

GLOSSARY: Linguistic terms made accessible

The sign ^ signifies a term defined here in a narrowed sense, adequate for the purposes of this text

Term	Definition	Example
abstract noun	a noun that denotes a non-material subject or object such as an idea, emotion or name of an action or state	love, illness, and election
adjective	a word describing objects (adding to an object/subject)	beautiful and active
adverb	a word describing the manner, amount, time, or place in which an action or state occurs	promptly, much, soon and far
affix	any morpheme except a root word	-tion, -ness and -ly
agent noun	denotes an agent of an action or bearer of state	player – a person/device that plays supervisor – a person who supervises
agent suffix	forms agent nouns	-er, -or and -ist
alternation of sounds	a variation of a sound in different forms of a word or in related words	consonant – consonance video – vision
assimilation of consonants	consonants of opposite characteristics “blending” together to gain similar qualities.	a voiced consonant /В/ positioned next to a voiceless /Х/ also becomes voiceless /Ф/ in the word вход – entrance, which is pronounced as /ФХОТ/
^borrowed word	^ a word that has been modified to fit Russian grammar (cf. loanword)	plan – планировать action – акция
calque	a literal word-to-word or morpheme-to-morpheme translation	skyscraper – небоскрёб, from sky – небо and to scrape – скрести (скрёб is the past tense, masculine)
case	a grammatical category used to express relationships of words in a sentence and – in a wider sense – relationships of things	office – офис from the office – из офиса
cognate	etymologically related words	to be – быть

collocation	a group of words that interdepend semantically and grammatically	white snow, run quickly and surprisingly strong
common gender	a grammatical gender that may be assigned to both males and females depending on contexts.	левша – a left-handed person
conjugation	a change in verb to express person, number, tense, and mood according to the context	I work, he works
consonant	a sound produced by combination of air flow and some type of obstruction labial – obstruction by lips and teeth palatal – obstruction by palate and tongue guttural – obstruction by throat and the back of the tongue	/b/ – labial /k/ – guttural /t/ – palatal
declension	the modification of nouns, pronouns, and adjectives according to case and number	nominative – год (year) genitive – года dative – году accusative – год instrumental – годом prepositional – о годе
demonym	a noun denoting a resident by the place of residence	Muscovite and Israelite
derivation	the process of creating a new word from an old word, usually by adding a prefix or a suffix	sad – sadness speech – speechless dependent – independent
derivational morpheme	an affix added to create a new word	-ful in hopeful and -less in hopeless
derivative	a new word – product of derivation	see the example in derivation
digraph	a sound recorded using two letters	ph=/f/ in Philip – Филипп
diminutive suffix	suffix that facilitates diminutive meaning	-y in Jimmy
diphthong	the combination of two vowels in a single syllable ^two sounds represented by one letter	proud and maid in the word computer, the letter u represents the sounds /yoʊ/
dividing soft sign	the graphic representation of “iotated” pronunciation of Russian vowels е/йэ/, ё/йо/, ю/йу/ and я/йа/ that follow a soft consonant	in the word компьютер (computer), the soft sign facilitates the “iotated” pronunciation: ком/п’йу/тер

dominant word	in a collocation of two or more parts of speech, the dominant word determines the grammatical forms of subordinate (dependent) words	in the collocation активная субстанция (active substance), the subordinate adjective активная agrees with the dominant noun субстанция in gender, number, and case
eliding vowels	vowels that are omitted in some forms of the same word or in cognates from different languages	able – ability sister – сестра – сестёр
emphasis (or stress)	a vowel in a strong phonetic position	мо<u>т</u>or – мото<u>р</u>
ending/inflectional ending	a morpheme that represents the change of a grammatical form	in verbs of the past tense был, была, было (was), the endings -а and -о represent feminine and neuter gender, respectively
euphony	a pleasant/smooth sound	
ethnolinguistics	the branch of linguistics concerned with the relations between linguistic and cultural behaviour	
ethnonym	a noun denoting a representative of an ethnos	Scot, Mongol, Kazakh
etymology	the origin of a word and the historical development of its meaning	
extended affix/suffix	two or more suffixes used as one to create a new word's meaning or grammatical category	English: -ical = ic+al in economical Russian: -ичн = ич+н in экономичный
false friends	words that look and sound similar, but they differ in meaning	English verb look – Russian noun лук (onion)
gerund	a verbal noun	(good) planning
grammar	the system in which parts of speech are organised to function	
grammatical category	a class of linguistic units that share the same characteristics	verbs denote actions or states adjectives describe objects declension is a variation of a noun by grammatical case

grammatical gender	the distribution of words and forms into classes traditionally correlated with genders (masculine and feminine) or their absence (neuter).	masculine – КОТ feminine – КОШКА neuter – МОЛОКО
grapheme	a letter/a symbol that represents a unit of a language such as sound	a, b, c etc.
graphic borrowing/ graphical loanwords	a letter-to-letter borrowing of a word that does is not necessarily pronounced as in the donor language	radio – радио
hissing (or hushing) consonant	a (consonant) sound similar to a hiss	/ch/, /sh/ and /s/
homographs	words of different meanings and origin spelt the same (but not necessarily pronounced the same)	an <u>o</u> bject – to <u>o</u> bject he <u>do</u> es (third person of to do) – beautiful <u>do</u> es (plural of doe)
homonym	words that have the same spelling or pronunciation but different meanings and origins.	mandarin (i) – an officer mandarin (ii) – the language mandarin (iii) – the fruit
homophone	words that have the same pronunciation but different meaning and spelling	ate – eight, be – bee and board – bored
iamb, iambus, or iambic metre	a group of two syllables, the first unstressed and the second stressed	<i>Then happy I, that love and am beloved, Where I may not remove nor be removed</i> (W. Shakespeare)
imperfective aspect/imperfective verb	imperfective verbs are associated with lasting, regular, or incomplete action. The nearest English form is the continuous tense. In Russian, aspect is an invariant characteristic of a verb.	я делаю работу – I am doing work
indeclinable noun	not declined for case or number	метро, такси
infinitive	the initial form of verb	English – to do Russian – делать
inflection	change of word forms	to be – am – are – is – was – will be
inflectional morpheme	facilitates inflection	the ending -s in English plural nouns: doll – dolls

initial form	the traditionally accepted form, in which a word is found in dictionaries	singular form for English nouns: table singular nominative case for Russian nouns: стол
interfix (or linking element)	a sound placed between two morphemes for the purpose of euphony	English graphology and Russian самолёт – airplane (from сам – self and летать – to fly)
interjection	expression of emotion in language	ah, oh and wow
International Scientific Vocabulary (ISV)	scientific and specialised words used in the modern language, the origin of which may not be certain	insulin, vitamin
iotated pronunciation	pronunciation that includes the sound /й/ – “iot” – that may be or may be not recognised graphically	computer – компьютер
lexeme	the fundamental unit of a language vocabulary	be – быть is the word associated with fact and existence and passes this meaning to all derivatives, e.g. быль – a story based on true events
lexis	the total bank of words and phrases of a language	
loanword	a word adopted from a foreign language with little or no modification	baker – байкер quarantine – карантин
metalinguistic awareness	insight into the systematic nature that all languages have in common	
method of phonics	teaching children to identify sounds symbolised by combinations of letters	ea, e, ee and i symbolise the sound /i/ that may vary in its length
modal verb	an auxiliary verb	can, must, need
monophthong	a vowel retaining the same quality throughout its duration	read /reed/ and meal /meel/
morpheme	the smallest grammatical components of a word	in the word inequality : prefix in- , root word -equ- and suffixes -al- and -ity

morphological derivation	derivation that changes one part of speech into another	the noun comfort is derived into the adjective comfortable
morphology	the identification, analysis, and description of parts of speech and the morphemes of a language	
muffling of voiced consonants	a voiced consonant that alternates with its voiceless pair in specific phonetic positions	the Russian guttural voiced consonant /г/ in the word ранг – rank is pronounced as /ранк/, where the sound /к/ is also guttural but voiceless. However, it is a voiced /г'/ in the plural form – ранги
natural gender	grammatical gender of a noun that matches the physical gender of the denoted object	отец (father) is a masculine noun
nominalised adjective	an adjective used in the role of a noun	constant, infinitive
non-phonetic language	pronunciation of words does not match their spelling	English is a non-phonetic language: read, mean and few
noun	a word that denotes an object or a subject of a sentence	tree and station in the sentence: The tree grows by the station
number	grammatical category that indicates singular and plural states of objects	a person – people a child – children
onomatopoeia	a word that imitates a natural sound	bang! meow and cuckoo
orthoepy	pronunciation commonly accepted in a language	
orthogram	correct spelling chosen from more than one option that follows a rule or a tradition	spell -ie- in words except after -c- : achieve and receive
orthography	the conventional spelling system of a language	
part of speech	the grammatic and semantic function of a word in a sentence	
participle	a verbal adjective	working in working woman

patronym	a name derived from the name of a father or ancestor	Иванович – Ivanovitch (a son of Иван – Ivan)
perfective aspect	the aspect of a Russian verb associated with a singular or complete action. The nearest English form is the perfect tense	Я сделал работу – I have done the work
phoneme	a distinct unit of sound in a specified language	/b/, /p/ and /ee/
phonetic borrowing/phonetic loanwords	spelling of borrowed word reflects the pronunciation in the donor language	peignoir – пеньюар
phonetic language	a language, in which pronunciation highly correlates with written forms	
phonetics	the study of speech sounds	
psycholinguistics	the study of the relationships between psychological processes and linguistic behaviour, including the processes of vocabulary development and language acquisition	
plural	denoting more than one	cars and apples
predicate	a part of a sentence (typically a verb or verbs) that expresses an action or state	Wind blows The cat is black
prefix	an affix attached to the beginning of a word	un- in unlimited
primary source of borrowing	the language of a word's origin.	
proto-	first or earliest (pre-)	
proto-root / proto-stem / proto base	hypothetical (*) root morpheme present in cognates cross-linguistically	*b in be and быть *st in stand and стоять
reduction of vowels	a change in acoustic quality of a vowel that is perceived as “weakening”, e.g. shortening of duration and shift of stress to another vowel	in the English suffix -able , the vowel /e/ is reduced compare to the German suffix -abel borrowed by Russian as -абель

root word	the primary unit of word that appears in all cognates and bears its core meaning	in the words stand, stool, stone, statue and establish , the root word st- indicates a fixed state of an object
secondary source of borrowing	a donor language which itself borrowed the relevant words from another language	
semantic/lexical derivation	derivation that results into a word with a new meaning	progress – progression equal – unequal
semantic suffix	a suffix that modifies the meaning of a word	the suffix -less in the word hopeless transforms the noun hope into an adjective with negative connotation
sentence	subject and predicate with dependent words	A manager wrote a report. a manager (subject) wrote (predicate) a report (dependent word – object)
singular form	grammatical form that signifies a singular state of an object or subject of speech	a person, a child, and a table
stem (or base) of word	a part of word excluding an inflectional ending	in the adjective активный (active), the stem is активн-
subject of a sentence	an acting component of a message	A manager (subject) wrote a report
subordinate (dependent) word	in a collocation of two or more parts of speech, grammatical forms of subordinate word are determined by the forms of the dominant word	in the collocation активная субстанция (active substance), the subordinate adjective активная agrees with the dominant noun субстанция in gender, number, and case
suffix	an affix that follows a root word or another affix after the root	emotionally: -tion-, -al- and -ly are suffixes
syllable	an element of speech that includes one vowel, diphthong, or a syllabic consonant	com-pu-ter – 3 syllables fee-ling – 2 syllables table – 1 syllable
synonym	a word having the same or near the same meaning as another word	happy, joyful, and delighted
syntax	sentence structure	
text speak	the abbreviated form of written speech that utilises the names of letters and numbers, used predominantly in texts on mobile	How r u? – How are you? U 2 – you too Good nite – good night

	telephones with the purpose of reduction of the text volume	BTW – by the way FYI – for your information
trochee or trochiac meter	a metrical foot in poetry, in which a stressed syllable is followed by a weak syllable	Why were you born when the snow was falling ? You should have come to the cuckoo's calling ... (“A Dirge” by Christina Rossetti)
toponym	a name of a geographic location	England, Snowdon, and London
transliteration	writing words of sounds of a language in letters of another language	ocean – океан jazz – джаз
verb	a word used to denote an action or state	to walk, to sleep and to dream
vocabulary	1) all words known by a person 2) all words of a language	
^vocal vowel letter	^a vowel letter that is assigned to a physically pronounced sound (as opposed to a silent graphemes)	in the noun cliché , the vowel letter -é is vocal, and in the noun lake , the letter -e is silent
voiced consonant	pronunciation involves the vocal cords	/z/ in the word zoom
voiceless consonant	pronunciation does not involve the vocal cords	/s/ in the word son
vowel	a speech sound produced by unobstructed stream of air in the speech apparatus	/ee/ and /oo/
word class (open and closed)	word of the same grammatic and semantic function (part of speech).	
open word class	flexible acquisition of new units	new nouns and adjectives are created and borrowed from other languages frequently
closed word class	new units are rarely created or acquired	prepositions and connectives are typically exclusive to a language or group of languages
zero ending (-□)	absence of an inflectional ending in some forms of a word that has such an ending in other forms	мама – нет мам□ (mum – no mums) стол □ – нет стола (table – not table)