

# Galician

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Galician is a Romance language closely related to Portuguese. It is spoken in the far northwestern part of the Iberian Peninsula. As a result of historical circumstances, Spanish has exerted a strong political and cultural influence over this region since the end of the Middle Ages, and there is in consequence in Galicia today a socially ascendant Spanish-speaking urban minority, while the rest of the population maintains Galician as its mother tongue. As a result, Galician is in a situation of language shift and the spoken language now includes numerous loan-words from Spanish. However, in recent decades Galician has been recognized as an official language in Galicia along with Spanish, and the language has gone through a process of standardization and social recovery.

The language variety described here is that of colloquial Galician as spoken by a middle-aged male speaker whose speech may be considered representative of an informal variety used by educated urban speakers.

## Consonants

	Bilabial	Labio-dental	Dental	Alveolar	Post-alveolar	Palatal	Velar
Plosive	p b		t d			ɟ	k g
Affricate					tʃ		
Nasal	m			n		ɲ	ŋ
Trill				r			
Tap				ɾ			
Fricative		f	θ	ɣ	ʃ		
Approximant						j	w
Lateral Approximant				l			

Some varieties of the language, particularly among elderly speakers, display two contrasting lateral consonants, one alveolar [l] and the other palatal [ʎ]. However, in the language of most speakers, especially in urban and younger speakers, the palatal lateral consonant has been replaced by a voiced palatal plosive [ɟ], as can be seen in the table above.

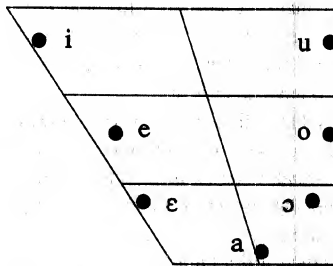
In the dialects of western Galician, instead of /θ/ and /ɣ/ there is only one fricative consonant, usually realized as a voiceless lamino-alveolar fricative [s]. This phenomenon is

known as *seseo* (Fernández Rei 1991: 189–215). Another dialectal characteristic which is encountered chiefly in the western half of the Galician-speaking region is known as *gheada*; this dialectal feature consists of the absence of the voiceless velar plosive /g/, which is replaced by a voiceless fricative with several possible realizations, including pharyngeal [h], uvular [χ], velar [x] and glottal [h]. Standard Galician, including the variety of pronunciation described here, does not show these variants.

p	'papo	<i>papo</i>	'jowl'	f	'fa	<i>xa</i>	'already'
b	'bimbjo	<i>vimbjo</i>	'wicker'	m	'mimo	<i>mimo</i>	'cuddle' (n)
t	'tinta	<i>tinta</i>	'ink'	n	'neno	<i>neno</i>	'child'
d	'doṇdo	<i>dondo</i>	'soft'	ɲ	'apo	<i>año</i>	'lamb'
ʃ	'aʃo	<i>allo</i>	'garlic'	ŋ	'uŋa	<i>unha</i>	'a'. 'one'
k	'kuko	<i>cuco</i>	'cuckoo'	r	ko'rer	<i>correr</i>	'to run'
g	'ganga	<i>ganga</i>	'bargain'	ɾ	'owro	<i>ouro</i>	'gold'
t̪	't̪ut̪o	<i>chucho</i>	'kiss'	l	'lingwa	<i>lingua</i>	'language'
f	'fofo	<i>fofo</i>	'flabby'	j	'baja	<i>vaia</i>	'goes' (subj)
θ	'θiŋθa	<i>cinza</i>	'ash'	w	'bow	<i>vou</i>	'I go'
s	'sišo	<i>siso</i>	'good sense'				

The approximants [j] and [w] may appear after a vowel, giving rise to sequences such as [ew], [ow], [ej], [oj], etc. While in most phonetic descriptions of Galician these are labelled diphthongs, in the present description they are viewed as sequences of vowel plus consonant, rather than as sequences of two vowels.

**Vowels**



Nasalization is not distinctive for vowels, but any vowel can become fully or partially nasalized in contact with a nasal. The effect is strongest when a vowel occurs between two nasal consonants, and nasalization is systematically indicated for this sequence of sounds in the examples in this article. (In the recorded passage, nasalization is indicated *wherever* the speaker produced a nasalized vowel, i.e. in more than just the NVN context.)

i	'bir	<i>vir</i>	'to come'	ɔ	'noʒ	<i>nós</i>	'we'
e	'ter	<i>ter</i>	'to have'	o	'koro	<i>corro</i>	'I run'
ɛ	'bero	<i>berro</i>	'shout' (n)	u	'duro	<i>duro</i>	'hard'
a	'pa	<i>pa</i>	'shovel'				

### Stress

Stress in Galician may fall on any of the last three syllables of a word. If a word has a closed syllable in final position, stress usually falls on that syllable, e.g. *final* [fi'nal] 'end', *roncón* [roŋ'kon] 'pipe in a bagpipe', *armar* [ar'mar] 'to arm'. In certain loans and learned words stress may be on the penultimate syllable, as in *revólver* [re'βolβer] 'revolver', *dolmen* [dɔlmɛŋ] 'dolmen', *útil* [util] 'useful'. If there is a final open syllable in a word, stress will normally fall on the penultimate syllable, e.g. *casa* [kaʒa] 'house', *home* ['ɔme] 'man', *carballo* [kar'βaʒo] 'oak', *edificio* [eðifi'tio] 'building'. However, some words end in a stressed vowel, e.g. *avó* [a'βo] 'grandfather', *alá* [a'la] 'over there'. This is true of the third person singular of the future tense in all verbs: *cantará* [kaŋ'ta'ra] 'will sing', *lerá* [le'ra] 'will read', *virá* [bi'ra] 'will come'. There are in consequence some minimal pairs where stress placement is contrastive, e.g. *revólver* [re'βolβer] 'revolver' vs. *revolver* [reβolβer] 'to mix'; *cantara* [kaŋ'tara] 'sang' (subj) vs. *cantará* [kaŋ'ta'ra] 'will sing'.

Some words ending in two open syllables bear the stress on the antepenultimate syllable, e.g. *cóbado* [ko'βaðo] 'elbow', *lóstrego* [loʒ'treɣo] 'lightning', *médico* [me'ðiko] 'doctor', *lógico* [lo'fiko] 'logical', *cálculo* [ka'kulo] 'calculation'.

### Conventions

The consonants represented in the table above as /b d g/ are only realized as a plosive after a pause or after a nasal consonant (and also after a lateral in the case of [d]), whereas in other positions they have approximant variants [β ð ɣ] respectively. Thus in *veciño* [be'θiɲo] 'neighbour', [um be'θiɲo] 'a neighbour' a plosive is pronounced, while an approximant is found in *o veciño* [o βe'θiɲo] 'the neighbour', *mal veciño* [mal βe'θiɲo] 'bad neighbour', *ter veciños* [ter βe'θiɲos] 'to have neighbours'.

Place of articulation in syllable-final nasals is non-contrastive, and assimilates to that of a following syllable-initial consonant, e.g. *inferno* [im'ferno] 'hell', *enredar* [enre'ðar] 'to entangle', *ancho* [an'i'ʃo] 'broad, wide', *nunca* [nũŋka] 'never'; before a pause or before a word beginning with a vowel the realization is always velar [ŋ]: *non* [noŋ] 'no, not', *son un home* [soŋ un 'ɔme] 'I am a man'. The velar nasal also occurs intervocally in a small number of words, for instance *unha* [uŋa] 'a, one', *algunha* [aɫ'uŋa] 'some' (fem), *ningunha* [niŋ'guŋa] 'no, none', where the place of articulation is distinctive: *unha* [uŋa] 'a, one' vs. *una* [una] 'joins' (subj), *uña* [uŋa] 'nail' (Álvarez, Regueira and Monteagudo 1995: 33). Nevertheless, some authors do not include [ŋ] among the phonemes of Galician, suggesting that in cases such as those above the velar place of articulation is conditioned by the location of the syllable break: [uŋ.a] vs. [u.na] (Veiga 1976: 105–7; Castro 1989: 144–55). The present description prefers to regard /ŋ/ as a distinct phoneme.

As with the nasals, the place of articulation of the lateral approximant in syllable-final positions is also affected by a following dental, palatal or velar consonant: *alto* [a]to] 'tall', *colcha* [kolʃ̺a] 'bedspread', *algo* [aʎo] 'something'. Elsewhere the lateral approximant is articulated as an alveolar [l].

Fricatives /θ/ and /s/ may become partially or fully voiced in syllable-final position before a voiced consonant: *dez meses* [deθ 'meʃeʃ] ~ [deð 'meʃeʃ] 'ten months', *tres meses* [treθ 'meʃeʃ] 'three months'. Elsewhere they remain voiceless. The open central vowel /a/ is realized as an open back [ɑ] in contact with velar consonants.

#### Transcription of recorded passage

o 'βeɲto θo 'norte e majlo 'sol | porfi'abān ʃoβre kaɫ 'deleʃ 'era o majʃ 'forte | kāndo ka'θrow θe pa'ʃar ūm bia'feɲro m'boɫto nūna 'āmpla 'kapa || kōmbi'neron ēɲ ke o ke 'antes kōɲse'wiʃe fa'θerje ki'tala 'kapa ɔ bia'feɲro ʃe'ria kōɲʃiðeraðo: majʃ 'forte || o 'βeɲto θo 'norte ʃo'prow kōɲ grām 'furja | e 'kaɲto majʃ ʃo'praβa majʃ ʃe mbol'βi ɔ bia'feɲro na 'ʃua 'kapa || final'mēnte | o 'βeɲto θo 'norte aβaɲdo'nou o 'ʃew ēm'peɲo || eɲ'ton o 'ʃol keɲ'tow kōɲ 'forθa | e iɲmeðjata'mēnte o bia'feɲro ʃa'kow a 'kapa || e θa'kela | o 'βeɲto θo 'norte 'tiβo ke rekoɲe'θela ʃuperjori'θaðe θo 'sol ||

#### Orthographic version

O vento do norte e mailo sol porfiaban sobre cá l deles era o máis forte, cando cadrou de pasar un viaxeiro envolto nunha ampla capa. Conviñeron en que o que antes conseguise facerlle quita-la capa ó viaxeiro sería considerado o máis forte. O vento do norte soprou con gran furia, e canto máis sopraba máis se envolvía o viaxeiro na súa capa; finalmente o vento do norte abandonou o seu empeño. Entón o sol quentou con forza e inmediatamente o viaxeiro sacou a capa. E daquela o vento do norte tivo que recoñece-la superioridade do sol.

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