

Chuvash Pronunciation © 2012 Luciano Canepari

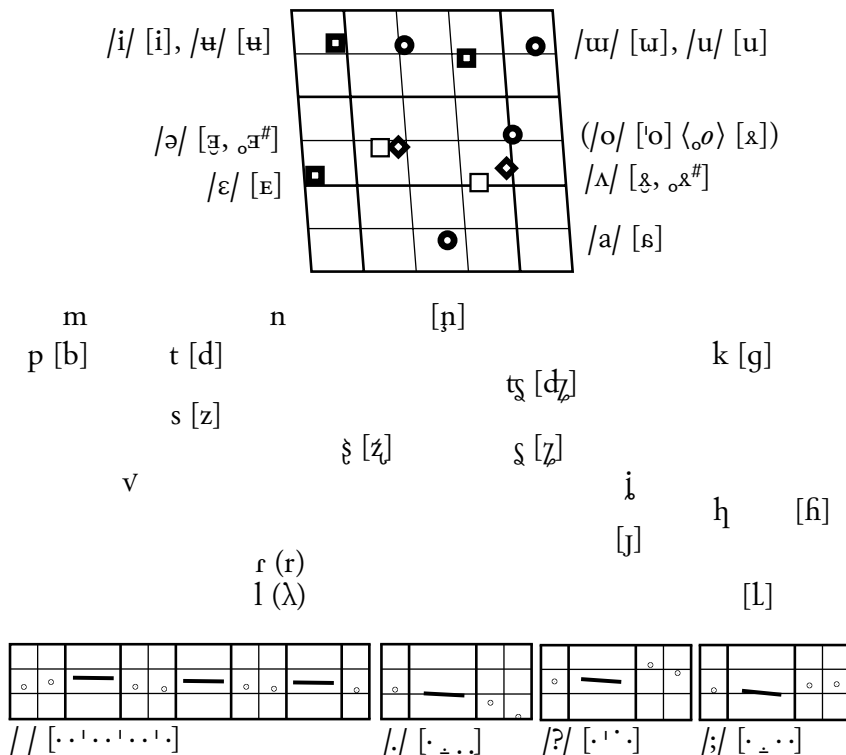
17.43+. *Chuvash* /tʃuːvɑːʃ, tʃuːvæʃ/ (Russ. Feder.: Altaic) has eight V, /i, ɯ, u, ε, a, ə, ʌ/, with no length opposition (but with [ʷʷʰ, ʷʷʰ]). As a general rule, the last syllable of a word is stressed, unless it has /ə, ʌ/; while, in words with only /ə, ʌ/, the first of them is stressed. Unstressed /ə, ʌ/ can be reduced, or fall completely, especially at the end of words or compounds; the same can happen between consonants and sonants, and vice versa (but they can also be inserted, in these contexts, when not written at all).

With some exceptions, *vowel harmony* occurs within words (but compound lexemes are independent), the two groups are /i, ε, ɯ, ə/ & /u, u, ʌ, a/ (note that /a/ is rounded, [ɤ], though slightly so, being a low vocoid); some (mostly older) people can have /av/ [ɤu]. In addition, Russian loans have stressed /o/ [o] (but unstressed [ɤ]); however, older speakers mostly have [o, ɤʰ], younger ones [ɤ, ɤʰ]. Instead of /ʌ/ [ɤ, ɤʰ], some (mostly older) speakers can have [o, ɤʰ], others (mostly younger) [ɤ, ɤʰ].

Initial *e* is /ʃjε/ [jε] (semi-constrictive), while *ə* is plain /ε/ [ε]; after C (except /r/), /ε, ɯ/ are preceded by a palatal semi-approximant, [j], which gives the hasty impression of ‘palatalized C’; very often, also /hə/ has a [j] inserted; occasionally, we have /hi/ [hi], while /ni/ [ni] is regular; influenced by Russian, some (mostly younger) speakers can have [ʧi, ci] for /ti, ki/, but not systematically.

There is no place assimilation for /nC/ [nC]. Within words or rhythmic groups, simple voiceless C have voiced taxophones between V, or between sonants and V (including /vC/ [vC] (a semi-constrictive), and, of course, VjC /ViC/ [ViC] (which only graphically is a consonant); besides, for /h/ [h], we have [ɦ] (plus [j] in the expected contexts).

As can be seen, /tʃ, ʃ, ʃ/ and their taxophones have a semi-constrictive component (as /v, j/ [v, j]). For /r/ we have [r], although [r] is fairly common, but not systematic. Before (or next to) back V, we find a velar *l*-sound ([l], not a velarized one), while with front V we



have a plain *bilateral* alveolar [l] (or, more rarely, a *unilateral* [λ]). C can be long, not geminated, belonging to the first syllable after V: [VC[#]V] (but notice *κᾶρκκα* [k̄ɾr̄k̄k̄s̄s̄]).

Special spelling (the rest is Russian-like as for Russian loans): *ă* /Λ/ [ɣ, ɔ[#]], *e* /ε/ [ɛ, jɛ, [#]ɤ], *ě* /ə/ [ɚ, ɔ[#]], *ə* /ε/ [ɛ], *ç* /ʃ/ [ʃ, ʒ], *ý* /ɥ/ [ɥ], *υ* /ɯ/ [ɯ], *υ* /ɣ/ [ɣ, ʒ].