

## Uralic languages

Europe's Uralic literary languages, Finnish, Estonian, and Hungarian, all have high and mid front rounded vowels, Finnish and Estonian also [æ], represented orthographically by an umlaut—except that Finnish, like Swedish, uses *y* rather than *ü*. Although archaic and rural varieties of standard Hungarian distinguish low and mid front unrounded vowels, they are not distinguished orthographically (or in current urban speech).

All three languages have distinctive vowel and consonant length. Consonant length is shown by doubling the consonant (or the first element of a digraph in Hungarian, e.g. *ssz* for long *sz* [s]). Doubling is also used for vowel length in Finnish and Estonian; but Hungarian uses an acute accent, and combines umlaut and acute to give the distinctive diacritic in *ő ü*.

Estonian has a distinction between light and heavy stressed syllables, involving a combination of tenseness, segment length, and pitch, but this is usually not shown orthographically. However, for long intervocalic obstruents (except [s]) Estonian writes *p, t, k, f, š* in light stressed syllables, and *pp, tt, kk, ff, šš* in heavy stressed syllables, e.g. *kapi* [kappi] 'cupboard (genitive)', *kappi* ["kappi] 'cupboard (illative)', where [" symbolizes heavy stress. The short obstruents are written *b, d, g, ž* word-

TABLE 59.22: *Hungarian Alphabet*

<i>Letter</i>	<i>Value</i>	<i>Name<sup>a</sup></i>	<i>Letter</i>	<i>Value</i>	<i>Name<sup>a</sup></i>
A	a	[ɒ] [ɒ:]	Ny	ny	[ɲ] [ɲ]
Á	á	[a:] [a:]	O	o	[o] [o]; [røvid o:] ‘short o’
B	b	[b] [be:]	Ó	ó	[o:] [o:]; [hossu: o:] ‘long o’
C	c	[t͡s] [t͡se:]	Ö	ö	[ø] [ø]; [røvid ø:] ‘short ø’
Cs	cs	[t͡ʃ] [t͡ʃe:]	Ő	ő	[ø:] [ø:]; [hossu: ø:] ‘long ø’
D	d	[d] [de:]	P	p	[p] [pe:]
DZ	dz	[dz] [dze:]	(Q)	q	[ku:]
Dzs	dzs <sup>b</sup>	[d͡ʒ] [d͡ʒe:]	R	r	[r] [er]
E	e	[ɛ] [ɛ:]	S	s	[ʃ] [ɛʃ]
É	é	[e:] [e:]	Sz	sz	[s] [es]
F	f	[f] [ɛf]	T	t	[t] [te:]
G	g	[g] [ge:]	Ty	ty	[c] [ce:]
Gy	gy	[j] [je:]	U	u	[u] [u]; [røvid u:] ‘short u’
H	h	[h] [ha:]	Ú	ú	[u:] [u:]; [hossu: u:] ‘long u’
I	i	[i] [i]; [røvid i:] ‘short i’	Ü	ü	[y] [y]; [røvid y:] ‘short ü’
Í	í	[i:] [i:]; [hossu: i:] ‘long i’	Ű	ű	[y:] [y:]; [hossu: y:] ‘long ü’
J	j	[j] [je:]	V	v	[v] [ve:]
K	k	[k] [ka:]	(W)	w	[duplave:] ‘double v’
L	l	[l] [ɛl]	(X)	x	[iks]
Ly	ly	[j] [ɛl ɪpsilon]	(Y)	y	[ɪpsilon]
M	m	[m] [ɛm]	Z	z	[z] [ze:]
N	n	[n] [ɛn]	Zs	zs	[ʒ] [ʒe:]

a. The names of the vowels *a* and *e* are usually phonetically long, being distinguished qualitatively from the names of *á* and *é*. For the other vowels, where qualitative distinctions are less marked, there are variant systems, as indicated in the table.

b. Dictionaries usually, but not invariably, place words beginning with *dzs* at the end of the *d* section, rather than as a separate section; there are no words beginning with *dz* (other than the letter name *dzé*) and its status as a unitary phoneme is dubious, whence it is transcribed here as a sequence of sounds rather than as an affricate. Since *z* and *zs* are the last letters of the alphabet, there are no examples where treating *dz* and *dzs* as single letters or as sequences of *d-z* and *d-zs* would affect alphabetical order.

medially and -finally (short [f] does not occur here), but *p, t, k, f, s* word-initially, as in *kabi* [kapi] 'hoof'.

Finnish uses the digraph *ng* to represent [ŋ] (which occurs only long and intervocalically, other than through assimilation of /n/ to a following velar), this being the only use of *g* in native words.

Estonian has an extra vowel [ɤ], written *õ*, and also has phonemically distinct (pre-)palatalized [tʲ], [nʲ], [sʲ], and [lʲ] in very restricted environments, the palatalization not being shown orthographically.

Hungarian has a more complicated consonant inventory, including palatals and affricates, and like Polish it makes widespread use of digraphs: [tʃ] is represented by *c*, as in most central and eastern European languages. A digraph with *y* represents a palatal in the case of *gy* [j], *ty* [c], *ny* [ɲ]; *ly* originally represented a palatal lateral, but has now merged with [j]. A digraph with *s* represents a palatal in the case of *cs* [tʃ] and *zs* [ʒ]. Among the voiceless fricatives, Hungarian has *s* for [ʃ] but the digraph *sz* for [s]—a unique distribution among the modern languages of central and eastern Europe, but one found elsewhere in earlier periods. All languages have basically non-phonemic stress, though Estonian has exceptions in words of foreign origin; stress is not indicated orthographically. Finnish and Estonian show Scandinavian influence in placing the special vowel letters at or near the end of the alphabet.

#### HUNGARIAN

- |                          |                  |    |          |     |           |          |
|--------------------------|------------------|----|----------|-----|-----------|----------|
| 1. <i>Hungarian:</i>     | Szeretnők,       | ha | nemcsak  | a   | magyar    | nyelv    |
| 2. <i>Transcription:</i> | seretnøk         | hø | nemʃøk   | o   | mɔɟor     | ɲelv     |
| 3. <i>Gloss:</i>         | we.would.like.it | if | not.only | the | Hungarian | language |
- 
- |                   |                   |       |            |        |            |      |
|-------------------|-------------------|-------|------------|--------|------------|------|
| 1. történetének   | búvárai,          | hanem | népünk     | széles | rétegei    | is   |
| 2. története:nøk  | bu:va:roi         | hanem | ne:pynk    | se:lɛʃ | re:tegei   | if   |
| 3. of.its.history | its.investigators | but   | our.people | broad  | its.strata | also |
- 
- |                         |           |         |     |        |              |        |
|-------------------------|-----------|---------|-----|--------|--------------|--------|
| 1. tudatában            | lennének  | annak   | a   | hősi   | küzdelemnek, | melyet |
| 2. tudata:bøn           | lenne:nøk | ønøk    | o   | hø:ʃi  | kyzdelemnek  | mejet  |
| 3. in.its.consciousness | would.be  | of.that | the | heroic | of.struggle  | which  |
- 
- |            |         |          |     |                |         |              |
|------------|---------|----------|-----|----------------|---------|--------------|
| 1. Petőfi  | vívott  | irodalmi | s   | elsősorban     | költői  | nyelvünk     |
| 2. petø:fi | vi:vott | irodølmi | ʃ   | ɛʃʃø:forbøn    | køltø:i | ɲelvynk      |
| 3. Petőfi  | fought  | literary | and | in.first.place | poetic  | our.language |
- 
- |                       |
|-----------------------|
| 1. megújhodásáért.    |
| 2. meɟu:jhoda:ʃa:e:rt |
| 3. for.its.revival    |

'We would be happy if not only investigators of the history of the Hungarian language, but also broad strata of our people, would be conscious of the heroic struggle that Petőfi fought for the revival of our literary and, especially, poetic language.'

—Gáldi et al. 1973: 135.

## URALIC LANGUAGES

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