

Russian

Category	What the language does	Comments: How English differs and/or how the language will interfere with English	Example or description of errors
Phonology (the sounds that exist in the language)			
Vowels (general)	Russian has fewer vowels	The 'a' sound in 'sat' and the 'e' sound in 'set' merge into the same vowel sound. The 'i' sound in 'sit' and the 'ee' sound in 'seat' merge into the same vowel sound.	These words will be pronounced the same and potentially spelled the same. In general it may be the case that any word where one vowel is expected, the other is written.
Consonants (th)	There is no 'th' sound in Russian.	Words with 'th' anywhere will be replaced with a t- or d-like sound.	thin → tin then → din
Consonants (v, w)	Russian has a 'v' sound, but no 'w' sound.	English words with 'w' may be pronounced with a 'v' sound. English words with a 'v' may be hyper corrected to have a 'w' sound.	west ↔ vest
Consonants (ng)	Russian does not have the 'ng' sound.	For English words ending in 'ng', Russian speakers may drop the 'g' and pronounce just the 'n' (ie, they will pronounce words ending in 'ng' with an alveolar nasal rather than velar nasal).	sing → sin (pron: seen)
Syntax (parts of speech and rules)			
Parts of Speech	Russian has free word order because they have a rich case system (meaning, there are markers on nouns that indicate how they relate to each other). They have a default word order which is subject+verb+object. However, the free order allows them to place focus or emphasis on one noun over another.	English has rigid word order. It is possible to move the object before the verb (for example passive voice constructions or topicalization such as "Bagels, I like."), but this requires more subtle syntactic changes than simply changing the order of the words.	There is not much evidence that this effects a Russian speaker's English. However, there may be instances where the English seems stylistically odd because they have chosen to place emphasis on a word when an English speaker may not.

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Articles	There are no articles in Russian.	English as indefinite and definite articles that (generally speaking) mark the specificity of a noun.	This is the hardest grammatical element for Russian speakers to master and thus the most common area of error. I put book on table.
Verbs (general)	Russian shows perfect (completed) or progressive (continuous) aspect through affixes to the verb.	In English, we do this through helping verbs. Russian has very few helping verbs. To compensate, Russian speakers will use the simple tenses.	She has a bath now. [Intended: She is having a bath.]
Verbs (auxiliary)	Questions and negative statements are not formed with auxiliaries in Russian.	In English, questions and negative statements are formed with an auxiliary 'do' if there is no other auxiliary present. A Russian speaker may omit the 'do.'	How [did] you do that? I [do] no[t] have it.
Gender	Russian has a complex gender system. Nouns are broken into animate and inanimate, but also broken down further into masculine, feminine, and neuter.	A Russian speaker or writer may be aware that an article is required, but uses a possessive pronoun as the article or a gendered pronoun in place of 'it.'	English speaker: Have you seen my book? Russian speaker: I put her on the table.
Orthography (spelling)			
	Russian spelling corresponds very closely to Russian pronunciation.	Because English words are spelled in an almost unpredictable manner, Russians have much difficulty spelling in English. The phonological differences described above are examples of this.	
False cognates (words that look similar in both languages, but have different meanings; in reading and writing they may think/intend the meaning of the original language)			
	Word from the language	Meaning of the word	English word used
	Дата (data)	date	data
	Бог (Bog)	God	bog

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	Талон (Talon)	coupon	talon
	Труп (Troop)	corpse	troop
Style	Russian speech and writing can be abrupt or curt.		
Culture	The youth of Russia is interested in and embraces Western culture. The ruling classes discourage this feeling. On some level, the tension between Russia and the US still exists.		

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