It was sad when he did not come.
We worked hard so that everything
was done on time.

The long adjective is usually used if the subject is not the neuter third person impersonal.

Пакой поўны людзей.
Яна не абавязана дапамагчы яму.

The room is full of people.
She is not obligated to help him.

Chapter 6

Comparative and Superlative Adjectives

Only qualitative adjectives can have a superlative or comparative form. If an English adjective can be used comparatively or superlatively, the equivalent Belarusian adjective most likely can as well. By the same token, if the English adjective cannot be used comparatively or superlatively, the Belarusian adjective probably cannot also.

6.1 Short comparative adjective formation

The short comparative form of an adjective is identical to the comparative adverb. The comparative adverb is formed by removing the final *-ы* or *-і* and replacing it with an accented *-ей*. See 29.4 for more on the comparative adverb.

| | | | |
|----------|------------------|-----------|-----------------------|
| бедны | <i>poor</i> | бядней | <i>poorer</i> |
| белы | <i>white</i> | бялей | <i>whiter</i> |
| важны | <i>important</i> | важней | <i>more important</i> |
| вольны | <i>free</i> | вальней | <i>more free</i> |
| вясёлы | <i>fun</i> | вясялей | <i>more fun</i> |
| дакладны | <i>precise</i> | дакладней | <i>more precise</i> |
| ранні | <i>early</i> | раней | <i>earlier</i> |

If the last consonant of the adjective is invariably non-palatized, the final *-ы* is replaced with *-эй*.

| | | | |
|---------|------------------|----------|-----------------------|
| мудры | <i>wise</i> | мудрэй | <i>wiser</i> |
| прыгожы | <i>beautiful</i> | прыгажэй | <i>more beautiful</i> |
| хітры | <i>cunning</i> | хітрэй | <i>more cunning</i> |

For adjectives ending in *-ты* or *-ды*, the ending is removed and replaced with one of the accented endings *-цей* or *-дзеі* respectively.

| | | | |
|--------|-----------------------|----------|------------------------------|
| багаты | <i>rich</i> | багацей | <i>richer</i> |
| густы | <i>thick, viscous</i> | гусцей | <i>thicker, more viscous</i> |
| жоўты | <i>yellow</i> | жаўцей | <i>more yellow</i> |
| малады | <i>young</i> | маладзеі | <i>younger</i> |
| просты | <i>simple</i> | прасцей | <i>simpler</i> |
| тоўсты | <i>thick, fat</i> | таўсцей | <i>thicker, fatter</i> |
| цвёрды | <i>hard, firm</i> | цвярдзеі | <i>harder, firmer</i> |
| чысты | <i>clean</i> | чысцей | <i>cleaner</i> |

There are a number of irregular comparative adjectives.

| | | | |
|---------|------------------|----------|-----------------------|
| высокі | <i>high</i> | вышэй | <i>higher</i> |
| глыбокі | <i>deep</i> | глыбей | <i>deeper</i> |
| далёкі | <i>far</i> | далей | <i>farther</i> |
| шырокі | <i>wide</i> | шырэй | <i>wider</i> |
| блізкі | <i>near</i> | бліжэй | <i>nearer</i> |
| вузкі | <i>narrow</i> | вужэй | <i>narrower</i> |
| гладкі | <i>smooth</i> | гладзэй | <i>smoother</i> |
| кароткі | <i>short</i> | карацей | <i>shorter</i> |
| салодкі | <i>sweet</i> | саладзэй | <i>sweeter</i> |
| глухі | <i>deaf</i> | глушэй | <i>deaf</i> |
| дарагі | <i>expensive</i> | даражэй | <i>more expensive</i> |
| доўгі | <i>long</i> | даўжэй | <i>longer</i> |
| лёгкі | <i>light</i> | лягчэй | <i>lighter</i> |
| мяккі | <i>soft</i> | мякчэй | <i>softer</i> |
| ціхі | <i>quiet</i> | цішэй | <i>quieter</i> |
| хуткі | <i>fast</i> | хутчэй | <i>faster</i> |

6.2 Short comparative adverb usage

Because short comparative adjectives are adverbs, they do not decline and can only be used predicatively.

| | |
|--|--|
| Я маладзэй за яго. | <i>I am younger than him.</i> |
| Кожнаму хацелася стаць бліжэй да вады. | <i>Each wanted to get closer to the water.</i> |

6.3 Irregular short comparative adjectives

A small number of adjectives have unique short comparative adjective forms, separate from their short comparative adverb form. These adjectives all end in **-шы**, decline like other adjectives, and are not limited to predicate usage.

| | | | |
|--------|--------------|--------|----------------|
| вялікі | <i>big</i> | большы | <i>bigger</i> |
| добры | <i>good</i> | лепшы | <i>better</i> |
| дрэнны | <i>bad</i> | горшы | <i>worse</i> |
| малы | <i>small</i> | меншы | <i>smaller</i> |

Some examples of usage of short comparative adjectives are given.

Сам быў не ў лепшым стане.
Там былі яблыкі болшыя,
чым тут.

*I myself was not in any better shape.
The apples were bigger over there
than here.*

The adjective *малады*, *young*, has the normal short comparative form *маладзей*, but it also has an additional short comparative form *малодшы*, which has the specialized meaning of junior. The adjective *стары* does not have a normal short comparative form, but there is the specialized word *старшы*, which means *older*, or *senior*. Both *малодшы* and *старшы* are used like any normal adjective.

Малодшы лейтэнант камандаваў
мінаметнай ротай.

*The junior lieutenant commanded
the mortar company.*

Апроч мяне была ў маці яшчэ
дачка, мая сястра старшая.

*My mother had another daughter besides
me, my older sister.*

6.4 Long comparative adjectives

Adjectives that do not have a short comparative form can be used comparatively by placing either *больш*, *more*, or *менш*, *less*, before the word.

Я больш палітычны, чым вы
разам узятая.

*I am more tactful than both of
you combined.*

Беражок ля ямы стаў больш
зручны.

*The rim around the hole became
more convenient.*

6.5 Superlatives ending in *-ейшы* or *-эйшы*

Any adjective which has a short comparative form can form a superlative by appending the ending *-шы* to that short comparative form. Adjectives without a short comparative form that ends in *-ей* or *-эй* do not have a unique superlative form.

бядней

poorer

бяднейшы

poorest

бялей

whiter

бялейшы

whitest

даражэй

more expensive

даражэйшы

most expensive

карацей

shorter

карацейшы

shortest

мякчэй

softer

мякчэйшы

softest

раней

earlier

ранейшы

earliest

The adjective *стары*, *old*, has no short comparative form, but does have the superlative *старэйшы*, *oldest*.

6.6 Superlatives using the adverb самы

The superlative form of any qualitative adjective can be formed by placing the adjective самы, *most*, before the adjective and by then declining самы to agree with the adjective. This is the form used for adjectives that do not have a superlative form ending in -ейшы or -эйшы, like the adjectives discussed in **Section 6.3**.

Яны стаялі перад самым крутым узгоркам. *They stood in front of the steepest hill.*

А ўвогуле розум — не самае галоўнае ў чалавеку. *Generally, the mind is not the most important thing to a person.*

6.8 Superlatives with the prefix най-

This prefix can be appended to ordinary superlatives, the comparative adjectives mentioned in **Section 6.3**, or to adjectives that normally has no special superlative form. The prefix най- slightly changes the meaning of the word. A normal superlative indicates that the characteristic of the noun is the extreme when compared to others. When the prefix най- is appended, the meaning indicates that the characteristic of the adjective is extreme, regardless of whether it is compared to others or not.

Гэта — найбольшы знак для гарадка, што заўтра вайна. *This is a really big sign for the town that war is tomorrow.*

Гэтую даведку, бы найдаражэйшы дакумент, яна загарнула ў паперку. *She buried this affidavit in the papers, as if it were a most valuable document.*

Я калісьці буду найпершы. *Someday I will be the very first.*

Chapter 7

Personal Pronouns

7.1 Personal pronouns

| | 1 st Pers. Sing. | 2 nd Pers. Sing. | 1 st Pers. Pl. | 2 nd Pers. Pl. |
|--------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Nom. | я | ты | мы | вы |
| Acc. | мя <u>н</u> е | ця <u>б</u> е | нас | вас |
| Gen. | мя <u>н</u> е | ця <u>б</u> е | нас | вас |
| Dat. | мне | та <u>б</u> е | нам | вам |
| Instr. | мно <u>й</u> * | та <u>б</u> о <u>й</u> * | на <u>м</u> і | ва <u>м</u> і |
| Prep. | аба мне | аб та <u>б</u> е | аб нас | аб вас |
| | 3 rd Pers. Masc. | 3 rd Pers. Neut. | 3 rd Pers. Fem. | 3 rd Pers. Pl. |
| Nom. | ё <u>н</u> | я <u>н</u> о | я <u>н</u> а | я <u>н</u> ы |
| Acc. | я <u>г</u> о | я <u>г</u> о | я <u>е</u> | і <u>х</u> |
| Gen. | я <u>г</u> о | я <u>г</u> о | я <u>е</u> | і <u>х</u> |
| Dat. | я <u>м</u> у | я <u>м</u> у | ё <u>й</u> | і <u>м</u> |
| Instr. | і <u>м</u> | і <u>м</u> | ё <u>й</u> * | і <u>м</u> і |
| Prep. | аб і <u>м</u> | аб і <u>м</u> | аб ё <u>й</u> | аб і <u>х</u> |

7.2 The reflexive personal pronoun

The reflexive pronoun is a direct synonym for the subject of the sentence. This means that it cannot be the subject of a sentence and does not have a nominative form. This pronoun is used when the subject of the sentence is also some other part of the sentence, such as the direct or indirect object.

| | |
|--------|--------------------------|
| Acc. | ся <u>б</u> е |
| Gen. | ся <u>б</u> е |
| Dat. | са <u>б</u> е |
| Instr. | са <u>б</u> о <u>й</u> * |
| Prep. | аб са <u>б</u> е |

*The variations мною, табою, ёю, and сабою are very common, but are non-standard and should be avoided by the non-native speaker. See 3.5 for how this variation affects nouns.

7.3 The pronoun сам

This pronoun is used to emphasize part of the sentence, either the subject, an object, or indirect object. When not used with the subject of the sentence, the pronoun сам simply imparts emphasis and is not actually translated. When used with the subject of the sentence, however, its meaning can be roughly translated as *myself, yourself, himself, etc...* The pronoun сам is used like an adjective, matching the case and gender of the noun it describes.

| | Masc. | Neut. | Fem. | Pl. |
|--------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Nom. | сам | сам <u>о</u> | сам <u>а</u> | сам <u>і</u> |
| Acc. | сам (-о <u>га</u>) | сам <u>о</u> | сам <u>у</u> | сам <u>і</u> (-ix) |
| Gen. | сам <u>о</u> га | сам <u>о</u> га | сам <u>о</u> й | сам <u>і</u> х |
| Dat. | сам <u>о</u> му | сам <u>о</u> му | сам <u>о</u> й | сам <u>і</u> м |
| Instr. | сам <u>і</u> м | сам <u>і</u> м | сам <u>о</u> й | сам <u>і</u> мі |
| Prep. | аб сам <u>і</u> м | аб сам <u>і</u> м | аб сам <u>о</u> й | аб сам <u>і</u> х |

Ён вырашыў сам прыйсці.

He decided to come himself.

Аднойчы нават выратаваў саму каралеву.

Once he even rescued the queen.

Але гаварыў ён толькі з самімі суседзьмі.

But he only spoke with the neighbors.

Chapter 8

Possessive and Demonstrative Pronouns

These pronouns follow the same rules as adjectives, declining for gender and case to match the nouns they modify, see Chapter 5 for more details on adjectives.

8.1 Possessive pronouns

The first person singular possessive pronoun мой, *my*, declines as follows.

| | Masc. | Neut. | Fem. | Pl. |
|--------|-------------|---------|---------|------------|
| Nom. | мой | маё | мая | мае |
| Acc. | мой (майго) | маё | маю | мае (маіх) |
| Gen. | майго | майго | маёй | маіх |
| Dat. | майму | майму | маёй | маім |
| Instr. | маім | маім | маёй | маімі |
| Prep. | аб маім | аб маім | аб маёй | аб маіх |

The second person singular possessive pronoun твой, *your*, declines as follows.

| | | | | |
|--------|---------------|----------|----------|--------------|
| Nom. | твой | тваё | твая | твае |
| Acc. | твой (твайго) | тваё | тваю | твае (тваіх) |
| Gen. | твайго | твайго | тваёй | тваіх |
| Dat. | твайму | твайму | тваёй | тваім |
| Instr. | тваім | тваім | тваёй | тваімі |
| Prep. | аб тваім | аб тваім | аб тваёй | аб тваіх |

The first person plural possessive pronoun наш, *our*, declines as follows.

| | | | | |
|--------|--------------|----------|----------|--------------|
| Nom. | наш | наша | наша | нашы |
| Acc. | наш (нашага) | наша | нашу | нашы (нашых) |
| Gen. | нашага | нашага | нашай | нашых |
| Dat. | нашаму | нашаму | нашай | нашым |
| Instr. | нашым | нашаму | нашай | нашымі |
| Prep. | аб нашым | аб нашым | аб нашай | аб нашых |

The second person plural possessive pronoun *ваш*, *your*, declines as follows.

| | Masc. | Neut. | Fem. | Pl. |
|--------|--------------|----------|----------|--------------|
| Nom. | ваш | ваша | ваша | ваши |
| Acc. | ваш (вашага) | ваша | вашу | ваши (ваших) |
| Gen. | вашага | вашага | вашай | ваших |
| Dat. | вашаму | вашаму | вашай | вашым |
| Instr. | вашым | вашаму | вашай | вашими |
| Prep. | аб вашим | аб вашим | аб вашей | аб ваших |

8.2 Third person possessive pronouns

The words *ягны*, *his*, *ейны*, *her*, and *ихны*, *their*, are the most common way of indicating possession. They decline like normal adjectives and their usage is extremely common, however there are some who feel that their usage is colloquial and that possession should be indicated by preceding the noun with the genitive form of the third person pronoun.

8.3 The reflexive pronoun

The pronoun *свой* roughly translates as *one's own*, and declines as follows.

| | | | | |
|--------|---------------|----------|----------|--------------|
| Nom. | свой | сваё | свая | свае |
| Acc. | свой (свайго) | сваё | сваю | свае (свайх) |
| Gen. | свайго | свайго | сваёй | свайх |
| Dat. | свайму | свайму | сваёй | свайм |
| Instr. | свайм | свайм | сваёй | свайми |
| Prep. | аб свайм | аб свайм | аб сваёй | аб свайх |

8.4 The interrogative possessive pronoun

The pronoun *чий* roughly translates as *whose*, and declines as follows.

| | | | | |
|--------|-------------|---------|---------|------------|
| Nom. | чий | чыё | чья | чые |
| Acc. | чий (чийго) | чыё | чыю | чые (чыих) |
| Gen. | чийго | чийго | чыёй | чыих |
| Dat. | чийму | чийму | чыёй | чийм |
| Instr. | чийм | чийм | чыёй | чийми |
| Prep. | аб чийм | аб чийм | аб чыёй | аб чыих |

8.5 The demonstrative pronouns

The pronouns гэты, *this*, and той, *that*, decline as follows.

| | Masc. | Neut. | Fem. | Pl. |
|--------|---------------|----------|----------|---------------|
| Nom. | гэты | гэта | гэта | гэтыя |
| Acc. | гэты (гэтага) | гэта | гэта | гэтыя (гэтых) |
| Gen. | гэтага | гэтага | гэту | гэтых |
| Dat. | гэтаму | гэтаму | гэтай | гэтым |
| Instr. | гэтым | гэтым | гэтай | гэтымі |
| Prep. | аб гэтым | аб гэтым | аб гэтай | аб гэтых |
| Nom. | той | тое | тая | тыя |
| Acc. | той (-аго) | тое | тую | тыя (-ых) |
| Gen. | таго | таго | той | тых |
| Dat. | таму | таму | той | тым |
| Instr. | тым | тым | той | тымі |
| Prep. | аб тым | аб тым | аб той | аб тых |

The pronoun гэны, *that*, declines just like гэты. It is not very common.

Гэны ўсё можа.

That guy can do anything.

Усе пра гэна даведаліся.

Everybody found out about that.

8.6 The pronoun увесь

The pronoun увесь, *all*, declines as follows.

| | | | | |
|--------|---------------|----------|----------|------------|
| Nom. | увесь | усё | уся | усе |
| Acc. | увесь (усяго) | усё | усю | усе (усіх) |
| Gen. | усяго | усяго | усёй | усіх |
| Dat. | усяму | усяму | усёй | усім |
| Instr. | усім | усім | усёй | усімі |
| Prep. | аба ўсім | аба ўсім | аба ўсёй | аба ўсіх |

Chapter 9

Interrogative and Relative Pronouns

These pronouns follow the same rules as adjectives, declining for gender and case to match the nouns they modify, see Chapter 5 for more details on adjectives.

9.1 The interrogative pronouns

The pronouns *што*, *what*, and *хто*, *who*, decline as follows.

| | | |
|--------|--------|--------|
| Nom. | што | хто |
| Acc. | што | каго |
| Gen. | чаго | каго |
| Dat. | чаму | камү |
| Instr. | чым | кім |
| Prep. | аб чым | аб кім |

The pronouns *нішто*, *nothing*, and *ніхто*, *nobody*, decline like *што* and *хто* except for the genitive case, for which the accent lies on the middle syllable.

Гэ́та нішто́.

Я нічо́га не сказа́ў.

Год таму́ зразуме́ў, што ў жыцці́
я ніхто́ і нішто́.

У пако́і ўжо́ ніко́га не было́.

It's nothing.

I didn't say anything.

*A year ago I realized that in life,
I am a nobody and a nothing.*

*There was already noone in the
room*

9.3 The pronoun *які*

The pronoun *які* declines just like the adjective *другі*, *second*, see 5.1 for the complete declension. The pronoun is used as the conjunction *which* or *what*. It is also used as an exclamation.

Якую́ кні́гу чита́еш?

Вось кні́га, яку́ю чита́ю.

Яка́я да́та сё́ння?

Яка́я прыго́жая дзяўчы́на!

Which book are you reading?

This is the book, which I am reading.

What is the date today?

What a pretty girl!

Chapter 10

Numerals

10.1 Numerals and case governance

The numeral адзін, *one*, is used just like an adjective, following the same rules. It declines to match the case and gender of the noun it describes. See Chapter 5 for more details. The numerals два, *two*, тры, *three*, and чатыры, *four*, as well as абодва, *both*, all decline to agree with the case of the noun that they govern. Два and абодва also decline to match the gender of their corresponding nouns. Like adjectives, the accusative animate forms of these numerals coincide with the genitive forms for masculine objects.

| | |
|---|--|
| У мяне застаецца адна ручка. | <i>I have one pen left.</i> |
| У нас два новыя сталы. | <i>We have two new tables.</i> |
| Я прыехаў з дзвюма гарматамі. | <i>I arrived with two cannons.</i> |
| Ён тры дні не паднімаўся з гнілой саломы. | <i>For three days, he did not get up off of the moldy hay.</i> |
| Ён узяўся абедзвюма рукамі за вугал. | <i>He grabbed the corner with both hands</i> |

When the numerals два, тры, чатыры, and абодва are used as either the subject or the inanimate direct object of a clause, the nouns that they govern take a special form. For feminine nouns, this form is identical to the genitive singular. For masculine and neuter nouns, it is formed by appending either *ы* or *і* to the root, depending on whether the root has a palatized or non-palatized ending and on other spelling rules. Any modifying adjectives are declined for the nominative plural.

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| У селяніна ёсць два кані. | <i>The villager has two horses.</i> |
| Дзве дзяўчыны прыйшлі. | <i>Two young ladies came.</i> |
| Вось гэтыя тры акны. | <i>Look at these three windows.</i> |
| Чатыры чалавекі стаяць там. | <i>Four people are standing over there.</i> |
| Абодва сыны служаць у арміі. | <i>Both sons are serving in the army.</i> |
| Абедзве даты вельмі прыблізныя. | <i>Both dates are very close.</i> |

10.2 The number *one*

The number адзін, *one*, declines as follows.

| | Masc. | Neut. | Fem. | Pl. |
|--------|--------------|----------|----------|------------|
| Nom. | адзін | адно | адна | адны |
| Acc. | адзін (-аго) | адно | адну | адны (-ых) |
| Gen. | аднаго | аднаго | адной | адных |
| Dat. | аднаму | аднаму | адной | адным |
| Instr. | адным | адным | адной | аднымі |
| Prep. | аб адным | аб адным | аб адной | аб адных |

The plural form адны is used with nouns that have no singular form, as well as with certain idiomatic constructions.

Там былі адны хлопцы.
Ён там быў толькі адны суткі.

*There were only boys there.
He was here for only twenty-four
hours.*

The word адзін is also used in certain constructions to mean *each other*.

Мы разумеем адзін аднаго.
Падморгвалі адзін аднаму зайздросным
калючым вокам.

*We understand each other.
They winked at each other with
prickly envious eyes.*

10.3 The number *two* and the word *both*

The number два, *two*, declines as follows.

| | Masc. | Neut. | Fem. |
|--------|------------|---------|----------|
| Nom. | два | два | дзве |
| Acc. | два (двух) | два | дзве |
| Gen. | двух | двух | дзвюх |
| Dat. | двум | двум | дзвюм |
| Instr. | двума | двума | дзвюма |
| Prep. | аб двух | аб двух | аб дзвюх |

The word *абодва*, *both*, declines as follows.

| | Masc. | Neut. | Fem. |
|--------|------------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Nom. | або <u>д</u> ва | або <u>д</u> ва | абе <u>д</u> зве |
| Acc. | або <u>д</u> ва (або <u>д</u> вух) | або <u>д</u> ва | абе <u>д</u> зве (абе <u>д</u> звюх) |
| Gen. | або <u>д</u> вух | або <u>д</u> вух | абе <u>д</u> звюх |
| Dat. | або <u>д</u> вум | або <u>д</u> вум | абе <u>д</u> звюм |
| Instr. | або <u>д</u> вума | або <u>д</u> вума | абе <u>д</u> звюма |
| Prep. | аб або <u>д</u> вух | аб або <u>д</u> вух | аб абе <u>д</u> звюх |

10.4 *Three and four*

The numbers *тры*, *three*, and *чатыры*, *four*, decline as follows.

| | | |
|--------|------------------|---|
| Nom. | тры | ча <u>т</u> ыры |
| Acc. | тры (трох) | ча <u>т</u> ыры (ча <u>т</u> ыро <u>х</u>) |
| Gen. | трох | ча <u>т</u> ыро <u>х</u> |
| Dat. | тро <u>м</u> | ча <u>т</u> ыро <u>м</u> |
| Instr. | тры <u>м</u> а | ча <u>т</u> ыры <u>м</u> а |
| Prep. | аб тр <u>о</u> м | аб ча <u>т</u> ыро <u>х</u> |

10.5 *Five and up*

These numbers all decline like *связь*, as shown in **Section 2.9**, including *сем*, *seven*, and *восем*, *eight*, even though they do not end in a *ь*.

| | | | |
|--|-----------------|--|------------------|
| пя <u>ц</u> ь | <i>five</i> | ча <u>т</u> ырна <u>ц</u> ца <u>ц</u> ь | <i>fourteen</i> |
| шэ <u>с</u> ць | <i>six</i> | пя <u>т</u> на <u>ц</u> ца <u>ц</u> ь | <i>fifteen</i> |
| се <u>м</u> | <i>seven</i> | ша <u>с</u> на <u>ц</u> ца <u>ц</u> ь | <i>sixteen</i> |
| во <u>с</u> ем | <i>eight</i> | се <u>м</u> на <u>ц</u> ца <u>ц</u> ь | <i>seventeen</i> |
| дзе <u>в</u> яць | <i>nine</i> | ва <u>с</u> е <u>м</u> на <u>ц</u> ца <u>ц</u> ь | <i>eighteen</i> |
| дзе <u>с</u> яць | <i>ten</i> | дзе <u>в</u> ятна <u>ц</u> ца <u>ц</u> ь | <i>nineteen</i> |
| ад <u>з</u> іна <u>ц</u> ца <u>ц</u> ь | <i>eleven</i> | два <u>ц</u> ца <u>ц</u> ь | <i>twenty</i> |
| два <u>н</u> а <u>ц</u> ца <u>ц</u> ь | <i>twelve</i> | тры <u>ц</u> ца <u>ц</u> ь | <i>thirty</i> |
| трына <u>ц</u> ца <u>ц</u> ь | <i>thirteen</i> | | |

10.6 *Forty, ninety, and one hundred*

The words *сорок*, *forty*, *дзевяноста*, *ninety*, and *сто*, *one hundred*, decline as follows.

| | | | |
|--------|-----------|---------------|--------|
| Nom. | сорок | дзевяноста | сто |
| Acc. | сорок | дзевяноста | ста |
| Gen. | сарака | дзевяноста | ста |
| Dat. | сарака | дзевяноста | ста |
| Instr. | сарака | дзевяноста | ста |
| Prep. | аб сарака | аб дзевяноста | аб ста |

10.7 *Fifty, sixty, seventy, and eighty*

These numbers decline like *пяцьдзесят*, *fifty*. These words have two roots, both of which decline. Because of this, although the main accent falls on the final syllable, there is a quieter accent on the end of the first root.

| | <i>fifty</i> | <i>sixty</i> | <i>seventy</i> | <i>eighty</i> |
|--------|--------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------|
| Nom. | пяцьдзесят | шэсцьдзесят | семдзесят | восемдзесят |
| Acc. | пяцьдзесят | шэсцьдзесят | семдзесят | восемдзесят |
| Gen. | пяцідзесяці | шасцідзесяці | сямідзесяці | васьмідзесяці |
| Dat. | пяцідзесяці | шасцідзесяці | сямідзесяці | васьмідзесяці |
| Instr. | пяцюдзесяццю | шасцідзесяццю | сямідзесяццю | васьмідзесяццю |
| Prep. | пяцідзесяці | аб шасцідзесяці | аб сямідзесяці | аб васьмідзесяці |

10.8 *Two hundred and beyond*

These numbers also have two roots, which both decline. The number *дзвесце*, *two hundred*, has only one accent. The numbers *трыста*, *three hundred*, *чатырыста*, *four hundred*, and *пяцьсот*, *five hundred*, have only one accent in the nominative and accusative cases, but two accents in the rest of the cases. The numbers *шэсцьсот*, *six hundred*, *семсот*, *seven hundred*, *восемсот*, *eight hundred*, and *дзевяцьсот*, *nine hundred*, have two accents throughout all their forms.

| | | | | |
|--------|--------------|-------------|----------------|-------------|
| Nom. | дзвесце | трыста | чатырыста | пяцьсот |
| Acc. | дзвесце | трыста | чатырыста | пяцьсот |
| Gen. | дзвюхсот | трохсот | чатырохсот | пяцісот |
| Dat. | дзвюмстам | тромстам | чатыромстам | пяцістам |
| Instr. | дзвюмастамі | трымастамі | чатырмастамі | пяцістамі |
| Prep. | аб дзвюхстах | аб трохстах | аб чатырохстах | аб пяцістах |

| | | | | |
|--------|--|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| Nom. | шэ <u>сць</u> со <u>т</u> | се <u>м</u> со <u>т</u> | во <u>с</u> се <u>м</u> со <u>т</u> | дзе <u>в</u> я <u>ц</u> ь <u>с</u> о <u>т</u> |
| Acc. | шэ <u>сць</u> со <u>т</u> | се <u>м</u> со <u>т</u> | во <u>с</u> се <u>м</u> со <u>т</u> | дзе <u>в</u> я <u>ц</u> ь <u>с</u> о <u>т</u> |
| Gen. | шас <u>ц</u> і <u>с</u> о <u>т</u> | ся <u>м</u> і <u>с</u> о <u>т</u> | вас <u>м</u> і <u>с</u> о <u>т</u> | дзе <u>в</u> я <u>ц</u> і <u>с</u> о <u>т</u> |
| Dat. | шас <u>ц</u> і <u>с</u> та <u>м</u> | ся <u>м</u> і <u>с</u> та <u>м</u> | вас <u>м</u> і <u>с</u> та <u>м</u> | дзе <u>в</u> я <u>ц</u> і <u>с</u> та <u>м</u> |
| Instr. | шас <u>ц</u> ю <u>с</u> та <u>м</u> і | ся <u>м</u> ю <u>с</u> та <u>м</u> і | вас <u>м</u> ю <u>с</u> та <u>м</u> і | дзе <u>в</u> я <u>ц</u> ю <u>с</u> та <u>м</u> і |
| Prep. | аб шас <u>ц</u> і <u>с</u> та <u>х</u> | аб ся <u>м</u> і <u>с</u> та <u>х</u> | аб вас <u>м</u> і <u>с</u> та <u>х</u> | аб дзе <u>в</u> я <u>ц</u> і <u>с</u> та <u>х</u> |

10.9 Collective numerals

These numbers are used with nouns that do not have a singular form, and in certain cases with animate nouns. The collective numerals have adjectival endings for the oblique cases. When a collective numeral is in the nominative or accusative case, the noun that it governs takes the genitive plural case. For oblique cases, the noun takes the same case as the numeral. As always, the accusative animate form is the same as the genitive.

| | | | | |
|--------|-------------------|-------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| Nom. | дво <u>е</u> | тро <u>е</u> | ча <u>ц</u> в <u>ё</u> ра | пя <u>ц</u> ё <u>ра</u> |
| Acc. | дво <u>е</u> | тро <u>е</u> | ча <u>ц</u> в <u>ё</u> ра | пя <u>ц</u> ё <u>ра</u> |
| Gen. | два <u>і</u> х | тра <u>і</u> х | ча <u>ц</u> в <u>я</u> р <u>ы</u> х | пя <u>ц</u> я <u>р</u> ы <u>х</u> |
| Dat. | два <u>і</u> м | тра <u>і</u> м | ча <u>ц</u> в <u>я</u> р <u>ы</u> м | пя <u>ц</u> я <u>р</u> ы <u>м</u> |
| Instr. | два <u>і</u> мі | тра <u>і</u> мі | ча <u>ц</u> в <u>я</u> р <u>ы</u> мі | пя <u>ц</u> я <u>р</u> ы <u>мі</u> |
| Prep. | аб два <u>і</u> х | аб тра <u>і</u> х | аб ча <u>ц</u> в <u>я</u> р <u>ы</u> х | аб пя <u>ц</u> я <u>р</u> ы <u>х</u> |

| | | |
|--------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Nom. | шас <u>ц</u> ё <u>ра</u> | ся <u>м</u> ё <u>ра</u> |
| Acc. | шас <u>ц</u> ё <u>ра</u> | ся <u>м</u> ё <u>ра</u> |
| Gen. | шас <u>ц</u> я <u>р</u> ы <u>х</u> | се <u>м</u> я <u>р</u> ы <u>х</u> |
| Dat. | шас <u>ц</u> я <u>р</u> ы <u>м</u> | се <u>м</u> я <u>р</u> ы <u>м</u> |
| Instr. | шас <u>ц</u> я <u>р</u> ы <u>мі</u> | се <u>м</u> я <u>р</u> ы <u>мі</u> |
| Prep. | аб шас <u>ц</u> я <u>р</u> ы <u>х</u> | аб се <u>м</u> я <u>р</u> ы <u>х</u> |

The words двое, трое, and чацвёра can be used with nouns that only have a plural form.

У нас двое саней.
Загадана ўзяць ежы на трое сутак.

*We have two sleds.
It was ordered that enough food be
taken for three days.*

These numerals can also be used to denote a number of people. They are especially used with men, workers, children, and words that decline like the neuter nouns of **Section 2.6**.

| | |
|---|--|
| У яго трое дзяцей. | <i>He has three children.</i> |
| Чацвёрта манахаў-дамініканаў неслі вялізны чорны крыж. | <i>Four Dominican monks carried a large black cross.</i> |
| Сем прыйшлі, а пяцёра з іх спазніліся. | <i>Seven came, but five of them were late.</i> |

There is along with these words the word **абое**, which means *both*.

| | |
|--|---|
| Сцяпан моўчкі пазіраў на абайх. | <i>Stsyapan silently glanced at both of them.</i> |
| Аблапіў дзяўчыну і абое паваліліся ў мяккую канюшыну. | <i>He hugged the girl and both fell into the soft clover.</i> |

10.10 Ordinal numerals

These adjectives are used as ordinal numbers.

| | | | |
|--------------|-------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| першы | <i>first</i> | пятнаццаты | <i>fifteenth</i> |
| другі | <i>second</i> | шаснаццаты | <i>sixteenth</i> |
| трэці | <i>third</i> | семнаццаты | <i>seventeenth</i> |
| чацвёрты | <i>fourth</i> | васемнаццаты | <i>eighteenth</i> |
| пяты | <i>fifth</i> | дзевятнаццаты | <i>nineteenth</i> |
| шосты | <i>sixth</i> | дваццаты | <i>twentieth</i> |
| сёмы | <i>seventh</i> | трыццаты | <i>thirtieth</i> |
| восьмы | <i>eighth</i> | саракавы | <i>fortieth</i> |
| дзевяты | <i>ninth</i> | пяцідзесяты | <i>fiftieth</i> |
| дзесяты | <i>tenth</i> | шасцідзесяты | <i>sixtieth</i> |
| адзінаццаты | <i>eleventh</i> | сямідзесяты | <i>seventieth</i> |
| дванаццаты | <i>twelfth</i> | васьмідзесяты | <i>eightieth</i> |
| трынаццаты | <i>thirtieth</i> | дзевяносты | <i>ninetieth</i> |
| чатырнаццаты | <i>fourteenth</i> | соты | <i>hundredth</i> |

Chapter 11

1st Conjugation Verbs

Most of the difficulty involved with Belarusian verbs comes from the spelling rules, which distort the ending of the verb. Careful attention to spelling rules predicts and explains the different variations of conjugation. Verbs of the 1st conjugation are called type 1 verbs. Unless otherwise noted, all verbs here are imperfective.

11.1 The root ends in a vowel and the ending is accented

In general, type 1 verbs conjugate like даваць, *to give*.

| | | | |
|-----------------|----------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| да <u>ю</u> | да <u>ём</u> | | |
| да <u>еш</u> | да <u>яце</u> | | |
| да <u>е</u> | да <u>юць</u> | | |
| | | 1 st Pers. Sing. | 2 nd Pers. Sing. |
| жа <u>в</u> аць | <i>to chew</i> | жу <u>ю</u> | жу <u>еш</u> |
| пе <u>ц</u> ь | <i>to sing</i> | пя <u>ю</u> | пя <u>еш</u> |

This group also includes verbs whose stem ends in ь or the apostrophe. An example of these is біць, *to hit*.

| | | | |
|---------------|-----------------|-------------|--------------|
| б' <u>ю</u> | б' <u>ём</u> | | |
| б' <u>еш</u> | б' <u>яце</u> | | |
| б' <u>е</u> | б' <u>юць</u> | | |
| лі <u>ц</u> ь | <i>to pour</i> | ль <u>ю</u> | ль <u>еш</u> |
| пі <u>ц</u> ь | <i>to drink</i> | п' <u>ю</u> | п' <u>еш</u> |

11.2 The root ends in a vowel and the root is accented

Verbs of this type conjugate like чакаць, *to wait*.

| | | | |
|-----------------|------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| ча <u>к</u> аю | ча <u>к</u> аем | | |
| ча <u>к</u> аеш | ча <u>к</u> аеце | | |
| ча <u>к</u> ае | ча <u>к</u> аюць | | |
| га <u>д</u> аць | <i>to guess</i> | га <u>д</u> аю | га <u>д</u> аеш |
| шы <u>ц</u> ь | <i>to sew</i> | шы <u>ю</u> | шы <u>еш</u> |

11.3 The root ends in a consonant and the ending is accented

Most verbs of this type conjugate like жыць, *to live*.

| | | | |
|--------|----------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| жыву | жывём | | |
| жывеш | жывяце | | |
| жыве | жывуць | | |
| | | 1 st Pers. Sing. | 2 nd Pers. Sing. |
| зваць | <i>to call</i> | заву | завеш |
| грызці | <i>to gnaw</i> | грызу | грызеш |

For verbs of this type, whose root ends in **д** or **т** for the first person singular and third person plural, the final consonant changes to either **дз** or **ц** for the other persons. They conjugate like класці, *to put*.

| | | | |
|---------|-----------------|-------|--------|
| кладу | кладзём | | |
| кладзеш | кладзяце | | |
| кладзе | кладуць | | |
| ісці | <i>to go</i> | іду | ідзеш |
| цвісці | <i>to bloom</i> | цвіту | цвіцеш |

For verbs of this type, whose root ends in **г** or **к** for the first person singular and third person plural, the final consonant changes to either **ж** or **ч** for the other persons. They conjugate like пячы, *to bake*.

| | | | |
|---------|---------------------|--------|---------|
| пяку | пячом | | |
| пячэш | пячаце | | |
| пячэ | пякуць | | |
| сячы | <i>to cut up</i> | сяку | сячэш |
| берагчы | <i>to safeguard</i> | берагу | беражэш |

Verbs of this type, whose root ends in an invariable non-palatized consonant conjugate like браць, *to take*.

| | | | |
|-------|--------------------------|-----|------|
| бярэ | бярэм | | |
| бярэш | бераце | | |
| бярэ | бярэць | | |
| перці | <i>to make one's way</i> | пру | прэш |
| церці | <i>to rub</i> | тру | трэш |

11.4 The root ends in a consonant and the root is accented

Verbs like these conjugate like *цягнуць, to pull*.

| | | | |
|---------|------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| цягну | цягнем | | |
| цягнеш | цягнеце | | |
| цягне | цягнуць | | |
| | | 1 st Pers. Sing. | 2 nd Pers. Sing. |
| прыняць | <i>to accept</i> | прыму | прымеш |
| узяць | <i>to take</i> | вазму | возмеш |

Verbs of this type, whose root ends in **д**, conjugate like *быць, to be*.

| | | | |
|--------|---------------------------|-------|---------|
| буду | будзем | | |
| будзеш | будзеце | | |
| будзе | будуць | | |
| ехаць | <i>to go [by vehicle]</i> | еду | едзеш |
| красці | <i>to steal</i> | краду | крадзеш |

Verbs of this type, whose root ends in **г**, conjugate like *магчы, to be able*.

| | | | |
|-------|--------------------|------|-------|
| магу | можам | | |
| можаш | могаце | | |
| мога | могуць | | |
| легчы | <i>to lie down</i> | лягу | ляжаш |

Verbs of this type, whose root ends in an invariably non-palatized consonant, conjugate like *рэзаць, to cut*.

| | | | |
|---------|---------------|-------|--------|
| рэжу | рэжам | | |
| рэжаш | рэжаце | | |
| рэжа | рэжуць | | |
| казаць | <i>to say</i> | кажу | кажаш |
| плакаць | <i>to cry</i> | плачу | плачаш |

Chapter 12

2nd Conjugation Verbs

Most of the difficulty involved with Belarusian verbs comes from the spelling rules, which distort the ending of the verb. Careful attention to spelling rules predicts and explains the different variations of this conjugation. Unless otherwise noted, all verbs here are imperfective. Verbs of this conjugation are called type 2 verbs.

12.1 The root ends in a vowel

Accent placement of type 2 verbs has no effect. Some examples of these verbs are *стаяць*, *to stand*, *строіць*, *to prepare*, and *таіць*, *to hide*.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| ста <u>ю</u> | стаі <u>м</u> | стро <u>ю</u> | строі <u>м</u> | та <u>ю</u> | таі <u>м</u> |
| стаі <u>ш</u> | стаі <u>це</u> | строі <u>ш</u> | строі <u>це</u> | таі <u>ш</u> | таі <u>це</u> |
| стаі <u>ць</u> | стая <u>ць</u> | строі <u>ць</u> | строа <u>ць</u> | таі <u>ць</u> | тоа <u>ць</u> |

12.2 The root ends in a consonant

These verbs conjugate very similarly to the verbs in 12.1, but there are variations on the endings, depending on what consonant the root ends in. Verbs, whose root ends in л or н have the same endings as the verbs shown above.

| | | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| п <u>о</u> мню | п <u>о</u> мнім | | |
| п <u>о</u> мніш | п <u>о</u> мніце | | |
| п <u>о</u> мні <u>ць</u> | п <u>о</u> мня <u>ць</u> | | |
| | | 1 st Pers. Sing. | 2 nd Pers. Sing. |
| валі <u>ць</u> | <i>to knock down</i> | вал <u>ю</u> | валі <u>ш</u> |
| гна <u>ць</u> | <i>to chase (determinate)</i> | ган <u>ю</u> | гоні <u>ш</u> |

Verbs of this type, whose root ends in б, в, м, п, or ф, have a л added between the root and the ending for the first person singular.

| | | | |
|------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| раб <u>л</u> ю | раб <u>і</u> м | | |
| раб <u>і</u> ш | раб <u>і</u> це | | |
| раб <u>і</u> ць | раб <u>я</u> ць | | |
| ста <u>в</u> іць | <i>to put</i> | ста <u>ў</u> лю | ста <u>в</u> іш |
| кар <u>м</u> іць | <i>to feed</i> | кар <u>м</u> л <u>ю</u> | кар <u>м</u> іш |
| куп <u>і</u> ць | <i>to buy (perfective)</i> | куп <u>л</u> ю | куп <u>і</u> ш |

If the final letters of the root are **дз, з, с, сц,** or **ц,** they change for the first person singular as shown below. An example of these verbs is **ходзіць, to walk.**

| | | | | |
|---------|---------|-----------|----|-----------|
| хаджу | ходзім | дз | —> | дж |
| ходзіш | ходзіце | з | —> | ж |
| ходзіць | ходзяць | с | —> | ш |
| | | сц | —> | шч |
| | | ц | —> | ч |

| | | | |
|---------|---------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | | 1 st Pers. Sing. | 2 nd Pers. Sing. |
| вазіць | <i>to transport</i> | важу | возіш |
| ляцець | <i>to fly</i> | лячу | ляціш |
| насіць | <i>to carry</i> | нашу | носіш |
| песціць | <i>to pamper</i> | пешчу | песціш |

Verbs of this type, whose root ends in an invariably non-palatized consonant, conjugate like **бачыць, to see.**

| | | | |
|----------|------------------|--------|---------|
| бачу | бачым | | |
| бачыш | бачыце | | |
| бачыць | бачаць | | |
| гаварыць | <i>to speak</i> | гавару | гаворыш |
| служыць | <i>to serve</i> | служу | служыш |
| рашыць | <i>to decide</i> | рашу | рэшыш |

Chapter 13

Miscellaneous Verbs and Verb Irregularities

13.1 Three miscellaneous verbs

The verbs бегчы, *to run*, даць, *to give*, and есці, *to eat*, conjugate as follows.

| | | | | | |
|--------|--------|-------|--------|------|-------|
| бягу | бяжым | дам | дадзім | ем | ядзім |
| бяжыш | бяжыце | дасі | дасце | еш | ясце |
| бяжыць | бягуць | дасць | дадуць | есць | ядуць |

13.2 Shifting stress

For many verbs, the accent is on the ending for the first person singular, but is the root for all other persons. This happens most often when the final syllable of the infinitive is accented.

| Infin. | | 1 st Pers. Sing. | 2 nd Pers. Sing. |
|----------|---------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| вазіць | <i>to transport</i> | важу | возіш |
| гаварыць | <i>to speak</i> | гавару | гаворыш |
| прыняць | <i>to receive</i> | прыму | прымеш |
| хацець | <i>to want</i> | хачу | хочаш |

13.3 Verb ending variation

The verbs conjugated above have the most current and accepted endings, but variations do exist. One common variation that affects verbs of the types discussed in Sections 11.1 and 11.3 is to replace the ending of the 1st person plural, -**ём** or -**ом**, with the endings -**ем** or -**эм**, respectively. Another common variation, which affects all verbs with accented endings, replaces the final -**е** of the 2nd person plural with a -**ё**. Although these variations do exist, they are non-standard and should be avoided by the non-native speaker.

Chapter 14

Reflexive Verbs

14.1 Use of reflexive verbs

The one characteristic that all reflexive verbs have in common is that they cannot take a direct object in the accusative case. Very often, the fact that the verb is reflexive means that the subject of the sentence is what is being acted upon.

Мяч кідаецца ім.
Яны баяцца.

The ball is thrown by him.
They are afraid.

14.2 Conjugation of reflexive verbs

Reflexive verbs in general are all formed from non-reflexive verbs in the same way. Below are given examples of both type 1 and type 2 reflexive verbs. The reader will notice that they are formed in the exact same way. An example of a type 1 reflexive verb is старацца, *to try*, and an example of a type 2 reflexive verb is туліцца, *to press against*.

стараюся
стараешся
стараецца

стараемся
стараецца
стараюцца

тулююся
тулішся
туліцца

тулімся
туліцеся
туліяцца

падабацца
спадзявацца
баяцца
нарадзіцца

to be pleasing
to hope
to fear
to be born

1st Pers. Sing.
падабаюся
спадзяюся
баяюся
нараджуюся

2nd Pers. Sing.
падабаешся
спадзяешся
баяшся
нарадзішся

14.3 Reflexive past tense, participles, and gerunds

All other parts of the verb are formed like normal verbs, with the suffix *-ся* placed on the end.

Ён стараўся дапамагаць.
Ляжалі абняўшыся і маўчалі.
Міхась быстра падняўся з зямлі,
не аглядаючыся вакол.

He tried to help.
They lay hugging and were quiet.
Michael quickly got up off the ground,
not looking around.

Chapter 15

Past Tenses

15.1 Past tense formation

Belarusian verbal aspect is similar to Russian and Ukrainian. Consult a text on one of these languages for more information on verbal aspect. Belarusian has two past tenses, the past perfect and the past imperfect. The past tense form is conjugated for gender and number, but not for person. The past tense is formed from the infinitive of the appropriate aspect.

| | |
|---|---|
| Мы шмат рабілі, калі жылі там. | <i>We were getting a lot done while we were living there.</i> |
| Я пазнаёміўся з ім, калі прыехаў. | <i>I met him when I arrived.</i> |
| Густая і чорная вада цякла ціха і спакойна. | <i>The thick and black water flowed quietly and peacefully.</i> |

Infinitives with the ending **-ць** form the past tense by replacing the final **-ць** with **-ў** to form the masculine, **-ло** to form the neuter, **-ла** to form the feminine, or **-лі** to form the plural. If unaccented, the neuter ending is **-ла**.

| Infin. | | Masc. | Neut. | Fem. | Pl. |
|--------|----------------|-------|--------|--------|--------|
| быць | <i>to be</i> | быў | было | была | былі |
| жыць | <i>to live</i> | жыў | жыло | жыла | жылі |
| чытаць | <i>to read</i> | чытаў | чытала | чытала | чыталі |

15.2 Past tense of verbs ending in **-чы** or **-ці**

The past tense of these verbs really just have to be memorized. If the masculine form ends in **-ў**, the verb is conjugated for the other genders by replacing the final **-ў** with the proper ending, either **-ло**, **-ла**, or **-лі**.

| | | | | | |
|--------|-----------------|------|-------|-------|-------|
| вясці | <i>to bring</i> | вёў | вяло | вяла | вялі |
| есць | <i>to eat</i> | еў | ела | ела | елі |
| ісці | <i>to go</i> | ішоў | ішло | ішла | ішлі |
| класці | <i>to put</i> | клаў | клала | клала | клалі |
| красці | <i>to steal</i> | краў | крала | крала | кралі |
| сесці | <i>to sit</i> | сеў | села | села | селі |
| цвісці | <i>to bloom</i> | цвіў | цвіло | цвіла | цвілі |

If the masculine past tense form ends in a consonant, the other genders are formed by simply adding the appropriate ending to the end of the masculine form.

| Infin. | | Masc. | Neut. | Fem. | Pl. |
|---------|--------------------------|-------|---------|---------|---------|
| бегчы | <i>to run</i> | бег | бегла | бегла | беглі |
| берагчы | <i>to take care of</i> | бярoг | бераглo | берагла | бераглі |
| валачы | <i>to drag</i> | валoк | валаклo | валакла | валаклі |
| легчы | <i>to lie down</i> | лeг | ляглo | лягла | ляглі |
| магчы | <i>to be able to</i> | мoг | маглo | магла | маглі |
| пячы | <i>to bake</i> | пeк | пяклo | пякла | пяклі |
| сячы | <i>to cut up</i> | сeк | секла | секла | секлі |
| стрыгчы | <i>to cut [hair]</i> | стрыг | стрыглo | стрыгла | стрыглі |
| вeзці | <i>to transport</i> | вeз | вязлo | вязла | вязлі |
| лeзці | <i>to climb</i> | лeз | лезла | лезла | лезлі |
| нeсці | <i>to carry</i> | нeс | несла | несла | неслі |
| памeрці | <i>to die</i> | памeр | памерла | памерла | памерлі |
| пeрці | <i>to make one's way</i> | пeр | перла | перла | перлі |
| цeрці | <i>to rub</i> | цeр | церла | церла | церлі |

15.3 Past tense of verbs ending in -нуць

Most verbs ending in -нуць form the past tense normally, but there are a few irregular ones that just have to be memorized. These ones form the masculine past tense by removing the -нуць ending. The other genders are formed by adding the appropriate ending.

| | | | | | |
|------------|-----------------------|--------|----------|----------|----------|
| глухнуць | <i>to go deaf</i> | глух | глухла | глухла | глухлі |
| знікнуць | <i>to disappear</i> | знік | знікла | знікла | зніклі |
| мерзнуць | <i>to freeze</i> | мeрз | мерзла | мерзла | мерзлі |
| пранікнуць | <i>to penetrate</i> | пранік | пранікла | пранікла | праніклі |
| прывыкнуць | <i>to get used to</i> | прывык | прывыкла | прывыкла | прывыклі |
| сохнуць | <i>to become dry</i> | сох | сохла | сохла | сохлі |
| узнікнуць | <i>to arise</i> | узнік | узнікла | узнікла | узніклі |

Chapter 16

Present and Future Tenses

Belarusian verbal aspect is similar to Russian and Ukrainian. Consult a text on one of these languages for more information on verbal aspect.

16.1 Present tense

Belarusian has one present tense and two future tenses, the future perfect and the future imperfect. The present tense is formed by conjugating the infinitive of the imperfect aspect of a verb for the correct person.

| | |
|--|--|
| Я тут жы <u>в</u> у. | <i>I live here.</i> |
| Я жы <u>в</u> у ця <u>п</u> ер у ся <u>б</u> ро <u>ў</u> . | <i>I am living with friends right now.</i> |
| Я жы <u>в</u> у з і <u>мі</u> ме <u>с</u> я <u>ц</u> . | <i>I have lived with them for a month.</i> |

The verb быць, *to be*, has no present tense conjugation. The verb *to be* is often rendered in the present tense as a pause, represented as a dash when written. It is dropped completely in third person impersonal constructions. Some of the functions of the verb *to be* can also be filled by other verbs like бываць, *to occur*, and стаць, *to become*.

| | |
|---|--|
| Я — аме <u>р</u> ыка <u>н</u> ец, а ты — бе <u>л</u> ару <u>с</u> . | <i>I am an american, and you are a belarusian.</i> |
| Хло <u>п</u> чык — ве <u>л</u> ьмі га <u>л</u> одны. | <i>The young man is very hungry.</i> |
| Ця <u>ж</u> ка вы <u>в</u> учы <u>ц</u> ь но <u>в</u> ую мо <u>в</u> у. | <i>It is difficult to learn a new language.</i> |

The word ёсць is also used to fulfill some of the functions of the verb *to be*. It is used either to emphasis the existence of the subject, or as a predicate meaning *there is*. The word ёсць is etymologically descended from the obsolete present tense conjugation of the Common Slavonic verb byti, *to be*.

| | |
|---|--|
| Ё <u>н</u> з'я <u>в</u> і <u>ў</u> ся та <u>к</u> і <u>м</u> , я <u>к</u> і <u>м</u> ё <u>н</u> і ё <u>с</u> ць па сва <u>ё</u> й на <u>т</u> у <u>р</u> ы. | <i>He appeared as that person, whom he is by his nature.</i> |
| Ё <u>с</u> ць я <u>к</u> і-не <u>б</u> уд <u>з</u> ь ста <u>р</u> ы, што да вай <u>н</u> ы тут жы <u>ў</u> ? | <i>Is there anyone old that lived here before the war?</i> |

16.2 Future imperfect formation

The future imperfect tense is formed by conjugating the verb *быць* for the correct person, and following that with the infinitive of a verb's imperfective aspect.

Што будзеш рабіць?
Я буду многа чытаць.

What will you be doing?
I will be reading a lot.

16.3 Future perfect formation

The future perfect tense is formed by conjugating the infinitive of a verb's perfective aspect for the correct person.

Што зробіш?
Я скончу гэту кнігу.

What will you do?
I will finish this book.

Chapter 17

The Imperative

17.1 Formation of the imperative

In the case of the vast majority of Belarusian verbs, the imperative is formed as follows. Conjugate the verb for the 2nd person singular and remove the final two letters. If the stem ends in a vowel, add an **-й**. If the stem ends in an invariably non-palatized consonant, nothing is added, otherwise add either an **-і** or a **-ь**. The ending **-і** is added either if the infinitive is more than one syllable and the accent falls on the last syllable, or if the root ends in two or more consonants (note that the letter combinations **дз** and **дж** are each treated as a single letter). If neither of these two conditions is met, then a **-ь** is added. This forms the singular form of the imperative. To form the plural imperative, the suffix **-це** is appended to the singular form.

| Infin. | | 2 rd Pers. Sing. | Stem | Imp. Sing. | Imp. Pl |
|------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| браць | <i>to take</i> | бярэ <u>ш</u> | бяр- | бяр <u>ы</u> | бяр <u>ыце</u> |
| глядзе <u>ць</u> | <i>to look</i> | глядз <u>іш</u> | глядз- | глядз <u>і</u> | глядз <u>іце</u> |
| гляну <u>ць</u> | <i>to glance</i> | глян <u>іш</u> | глян- | глян <u>ь</u> | глян <u>ьце</u> |
| ж <u>ыць</u> | <i>to live</i> | ж <u>ыве</u> ш | ж <u>ыв</u> - | ж <u>ыві</u> | ж <u>ывіце</u> |
| ле <u>гчы</u> | <i>to lie down</i> | ляж <u>аш</u> | ляж- | ляж | ляж <u>це</u> |
| м <u>ыць</u> | <i>to wash</i> | м <u>ы</u> еш | м <u>ы</u> - | м <u>ый</u> | м <u>ыйце</u> |
| е <u>хаць</u> | <i>to drive</i> | е <u>дз</u> еш | е <u>дз</u> - | е <u>дз</u> ь | е <u>дз</u> ьце |
| ра <u>біць</u> | <i>to do</i> | ра <u>б</u> іш | ра <u>б</u> - | ра <u>бі</u> | ра <u>біце</u> |
| р <u>эзаць</u> | <i>to slice</i> | р <u>эж</u> аш | р <u>эж</u> - | р <u>эж</u> | р <u>эж</u> це |
| с <u>ячы</u> | <i>to cut up</i> | с <u>яч</u> еш | с <u>яч</u> - | с <u>яч</u> ы | с <u>яч</u> ыце |
| ста <u>ць</u> | <i>to become</i> | стан <u>еш</u> | стан- | стан <u>ь</u> | стан <u>ьце</u> |
| ст <u>укнуць</u> | <i>to knock</i> | ст <u>укн</u> еш | ст <u>укн</u> - | ст <u>укн</u> і | ст <u>укн</u> іце |
| ча <u>каць</u> | <i>to wait</i> | ча <u>ка</u> еш | ча <u>ка</u> - | ча <u>ка</u> й | ча <u>ка</u> йце |

17.2 Vowel changes due to spelling rules

There are several verbs, which seem to be irregular, but the changes of their vowels are really just manifestations of spelling rules.

| | | | | | |
|----------------|-----------------|--------------------------|------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| бая <u>цца</u> | <i>to fear</i> | ба <u>і</u> ш <u>ся</u> | бо- | ба <u>і</u> ш <u>ся</u> | ба <u>і</u> ш <u>ся</u> |
| смя <u>цца</u> | <i>to dare</i> | смя <u>е</u> ш <u>ся</u> | сме- | смя <u>е</u> ш <u>ся</u> | смя <u>е</u> ш <u>ся</u> |
| ста <u>ць</u> | <i>to stand</i> | ста <u>і</u> ш | сто- | ста <u>і</u> | ста <u>і</u> це |

17.3 Verbs beginning with **вы-**

If imperative form of verb ends in an -i (or -ы due to spelling rules) the verb formed by adding the prefix **вы-** to the verb also has an imperative that ends in -i, even though the accent will fall on the prefix.

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Infin. | | Imp. Sing. | Infin. | | Imp. Sing. |
| в <u>е</u> сці | <i>to lead</i> | в <u>я</u> дзі | в <u>ы</u> в <u>е</u> сці | <i>to lead away</i> | в <u>ы</u> в <u>е</u> дзі |
| ка <u>з</u> аць | <i>to say</i> | ка <u>ж</u> ы | в <u>ы</u> ка <u>з</u> аць | <i>to state smthng.</i> | в <u>ы</u> ка <u>ж</u> ы |
| р <u>в</u> аць | <i>to tear</i> | р <u>в</u> і | в <u>ы</u> р <u>в</u> аць | <i>to tear away</i> | в <u>ы</u> р <u>в</u> і |

17.4 Irregular imperatives

Certain verbs have irregular imperatives. A few of these are given below.

| | | | | |
|-----------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Infin. | | 2 nd Pers. Sing. | Imp. Sing. | Imp. Pl. |
| да <u>в</u> аць | <i>to give</i> | да <u>е</u> ш | да <u>в</u> ай | да <u>в</u> айце |
| да <u>ц</u> ь | <i>to give (Perf.)</i> | да <u>с</u> і | да <u>й</u> | да <u>й</u> це |
| е <u>с</u> ці | <i>to eat</i> | е <u>ш</u> | е <u>ш</u> | е <u>ш</u> це |
| б <u>і</u> ць | <i>to hit</i> | б' <u>е</u> ш | б <u>і</u> | б <u>і</u> це |
| л <u>і</u> ць | <i>to pour</i> | л <u>ь</u> еш | л <u>і</u> | л <u>і</u> це |
| п <u>і</u> ць | <i>to drink</i> | п <u>ь</u> еш | п <u>і</u> | п <u>і</u> це |

17.5 1st person plural imperative

The most common way of forming the 1st person plural imperative is by using the word давайце. If the verb is imperfective, давайце is followed by the verb's infinitive. If the verb is perfective, the word давайце is followed by the verb conjugated for the 1st person plural.

Давайце яшчэ нальем.
Давайце крычаць: хто слабей
крыкне, таго зьядзем.

Let's pour in some more.
Let's yell: Whoever yells the weakest,
him we will eat.

Alternatively, verbs do have a special form for the 1st person plural imperative.

Брэм манаткі і марш!
Уцякайма, пакуль не позна.
Едзем на базар, каб купіць ежу
на заўтра.

Let's grab our gear and move out!
Let's get out of here, while it's not too late.
Let's go to the market to buy food
for tomorrow.

If the 2nd person singular imperative ends in -й, the 1st person plural imperative is formed by adding the letters -ма to the end of the imperative.

| Infin. | | Imp. Sing. | 1 st Pers. Pl. Imp. |
|----------|------------------------|------------|--------------------------------|
| будаваць | <i>to build</i> | буду́й | буду́йма |
| мыцца | <i>to wash oneself</i> | мы́йся | мы́ймася |
| чытаць | <i>to read</i> | чыта́й | чыта́йма |

If the 2nd person singular imperative ends in an accented -ы or -і, the 1st person plural imperative is formed by replacing that final letter with -эм or -ем respectively.

| | | | |
|---------|------------------------------|---------|----------|
| бегчы | <i>to run</i> | бяжы́ | бяжэ́м |
| брацца | <i>to wrap around smthng</i> | бярэ́ся | бярэ́мся |
| крычаць | <i>to yell</i> | крычы́ | крычэ́м |
| сарваць | <i>to tear (Perf.)</i> | сарві́ | сарве́м |
| спаць | <i>to sleep</i> | спі́ | спе́м |
| хадзіць | <i>to walk</i> | хадзі́ | хадзе́м |

Otherwise, the 1st person plural imperative is identical to the 1st person plural indicative form.

| | | | |
|-------|----------------------------|-------|--------|
| быць | <i>to be</i> | будзь | будзем |
| сесці | <i>to sit down (Perf.)</i> | сядзь | сядзем |
| лягчы | <i>to lie down (Perf.)</i> | ляж | ляжам |

17.6 3rd person imperative

The third person imperative is formed by placing either the particle хай or няхай before the verb, conjugated for the third person, either singular or plural.

| | |
|-------------------------|--|
| Хай гаво́рыць. | <i>Let him speak.</i> |
| Не чапа́й, хай ляжы́ць. | <i>Don't disturb him, let him lie.</i> |
| Хай будзе́ святло́. | <i>Let there be light!</i> |

Chapter 18

Verbs of Motion

There is a set of verbs expressing motion, whose imperfective aspect has two distinct parts, the indeterminate form and the determinate form. The determinate form is used when expressing a distinct progression from one point to another. The indeterminate form is used in all other instances.

Indeter.
хадзіць

Deter.
ісці

to walk

хаджу
ходзіш
ходзіць

ходзім
ходзіце
ходзяць

іду
ідеш
ідзе

ідзем
ідзяце
ідуць

хадзіў
хадзіла
хадзіла

хадзілі

ішоў
ішло
ішла

ішлі

ездзіць

ехаць

to go [by transport]

езджу
ездзіш
ездзіць

ездзім
ездзіце
ездзяць

еду
едзеш
едзе

едзеш
едзеце
едуць

ездзіў
ездзіла
ездзіла

ездзілі

ехаў
ехала
ехала

ехалі

бегаць

бегчы

to run

бегаю
бегаеш
бегае

бегаем
бегаеце
бегаюць

бягу
бяжыш
бяжыць

бяжым
бяжыце
бягуць

бегаў
бегала
бегала

бегалі

бег
бегла
бегла

беглі

вадзіць

ваджу
вадзіш
вадзіць

вадзіў
вадзіла
вадзіла

весці

вадзім
вадзіце
вадзяць

вадзілі

вяду
вядзеш
вядзе

вёў
вяло
вяла

to lead

вядзём
ведзяце
вядуць

вялі

вазіць

важу
вазіш
вазіць

вазіў
вазіла
вазіла

везці

вазім
вазіце
вазяць

вазілі

вяду
вядзеш
вядзе

вёз
везла
везла

to transport

вядзём
ведзяце
вядуць

везлі

ганяць

ганяю
ганяеш
ганяе

ганяў
ганяла
ганяла

гнаць

ганяем
ганяеце
ганяюць

ганялі

ганю
гоніш
гоніць

гнаў
гнала
гнала

to chase

гонім
гоніце
гоняць

гналі

качаць

качаю
качаеш
качае

качаў
качала
качала

каціць

качаем
качаеце
качаюць

качалі

качу
коціш
коціць

каціў
каціла
каціла

to roll

коцім
коціце
коцяць

кацілі

лазіць

лажу
лазіш
лазіць

лазім
лазіце
лазяць

лазіў
лазіла
лазіла

лезці

лезу
лезеш
лезе

лез
лезла
лезла

лезем
лезеце
лезуць

лезлі

to climb

лятаць

лятаю
лятаеш
лятае

лятаем
лятаеце
лятаюць

лятаў
лятала
лятала

ляцець

лячу
ляціш
ляціць

ляцеў
ляцела
ляцела

ляцім
ляціце
ляцяць

ляцелі

to fly

насіць

нашу
носіш
носіць

носім
носіце
носяць

насіў
насіла
насіла

несці

нясу
нясеш
нясе

нёс
несла
несла

нясём
несяце
нясуць

неслі

to carry

цягаць

цягаю
цягаеш
цягае

цягаем
цягаеце
цягаюць

цягаў
цягала
цягала

цягнуць

цягну
цягнеш
цягне

цягнуў
цягнула
цягнула

цягнем
цягнеце
цягнуць

цягнулі

to pull

Chapter 19

Verbal Prefixes

19.1 Prefix usage

Adding a prefix to an imperfective verb usually creates a perfective verb with a modified meaning. Adding a prefix to an imperfective verb of motion does not create a perfective verb, but a new imperfective verb with a modified meaning. The same prefix is attached to the perfective aspect of the verb of motion to form the perfective form of the new verb.

When a prefix ending in a consonant is attached to a verb beginning in an iotized vowel, a buffer symbol ‘ is placed between them.

When хадзіць has a prefix attached to it, the accent moves to the root for all forms. When ісці has a prefix attached to it, the initial i- changes to an й- and the accent falls on the prefix for all persons in the present tense except the 1st person singular. The exception to this is the prefix вы-, for which the accent always falls on this prefix, irrespective of person or tense. When either хадзіць or ісці has a prefix attached, which ends in a consonant, an ы is placed as a buffer between the prefix and root.

| | | | |
|-----------|-----------------------|-----------|---------------------|
| аб’явіць | <i>to announce</i> | пад’ехаць | <i>to drive up</i> |
| прыходжу | <i>I am coming</i> | прыходзіў | <i>I came</i> |
| пойдзе | <i>he will go</i> | пайшоў | <i>he went</i> |
| разышліся | <i>they dispersed</i> | адыходжу | <i>I am leaving</i> |

19.2 Directional prefix meanings

Each of these prefixes has additional meanings that have nothing to do with direction, but for now I have only listed the meanings which imply a direction of motion. Prefixes can be added to verbs to create new verbs. Adding a prefix to the indeterminate form of a verb of motion creates the imperfective infinitive of a verb, and adding the prefix to the determinate form creates the perfective infinitive of the same verb. The exception to this rule is the verb ехаць and ездзіць, *to go [by transport]*. The perfective aspect of a verb can be formed by adding a prefix to ехаць, but the imperfective aspect of the same verb is formed by adding the prefix to the verb язджаць. The form язджаць rarely occurs on its own, without a prefix. These prefixes can also be added to other, non-motion verbs.

па- This prefix is added to the directional infinitive to form the perfective infinitive for all verbs of motion.

| | |
|------------------|--|
| пай <u>с</u> ці | <i>to go [somewhere, on foot]</i> |
| па <u>е</u> хаць | <i>to go [somewhere, by transport]</i> |
| па <u>б</u> егчы | <i>to run [somewhere]</i> |
| па <u>н</u> есці | <i>to carry [something somewhere]</i> |

аб- This prefix implies encompassing or overtaking motion.

| | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| а <u>б</u> ых <u>о</u> дзіць | а <u>б</u> ый <u>с</u> ці | <i>to walk around</i> |
| а <u>б</u> 'язд <u>ж</u> аць | а <u>б</u> ' <u>е</u> хаць | <i>to drive around</i> |
| а <u>б</u> га <u>н</u> яць | а <u>б</u> га <u>н</u> аць | <i>to overtake</i> |
| а <u>б</u> кла <u>д</u> ваць | а <u>б</u> кла <u>с</u> ці | <i>to surround [with something]</i> |

ад- This prefix has the meaning of moving away.

| | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| а <u>д</u> ых <u>о</u> дзіць | а <u>д</u> ый <u>с</u> ці | <i>to withdraw</i> |
| а <u>д</u> но <u>с</u> іць | а <u>д</u> не <u>с</u> ці | <i>to carry off</i> |
| а <u>д</u> бі <u>р</u> аць | а <u>д</u> а <u>б</u> раць | <i>to take away</i> |
| а <u>д</u> ры <u>в</u> аць | а <u>д</u> ар <u>в</u> аць | <i>to tear off</i> |

вы- This prefix has the meaning of going out of something.

| | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| вы <u>х</u> о <u>д</u> зіць | вы <u>й</u> сці | <i>to exit [on foot]</i> |
| вы <u>н</u> а <u>с</u> іць | вы <u>н</u> е <u>с</u> ці | <i>to carry out</i> |
| вы <u>б</u> і <u>р</u> аць | вы <u>б</u> раць | <i>to select</i> |
| вы <u>р</u> ы <u>в</u> аць | вы <u>р</u> ваць | <i>to tear out</i> |

да- This prefix implies movement as far as, or up to, a certain point.

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| да <u>х</u> о <u>д</u> зіць | да <u>й</u> сці | <i>to reach</i> |
| да <u>н</u> о <u>с</u> іць | да <u>н</u> е <u>с</u> ці | <i>to bring as far as</i> |
| да <u>г</u> а <u>н</u> яць | да <u>г</u> наць | <i>to catch up to</i> |
| да <u>б</u> і <u>р</u> а <u>ц</u> ца | да <u>б</u> ра <u>ц</u> ца | <i>to get as far as</i> |

з- This prefix has the meaning of coming off of, or coming out of.

| | | |
|-----------|---------|--|
| зыходзіць | зыйсці | <i>to come off of</i> |
| з'язжаць | з'ехаць | <i>to depart</i> |
| зносіць | знесці | <i>to take down from, to take out of</i> |
| знімаць | зняць | <i>to remove</i> |

за- Verbs with this prefix have the meanings of traveling far, or past something.

| | | |
|------------|----------|----------------------------|
| заходзіць | зайсці | <i>to walk behind</i> |
| забегаць | забегчы | <i>to run ahead</i> |
| заносіць | занесці | <i>to carry [far] away</i> |
| закладваць | закласці | <i>to place behind</i> |

на- Verbs with this prefix have the meaning of collision with something.

| | | |
|-----------|-----------|-------------------------------------|
| находзіць | найсці | <i>to come across, to walk into</i> |
| наязджаць | наехаць | <i>to run into [with a vehicle]</i> |
| нападаць | напасці | <i>to fall into</i> |
| наступаць | наступіць | <i>to approach [a certain time]</i> |

пад- This prefix has the basic meaning of upward motion.

| | | |
|-------------|-----------|------------------------------|
| падыходзіць | падыйсці | <i>to approach [on foot]</i> |
| пад'язджаць | пад'ехаць | <i>to drive up to</i> |
| падбягаць | падбегчы | <i>to run up to</i> |
| паднімаць | падняць | <i>to lift</i> |

пера- This prefix has the meaning of crossing over something.

| | | |
|--------------|------------|----------------------------------|
| пераходзіць | перайсці | <i>to walk across</i> |
| пераносіць | перанесці | <i>to carry across</i> |
| перадаваць | перадаць | <i>to pass along</i> |
| перакладваць | перакласці | <i>to transfer, to translate</i> |

пра- This prefix gives verbs the meaning of passing by something.

| | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| пра <u>х</u> одзіць | пра <u>й</u> сці | <i>to pass by</i> |
| пра <u>я</u> зджаць | пра <u>е</u> хаць | <i>to drive past</i> |
| пра <u>б</u> ягаць | пра <u>б</u> егчы | <i>to run by</i> |
| пра <u>н</u> осіць | пра <u>н</u> есці | <i>to carry by</i> |

раз- This prefix gives verbs the meaning of movement in various directions, or distribution.

| | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|--|
| раз <u>ы</u> ходзіцца | раз <u>ы</u> йсціся | <i>to disperse</i> |
| раз' <u>я</u> зджацца | раз' <u>е</u> хацца | <i>to drive away [in various directions]</i> |
| раз <u>б</u> ягацца | раз <u>б</u> егчыся | <i>to run off, to scatter</i> |
| раз <u>л</u> ятацца | раз <u>л</u> яцецца | <i>to fly away, to scatter</i> |

у- This prefix gives verbs the meaning of entering. It changes to ува- with хадзіць and ісці.

| | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| ува <u>х</u> одзіць | ува <u>й</u> сці | <i>to enter</i> |
| ува <u>я</u> зджаць | ува <u>е</u> хаць | <i>to drive in</i> |
| ува <u>б</u> ягаць | ува <u>б</u> егчы | <i>to run in</i> |
| ува <u>н</u> осіць | ува <u>н</u> есці | <i>to carry in</i> |

уз- This prefix gives verbs the meaning of upward motion.

| | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| уз <u>ы</u> ходзіць | уз <u>ы</u> йсці | <i>to walk up</i> |
| уз <u>л</u> азіць | уз <u>л</u> езці | <i>to climb up</i> |
| уз <u>л</u> ятаць | уз <u>л</u> яцець | <i>to take off</i> |
| уз <u>в</u> ышаць | уз <u>в</u> ысіць | <i>to elevate</i> |

Chapter 20

Gerunds and Participles

Gerunds and participles are not commonly used in colloquial Belarusian, but they are found in literature.

20.1 Present imperfect gerunds

These gerunds are formed by conjugating an imperfect infinitive of a verb for the 3rd person plural, removing the final -ць, and appending the ending -чы. They are often also used as a present active participle, but they do not decline.

| Infin. | | 3rd Pers. Pl. | Gerund |
|----------|----------|---------------|------------|
| вяртацца | to turn | вяртаюцца | вяртаючыся |
| гаварыць | to speak | гавораць | гаворачы |
| пісаць | to write | пішуць | пішучы |
| хадзіць | to walk | ходзяць | ходзячы |
| чытаць | to read | чытаюць | чытаючы |

Яго вусны заварушыліся, нібы
творачы святую малітву.

*His lips moved, as though forming a
sacred prayer.*

Нават будучы параненым, ён не
меў права на спакойнае
жыццё.

*Even being wounded, he didn't have
the right to a peaceful life.*

20.2 Past perfect gerunds

These gerunds are formed from perfective verbs by conjugating the verb for the past tense masculine singular and adding the ending -шы.

| | | | |
|----------|-----------|----------|------------|
| напісаць | to write | напісаў | напісаўшы |
| зрабіць | to do | зрабіў | зрабіўшы |
| вярнуцца | to return | вярнуўся | вярнуўшыся |
| прывесці | to bring | прывёс | прывёсшы |
| пабегчы | to run | пабег | пабегшы |

Напісаўшы, што трэба было, ён
пачаў поркацца ў паперах.

*Having written what was necessary, he
began to pore over the papers.*

Перанёсшы яго, рыбы доўга не
вярталіся.

*Having carried him over, the fish did not
return for a long time.*

20.3 Past passive participles

Participles are adjectives, obeying all the same rules that other adjectives do. Most of them are formed by attaching **-аны**, or **-ены** to the root of the infinitive. There really isn't much rhyme or reason to the formation, each participle needs to be memorized. These participles can be formed from either aspect, but they are formed much more often from the perfective aspect.

| Infin. | | Past Pass. Part. |
|---------|------------------------------------|------------------|
| пісаць | <i>to write</i> | пісаны |
| звязаць | <i>to bind (perfective)</i> | звязаны |
| купіць | <i>to buy (perfective)</i> | куплены |
| зрабіць | <i>to do, to make (perfective)</i> | зроблены |
| скласці | <i>to stack (perfective)</i> | складзены |

Monosyllable infinitives form the past passive participle by removing the suffix **-ць** and appending **-ты**.

| | | |
|------|----------------|------|
| мыць | <i>to wash</i> | мыты |
| біць | <i>to hit</i> | біты |
| шыць | <i>to sew</i> | шыты |

| | |
|---|---|
| У выстаўцы ёсць каран беларускі, пісаны татарскімі літарамі. | <i>In the exhibit there is a Belarusian Koran, written with the Tatar alphabet.</i> |
| Яна была падобна да зробленай з каменю фігуркі. | <i>She was like a statue wrought from stone.</i> |
| Давялося-б яму зараз выціраць свой твар ад слядоў, а галаве прышлося-б пазнаёміцца з бітым шклом. | <i>He just happened to peel his face away from the footprints, and his head happened to become acquainted with the smashed glass.</i> |

20.4 Other participles

Other participles such as the Present Active, Present Passive, and Past Active may be encountered very occasionally, especially in technical literature. These participles are uncommon in normal literature, and their use in Belarusian is considered to be a symptom of language interference from Russian. It is preferable to use other synonymous constructions.

Chapter 21

The Nominative Case

21.1 Use of the nominative case

This case is taken by the subject of the sentence. If the verb of the sentence is ёсць, or if there is no verb, then the object of the sentence also takes the nominative case.

Беларусь — прыгожы кут.
Але ён дурны, а я разумны.

*Belarus is a beautiful land.
But he is foolish, and I am wise.*

The direct objects of verbs such as зваць, *to call*, and its derivatives, often take the nominative case.

Яго завуць Саша.

*His name is Sasha.
(Literally: [They] call him Sasha.)*

The direct object of the verbs быць, *to be*, and стаць, *to become*, can take the nominative case if the direct object is an adjective that is being used as a predicate.

Яна стала цяпер жвавая.
Рана ці позна будуць названыя
злачынцамі і праклатыя.

*She's now become lively.
Sooner or later, they will be labeled
criminals and damned.*

Chapter 22

The Accusative Case

22.1 Use of the accusative case

The direct object of most verbs usually takes the accusative case. Certain prepositions are followed by nouns in the accusative case, often when motion is implied. A period of time placed in the accusative case, with no preposition preceding it, indicates that an action was carried out over the course of that time.

| | |
|--|--|
| Скаж <u>ы</u> мне, ты запра <u>ў</u> ды мяне каха <u>е</u> ш? | <i>Tell me, do you really love me?</i> |
| Я жыў з імі ме <u>с</u> яц. | <i>I lived with them for a month.</i> |

22.2 Prepositions with the accusative case

The following prepositions can be followed by the accusative case. Often, the meaning of the prefix revolves around a sense of motion. The meaning of each preposition in that context is given.

| | | | |
|----|----------------|--|--|
| аб | <i>against</i> | Лодка стукну <u>л</u> ася аб бе <u>р</u> аг. | <i>The boat bumped against the shore.</i> |
| з | <i>about</i> | Прайшо <u>ў</u> з кіла <u>м</u> етр. | <i>I walked about a kilometer.</i> |
| за | <i>behind</i> | Ён пайшо <u>ў</u> за ха <u>т</u> у. | <i>He went behind the house.</i> |
| | <i>at</i> | Саджу <u>ся</u> за стол. | <i>I sit down at the table.</i> |
| | <i>after</i> | Гавары <u>лі</u> далё <u>к</u> а за по <u>ў</u> нач. [not translated, expresses distance] | <i>They talked well past midnight.</i> |
| | | Жыве <u>ў</u> за 40 кіла <u>м</u> етра <u>ў</u> за го <u>р</u> ада. | <i>He lives 40 kilometers from the city.</i> |
| | <i>in</i> | Гэ <u>т</u> а мо <u>ж</u> на зра <u>б</u> іць за два д <u>н</u> і. | <i>This can get done in two days.</i> |

| | | | |
|------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| на | <i>on</i> | Паставіць яго на стол. | <i>He will put it on the table.</i> |
| | <i>to</i> | Ідзём на Магілёў. | <i>We're going to Mοhilyou.</i> |
| | [not translated, similar to 'per'] | Два разы на тыдзень. | <i>Twice a week.</i> |
| | <i>by</i> | Дыван тры на шэсць метраў. | <i>The carpet is three by six meters.</i> |
| па | <i>up to</i> | Стаіць у вадзе па пояс. | <i>He stands in water up to his waist.</i> |
| | <i>for</i> | Пайдзі пад студню па ваду. | <i>Go to the well for water.</i> |
| | <i>along</i> | Людзі ішлі па той бок. | <i>People were walking along that side.</i> |
| пад | <i>under</i> | Схаваў яго пад падушку. | <i>He hid it under the pillow.</i> |
| | <i>about</i> | Гадоў пад сорок. | <i>About forty years.</i> |
| | <i>to</i> | Пайдзі пад студню па ваду. | <i>Go to the well for water.</i> |
| паўз | <i>by</i> | Праязджалі паўз лес. | <i>We drove by the forest.</i> |
| пра | <i>about</i> | Мы гаварылі пра яго. | <i>We were talking about him.</i> |
| праз | <i>through</i> | Прайсці праз натоўп. | <i>To pass through a crowd.</i> |
| | <i>after</i> | Прышло праз дзве гадзіны. | <i>It arrived after two hours.</i> |
| | <i>because of</i> | Праз гэта я многае страціў. | <i>I suffered a lot because of this.</i> |

| | | |
|--------|---|---|
| скрозь | <i>through</i> (implying difficulty) Промні прабіва <u>л</u> іся скрозь галіны. | <i>Sunbeams broke through the branches.</i> |
| цераз | <i>across</i> Пераступіць цераз парог. <i>through</i> Дождж ішоў цераз поўнач. | <i>To step across the threshold. It rained right through midnight.</i> |
| у | <i>to</i> Дзеці ходзяць ў школу. <i>in</i> Запісаў гэта ў сшытак. <i>into</i> Яны ўвайшлі ў лес. <i>on</i> Стукаць у дзверы. <i>at</i> Страляць у праціўніка. <i>up to</i> Намяло снегу ў пояс. [not translated, similar to 'per'] Адзін раз у год. <i>on</i> Не працую ў выхадныя. [used to denote multiplication] Два ў тры — шэсць. | <i>The children go to school. He wrote it down in his notebook. They walked into the forest. To knock on the door. To shoot at the enemy. Snow drifted up to waist height. Once a year. I don't work on weekends. Two times three is six.</i> |

Chapter 23

The Genitive Case

23.1 Use of the genitive case

This case is used both by certain prepositions and also to express ownership and relationship. Some verbs, like баяцца, *to fear*, and хацець, *to want*, require that the direct object be placed in the genitive case. To negate a sentence, the particle не is placed before the direct object, and the direct object is placed in the genitive case. A lack of something can be expressed by the word няма, followed by the noun in the genitive plural, or genitive singular if the noun has no plural form.

Расліны баяцца марозу.
Я сама гэтага хацела.

*Plants fear frost.
I wanted this myself.*

Невядома, хто гаспадар гэтага
катэджа.

*No one knows who the owner of this
cottage is.*

Я не маю часу.
Я нічога не разумею.

*I do not have any time.
I do not understand anything.*

Шкада, але і ў мяне нічога няма.

It is sad, but I do not have anything either.

23.2 Prepositions with the genitive case

The following prepositions can be followed by the genitive case. The meaning of each preposition in that context is given.

ад *from*

Ад сасны адламалася галінка. *A branch broke off from the tree.*

Схаваліся ад дажджу. *They hid from the rain.*

Ад вясны да восені. *From spring to fall.*

than

Мацней ад грому. *Stronger than thunder.*

акрамя *but*

Там нікога не было
акрамя мяне. *No one was there
but me.*

| | | | |
|---------|---|---|--|
| апрача | <i>but</i> | Там ніког <u>а</u> не было апрача мяне. | <i>No one was there besides me.</i> |
| без | <i>without</i> | Без усяляка <u>й</u> прычы <u>ны</u> . | <i>Without any excuse.</i> |
| вакол | <i>around</i> | Вакол яго сабра <u>лі</u> ся люд <u>зі</u> . | <i>People gathered around him.</i> |
| воддаль | <i>far from</i> | Воддаль даро <u>гі</u> стаяла вёс <u>ка</u> . | <i>Far from the road stood a village.</i> |
| да | <i>until</i> | Яшчэ некалькі дзён да жні <u>ва</u> . | <i>It is still a few days until harvest.</i> |
| | <i>to</i> | Дадаць пяць да трох. Ужо да берага падплы <u>ва</u> ў. | <i>Add five to three. He had already swam to the bank.</i> |
| дзеля | <i>for [someone's benefit]</i> | Зраб <u>лю</u> гэта дзеля ця <u>бе</u> . | <i>I will do this for you.</i> |
| для | <i>for</i> | Для яго гэта лёг <u>ка</u> я справа. | <i>It is an easy thing for him.</i> |
| з | <i>off of (opposite of на + accusative)</i> | Прыбра <u>ў</u> ліст з ак <u>на</u> . | <i>He removed the leaf off of the window.</i> |
| | <i>out of (opposite of у + accusative)</i> | Выйша <u>ў</u> з ва <u>ды</u> . | <i>He got out of the water.</i> |

| | | | |
|---------|---------------------------|---|---|
| замест | <i>instead</i> | Хочаш вады замест чаю? | <i>Do you want water instead of tea?</i> |
| звыш | <i>more than</i> | Набраў звыш двух дзесяткаў. | <i>He gathered more than twenty.</i> |
| каля | <i>near</i> | Дрэва расце каля плоту. | <i>The tree grows near the fence.</i> |
| | <i>about</i> | Каля пяці гадзін. | <i>About five o'clock.</i> |
| ля | <i>near</i> | Ён там ля лазьні блізка жыў. | <i>He lived there, close near the bath-house.</i> |
| між | <i>among</i> | Спрэчка між сябраў. | <i>An arguement among friends.</i> |
| паводле | <i>in accordance with</i> | Апанутая паводле апошняй моды. | <i>Dressed according to the latest fashions.</i> |
| паміж | <i>between</i> | Стаяць паміж двух агней. | <i>To stand between two fires.</i> |
| пасля | <i>after</i> | Пасля аб'яднання, яны выбралі старэйшага. | <i>After the unification, they selected an elder.</i> |
| | | Настаўніца, якая прыедзе пасля вучылішча. | <i>The teacher, which will come after the school.</i> |

| | | | |
|---------|---------------------------|---|---|
| супраць | <i>across</i> | Хата стаіць супраць школы. | <i>The house is across from the school.</i> |
| | <i>against</i> | Плысці супраць цячэння. Хто «за» і хто «супраць»? Здарылася супраць маёй волі. | <i>To swim against the current. Who is “for” and who is “against”? It happened against my will.</i> |
| сярод | <i>in the middle of</i> | Дрэва стаіць сярод поля. | <i>A tree stands in the middle of a field.</i> |
| у | [used to show possession] | Няўжо ў іх няма сабакі? У яго баліць галава. | <i>Do they really not have a dog? His head hurts.</i> |
| | <i>at</i> | Шыць паліто ў краўца. | <i>To have the coat mended at the tailor’s.</i> |

Chapter 24

The Dative Case

24.1 Use of the dative case

This case is used to signify indirect objects, and is also used by certain prepositions. Very often, words in the dative case can be translated into English as having the word 'to' placed before them. There are also certain constructions with predicates that use the dative case.

| | |
|--|--|
| Вы даяце прыклад усім нашым калгаснікам. | <i>You give an example to all our workers.</i> |
| Мне трэба выйсці. | <i>I have to leave.</i> |
| Адставаць жа нельга нам! | <i>We must not fall behind!</i> |
| Не дваццаць табе летаў! | <i>You are not even twenty years old!</i> |

24.2 Prepositions with the dative case

The preposition most commonly used with the dative case is *па*. There are many different meanings of *па* + dative, but a few examples are given below. For these usages, the preposition *па* only takes the dative when the indirect object is singular. If the object is plural, it must take the prepositional case.

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Я даў дзецям па яблыку. | <i>I gave the children one apple apiece.</i> |
| Паляўнічы ідзе па слядах звера. | <i>The hunter went along the animal's tracks.</i> |
| Спаборніцтвы па футболе. | <i>Soccer competition.</i> |
| Не прыехаў па хваробе. | <i>He did not come because he was sick.</i> |
| Таварыш па ўніверсітэту. | <i>A friend from college.</i> |

The preposition *к* is also used with the dative case. This preposition is quite a bit rarer in Belarusian than it is in Russian. Often, the preposition *да* + genitive is used in Belarusian in situations where Russian uses *к* + dative.

[used to indicate moving towards something]

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Травы цягнуліся к сонцу. | <i>The plants strained towards the sun.</i> |
| <i>for</i> | |
| Спякла пірог к святу. | <i>She baked a pie for the holiday.</i> |
| <i>just before</i> | |
| Прышоў на сход к дзвюм гадзінам. | <i>I came to the meeting just before two o'clock.</i> |

Chapter 25

The Instrumental Case

25.1 Use of the instrumental case

This case is used by certain prepositions and also to signify that the noun functions as some means for an action. The direct object of some verbs, especially those that translate as *to be*, also takes this case. A word in the instrumental case can often be translated into English by preceding it with the preposition “with.”

| | |
|---|--|
| Галоўнай іх сілай былі гранаты. | <i>Their main weapon was grenades.</i> |
| Мы давай паедзем машынай. | <i>Let's take the car.</i> |
| Ты павінна валодаць гэтай мовай так, каб чулася як удома між людзей, якія па-беларуску гавораць. | <i>You should have such control of this language that you feel at home among people, who speak Belarusian.</i> |

25.2 Prepositions with the instrumental case

The following prepositions can be followed by the instrumental case. The meaning of each preposition in that context is given.

| | | | |
|-----|------------------|---------------------------|---|
| з | <i>with</i> | Я пайшоў з імі. | <i>I went with them.</i> |
| за | <i>behind</i> | Ідзі за мною. | <i>Walk behind me.</i> |
| між | <i>between</i> | Дарога ўецца між палямі. | <i>The road winds between fields.</i> |
| над | <i>over</i> | Над лесам навісла хмара. | <i>A stormcloud hung over the forest.</i> |
| | <i>exceeding</i> | Мароз над усімі маразамі. | <i>A frost exceeding all frosts.</i> |

| | | | |
|-------|--------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| пад | <i>beneath</i> | Жыта залоціцца пад сонцам. | <i>The rye ripened beneath the sun.</i> |
| | <i>under</i> | Быць пад строгай аховай. | <i>To be under heavy guard.</i> |
| паміж | <i>between</i> | Паміж небам і зямлёю. | <i>Between heaven and earth.</i> |
| | <i>in front of</i> | Не адступаць перад цяжкасцямі. | <i>Do not retreat in the face of difficulty.</i> |
| перад | <i>before</i> | Перад тым, трэба падумаць. | <i>Before that, one must think.</i> |
| | <i>compared to</i> | Яны нішто перад ім. | <i>They are nothing compared to him.</i> |

Chapter 26

The Prepositional Case

26.1 Use of the prepositional case

This case is only used when following prepositions, hence the name. The following prepositions can be followed by the prepositional case. The meaning of each preposition in that context is given.

| | | | |
|----|--|--|---|
| аб | <i>about</i> | Гаварылі аб усім. | <i>We spoke of everything.</i> |
| на | <i>on</i> | Кніга ляжыць на сталё. | <i>The book lies on the table.</i> |
| | <i>in</i> | На вайне куды болей патрэбна такая вось дужасць. | <i>In war, such strength is needed much more.</i> |
| па | [used to denote movement all over or around something] | Ехаць на санях па лёдзе. | <i>To ride a sleigh over the ice.</i> |
| | <i>among</i> | Чуткі хадзілі па вёсках. | <i>The rumors circulated among the villages.</i> |
| | <i>after</i> | Па абедзе. | <i>After dinner.</i> |

For the usages of па given below, the prepositional case can only be used if the object is plural. If it is singular, the dative case must be used, see 24.2 for examples.

| | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Пайшлі па ягоных слядах. | <i>They followed in his steps.</i> |
| Снаборніцтва па лыжах. | <i>Skiing competition.</i> |

| | | | |
|-----|-------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| пры | <i>near</i> | Ён быў пры смерці. | <i>He was near death.</i> |
| | <i>with</i> | Я застаўся пры сваёй думцы. | <i>I was left with my opinion.</i> |
| у | <i>in</i> | Стаіць у пакоі. | <i>He is standing in the room.</i> |

Chapter 27

Prepositional Oddities

27.1 Preposition variation

The prepositions listed below have a special form when preceding certain words.

| normal form | auxiliary form | |
|-------------|----------------|---|
| аб | аба | When preceding the words мне, ўсім, and ўсіх. |
| к | ка | When preceding the word мне. |
| пад | пада | When preceding the word мной. |
| над | нада | When preceding the word мной. |
| перад | перада | When preceding the word мной. |
| у | ва | When preceding any word beginning with ў. |
| у | ў | Otherwise, if it follows a word ending in a vowel. |
| з | са | When preceding a word whose first letter is either ж, з, м, с, or ш, and whose second letter is a consonant |

27.2 Pronouns following prepositions

A characteristic unique to Belarusian of all the Slavic languages, a prosthetic н is not added to the pronouns ён, яно, яна, and яны when following a preposition.

| | |
|---------|------------------|
| аб ім | <i>about it</i> |
| да яго | <i>to him</i> |
| з ёй | <i>with her</i> |
| над імі | <i>over them</i> |

27.3 Prepositional assimilation

Certain prepositions and particles are assimilated into the words that follow them. They and the words in front of them are pronounced as one word. For purposes of pronunciation, all spelling rules should be applied to the preposition as if it were part of the next word, for example, if the following word begins with a palatized consonant, the ending of the preposition is pronounced palatized. Classical orthography writes the prepositions with the rules applied, while Modern orthography does not. Pronunciation of prepositions reflects the application of the spelling rules, regardless of which orthography is used.

Classical

Modern

Устаў зь зямлі.

Устаў з зямлі.

I got up from the ground.

Як сарока бязь хваста.

Як сарока без хваста.

Like a magpie without a tail.

27.3 Prepositions with adverbs

Sometimes prepositions can be followed by an adverb, which is not declined.

Які прагноз на сёння?

What is the forecast for today?

Нам трэба купіць ежу на заўтра.

We need to buy food for tomorrow.

Chapter 28

Conditional Sentences

28.1 Real conditional sentences

Conditional sentences consist of two clauses, a condition, and the result of that condition. If the result is certain, given the condition, then the sentence is formed thus; the first clause begins with *калі* and states the condition. The second clause can optionally begin with the word *дык*, and then states the result.

Калі ён здаровы, дык ён можа працаваць. *If he is healthy, then he can work.*

Калі ён ведаў, ён не ішоў. *If he knew, then he did not go.*

28.2 Hypothetical conditional sentences

If the result is uncertain, then the particle *бы* (*б* when preceded by a vowel) must be inserted into the result clause and any indicative verb must be changed to the past tense. If there is speculation involved, then the condition clause can also have *бы* added to it and the verb changed to the past tense.

Калі ён здаровы, ён мог бы працаваць. *If he is healthy, he might be able to work.*

Калі б ён быў здаровы, то мог бы працаваць. *If he were healthy, then he might be able to work.*

Калі ён ведаў, ён не пайшоў бы. *If he knew, he might not have gone.*

Калі б ён ведаў, то не пайшоў бы. *If he had not known, he might not have gone.*

Chapter 29

Adverbs

29.1 Adverbs formed from adjectives

Most adverbs are formed by removing the final **-ы** or **-і** from the adjective and adding **-а** to the ending. If the stress in the adjective falls on the last or next to the last syllable, it often shifts to the first syllable for the adverb.

| | | | |
|----------|------------------|----------|--------------------|
| блізкі | <i>close</i> | блізка | <i>closely</i> |
| важны | <i>important</i> | важна | <i>importantly</i> |
| вясёлы | <i>happy</i> | весела | <i>happily</i> |
| дакладны | <i>precise</i> | дакладна | <i>precisely</i> |
| ранні | <i>early</i> | ранна | <i>early</i> |
| ціхі | <i>quiet</i> | ціха | <i>quietly</i> |

29.2 Compound adverbs

These adverbs are formed by adding 'па-' to the front of the adjective. When certain possessive adjectives are formed from animate nouns, they can be made into adverbs indicating similarity of behavior to the animate noun.

| | | | |
|---------|----------------|------------|--------------------|
| дзіцячы | <i>child's</i> | па-дзіцячы | <i>childishly</i> |
| воўчы | <i>wolf's</i> | па-воўчы | <i>like a wolf</i> |

Ordinal numbers form adverbs by declining the adjective for the nominative neuter case and adding the prefix.

| | | | |
|-------|---------------|-----------|-----------------|
| першы | <i>first</i> | па-першае | <i>firstly</i> |
| другі | <i>second</i> | па-другое | <i>secondly</i> |
| трэці | <i>third</i> | па-трэцяе | <i>thirdly</i> |

Some adjectives, especially ones denoting language or nationality, form an adverb by appending the prefix and changing the final **-і** to an **-у**.

| | | | |
|-----------|-------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| беларускі | <i>Belarusian</i> | па-беларуску | <i>in Belarusian</i> |
| брацкі | <i>brother's</i> | па-брацку | <i>like a brother</i> |
| англійскі | <i>English</i> | па-англійску | <i>in English</i> |

29.3 The adverbs болей, меней, больш and менш

The adverbs болей and больш mean *more*, and меней and менш mean *less*. See **Section 6.4** for more on the usage of these adverbs.

| | |
|--|---|
| Сястры ён <u>болей</u> не ўбачыць. | <i>He will not see his sister anymore.</i> |
| Куды <u>болей</u> за іх баяўся Ізяслаў свайго <u>народа</u> . | <i>Izyaslau feared his own people much more than them.</i> |
| У жыцці, аднак, усё <u>сталася</u> <u>болей</u> складана і <u>меней</u> шчасліва. | <i>In life, however, everything became more complicated and less happy.</i> |
| Кожны з якіх збіў <u>больш</u> за 100 <u>нашых</u> самалётаў. | <i>Each of which destroyed more than 100 of our planes.</i> |
| Я памкнуўся <u>бліжэй</u> , і Франі <u>больш</u> не пабачыў. | <i>I strove closer, and I did not see Franya any more.</i> |
| Яна, тым не менш, таіла ў сабе неразгаданую загадку. | <i>She nevertheless concealed within herself an unsolved riddle.</i> |
| Ён пачаў <u>менш</u> успамінаць былое. | <i>He started to remember the past less.</i> |

29.4 Comparative and superlative adverbs

There are two ways to form the comparative and two ways to form the superlative form of an adverb. The short comparative form is the more common of the two. It is identical to the short comparative adjective. Section 6.1 covers its formation thoroughly. Not all adverbs have a short comparative form, but all adverbs can also form a comparative by preceding the adverb with болей or больш.

| | |
|--|---|
| На вайне <u>куды</u> <u>болей</u> патрэбна такая <u>вось</u> <u>дужасць</u> . | <i>In war, such strength is much more necessary.</i> |
| Рабілася ўсё <u>болей</u> сцюдзёна на гэтым <u>ветраным</u> узлеску. | <i>It became much colder at this windy forest-edge.</i> |
| «Размова пра паходы <u>скочана</u> » сказаў <u>больш</u> лагодна | <i>“All talk of the march is finished” he said more good-naturedly.</i> |
| Гэта ідэя будзе <u>больш</u> <u>выгадна</u> . | <i>This idea will be more profitable.</i> |

There are two ways of forming the superlative adverb. The first is to precede the adverb with *найбольш*, *most*. The second way is to follow the adverb by the phrase *за ўсё* or *за ўсіх*.

Нас маглі накіраваць куды заўгодна, *They could place us wherever is*
але найбольш верагодна – у *convenient, but most likely, it will*
стралковы батальён. *be into a rifle battalion.*

Але найбольш зацята я не хацеў *But most stubbornly, I did not want to*
стаць кампазітарам. *become a composer.*

Але болей за ўсё яму дакучала *But mostly, he felt cravings of hunger.*
адчуванне голаду.

Болей за ўсё верагодна, што ён *It was most likely that he felt the*
адчуў непажаданую *unwanted perspective of loneliness.*
пэрспэктыву адзіноты.

29.5 Miscellaneous adverbs

There are many important adverbs that are not derived from adjectives. A very few of them are listed here.

| | | | |
|---------|--------------------|----------|--------------------------|
| дзе | <i>where</i> | куды | <i>to where</i> |
| тут | <i>here</i> | сюды | <i>to here</i> |
| там | <i>there</i> | туды | <i>to there</i> |
| нідзе | <i>nowhere</i> | нікуды | <i>not to anywhere</i> |
| усюды | <i>everywhere</i> | | |
| | | адкуль | <i>from where</i> |
| дома | <i>at home</i> | адсюль | <i>from here</i> |
| дадому | <i>to home</i> | адтуль | <i>from there</i> |
| | | ніадкуль | <i>not from anywhere</i> |
| калі | <i>when</i> | | |
| цяпер | <i>now</i> | сёння | <i>today</i> |
| зараз | <i>immediately</i> | заўтра | <i>tomorrow</i> |
| тады | <i>then</i> | учора | <i>yesterday</i> |
| потым | <i>after that</i> | | |
| ніколі | <i>never</i> | вельмі | <i>very</i> |
| заўсёды | <i>always</i> | зноў | <i>again</i> |
| | | ледзь | <i>barely</i> |
| як | <i>how</i> | надта | <i>significantly</i> |
| так | <i>so/that way</i> | крыху | <i>a little</i> |
| неяк | <i>some way</i> | шмат | <i>a lot</i> |
| ніяк | <i>no way</i> | многа | <i>much/many</i> |

Chapter 30

Conjunctions and Particles

30.1 Coordinating conjunctions

Coordinating conjunctions join two different phrases into one sentence.

| | | | |
|-------|--------------------------|--|---|
| i | <i>and</i> | Ён прыехаў і адразу пачаў працаваць | <i>He arrived and immediately began to work.</i> |
| | <i>both</i> | Мне падабаюцца і клубніца і маліна. | <i>I like both strawberries and raspberries.</i> |
| a | <i>and</i> (contrasting) | Ты школьнік, а ён студэнт. | <i>You are in grade school, and he is in college.</i> |
| | <i>but</i> | Ён паехаў, а я засталася. | <i>He went, but I stayed behind.</i> |
| аднак | <i>although</i> | Гэта не зусім лагічна, аднак значна больш нелагічна быў яго наступны ўчынак. | <i>This was not completely logical, although his next action was much more logical.</i> |
| але | <i>but</i> | Галоўнай іх сілай былі гранаты, але кідаць іх было яшчэ далёка. | <i>Their main weapon was grenades, but it was still a long way to throw them.</i> |
| ды | <i>and</i> | Каму-ж, калі не ім, па фэстах валачыцца, ды з бяднейшых пакепліваць? | <i>Who, if not they, should wander around the festival and make fun of poor people?</i> |
| | <i>but</i> | Людзі паміралі, ды не спынялі барацьбы. | <i>People died, but they did not stop the fighting.</i> |

ПОТЫМ *then*
Ліць пот за іншых в ўласнай патрэбе, потым ад голаду змерці гатовы. *To pour sweat for others in their own need, then be prepared to die from hunger.*

таксама *also*
Дзеці працавалі таксама як і дарослыя. *The children worked also, just like the adults.*

то *both*
Гэта ідзе то ўверх, то ўніз. *It goes both up and down.*

See **Chapter 28** for examples of *to* as a conditional conjunction.

ці *or*
Ці рана, ці позна, ці зусім не прыйдзе. *Either sooner, or later, or he will not come at all.*

30.2 Subordinating conjunctions

Subordinating conjunctions join a clause to another clause, on which it depends.

бо *because*
Хадзем шпарчэй, бо спознімся. *Let's walk faster, because we are going to be late.*

каб *so that*
Ён хоча, каб яго сын быў лекарам. *He wants his son to be a doctor.*

30.3 Predicates

When these are used, the sentence will not have a noun in the nominative case as a subject. Often they are used in combination with the dative case.

можна *one may*
Гэта можна зрабіць за два дні. *This can get done in two days.*

| | | |
|-----------------|--|--|
| н <u>ель</u> га | <i>one must not</i> Н <u>ель</u> га хадз <u>і</u> ць па газ <u>о</u> нах. <i>one cannot</i> Чалав <u>е</u> ку н <u>ель</u> га жыць без лю <u>б</u> ов <u>і</u> . | <i>No walking on the grass.</i> <i>Man cannot live without love.</i> |
| ня <u>ма</u> | <i>there is none</i> У мян <u>е</u> ня <u>ма</u> грош <u>а</u> й. | <i>I do not have any money.</i> |
| тр <u>э</u> ба | <i>it is necessary</i> На ко <u>ж</u> ны стр <u>э</u> л тр <u>э</u> ба был <u>о</u> браць дазв <u>о</u> л камадз <u>і</u> ра | <i>For each shot, they needed to get the commander's permission.</i> |
| шкад <u>а</u> | <i>it is sad</i> Шкад <u>а</u> , што т <u>о</u> е да мян <u>е</u> яшч <u>э</u> не дайшл <u>о</u> . | <i>It is too bad that it still has not come to me.</i> |

30.4 Suffixes

There are suffixes that can be attached to any interrogative pronoun or adverb. Doing this is equivalent to appending “some” to the beginning of an interrogative pronoun or adverb in English.

-сьці

| | |
|--|---|
| Ён яшч <u>э</u> да <u>да</u> ў пра злач <u>ы</u> нна <u>с</u> ць та <u>е</u> вайн <u>ы</u> , за яку <u>ю</u> кал <u>і</u> сьц <u>і</u> пр <u>ы</u> йдзе <u>ц</u> ца не <u>ка</u> му адка <u>з</u> ва <u>ц</u> ь. | <i>He again thought about the crimes of that war, for which sometime, someone would have to answer.</i> |
|--|---|

-небудзь

| | |
|--|--|
| Што-не <u>б</u> удз <u>ь</u> тлумач <u>ы</u> ць я не ме <u>ў</u> с <u>і</u> лы. Ёсць як <u>і</u> -не <u>б</u> удз <u>ь</u> стар <u>ы</u> ? Што да вайн <u>ы</u> тут жы <u>ў</u> ? | <i>This was something that I did not have the strength to explain. Is there someone who's old? That lived here before the war?</i> |
|--|--|

-колечы

| | |
|--|--|
| Ён пашука <u>ў</u> чаг <u>о</u> -кол <u>е</u> чы з' <u>е</u> с <u>ц</u> і. | <i>He looked for something to eat.</i> |
|--|--|

30.5 Other particles

| | | |
|-----|---|---|
| аж | [indicates a limit or extremeness] Гналі нас аж да Дунаю. Навокал зрабілася аж занадта ціхмана. | <i>They pursued us all the way to Duna. All around it became way too quiet.</i> |
| але | yes Але, я вас разумею. | <i>Yes, I understand you.</i> |
| абы | <i>if only</i> Абы яна пазваніла... <i>just</i> Хачу забіць яго, абы ціха было. | <i>If only she would call... I want to kill him, just so it would be quiet.</i> |
| жа | [adds emphasis] Ён жа вярнуўся тайком, без дазволу. | <i>He returned secretly, without permission.</i> |
| так | yes Так, але... У чым я магу вам памагчы? <i>so</i> Так думаў я. <i>so</i> [adds emphasis] Бо іх ужо так шмат на тым баку. | <i>Yes, but... How can I help you? I thought so. Because there is already so many of them on that side.</i> |
| ці | [indicates question] Ці размаўляеш па-беларуску? | <i>Do you speak Belarusian?</i> |

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