

# Український Подкаст «Спілкуймося українською»

---

The Ukrainian Podcast “Let’s Communicate in Ukrainian”

By Natalia Kovaliova and Roman Ivashkiv

University of Alberta

Вітаємо! Нам приємно, що Ви зацікавлені у вивченні української мови і культури. Бажаємо Вам успіху. Якщо у Вас є запитання, побажання, чи пропозиції, пишіть до [Наталі Ковальнової](#) або [Романа Івашківа](#).

Greetings! We are pleased that you are interested in learning the Ukrainian language and Ukrainian culture. We wish you success. If you have any questions or would like to make a suggestion, please, contact [Natalia Kovaliova](#) or [Roman Ivashkiv](#).

20 лютого 2008 – February 20, 2008

## УРОК 1 Звідки ти? – Lesson 1 “Where are you from?”

Діалог – Dialogue

**Н:** Привіт! Мене звати Наталя. А тебе?

**Р:** А мене звати Роман.

**Н:** Звідки ти, Романе?

**Р:** Я з України. А звідки ти, Наталю?

**Н:** Я з Канади.

**Р:** Приємно з тобою познайомитися.

**Н:** Мені теж.

**Р:** Побачимося пізніше.

**Н:** Па-па, щасливо.

## Нові слова та вирази – New vocabulary

**Звідки** – where from?

**Романе** – the vocative case<sup>1</sup> of the proper name Роман. The vocative case in Ukrainian is used when you address somebody. Similarly, «Наталю» is the vocative case of the proper name «Наталя».

**Звідки ти?** – Where are you from?

**Я з України** – I am from Ukraine. The name of the country is Україна, but when you want to say “from Ukraine” you need to use the preposition «з» (from) followed by the genitive form of the word Україна, which is «з України». As you can see, the ending «А» changes to «И».

---

<sup>1</sup> Please, see a grammar note on page 2.

# Український Подкаст «Спілкуймося українською»

---

The Ukrainian Podcast “Let’s Communicate in Ukrainian”

By Natalia Kovaliova and Roman Ivashkiv

University of Alberta

For example,

Україна – (з) України

Канада – (з) Канади

Мексика – (з) Мексики

Some countries, however, end in Я (like, Франція – France, Італія – Italy, Іспанія – Spain, Росія – Russia, etc). In the genitive case, the names of these countries will change their final letter (ending) «Я» to «ї»

For example,

Росі~~я~~ – з Росі~~ї~~

Франці~~я~~ – з Франці~~ї~~

There are also more complicated cases of the genitive case, like Польща – Poland. The genitive case of «Польща» is «Польщі» (the ending is changed from «А» to «І» because of the sibilant sound «щ» that precedes the ending). Such instances, however, are not very frequent.

## **GRAMMAR NOTE:**

Ukrainian is a Cyrillic language. It has a complex system of nouns that differs greatly from the English one. First of all, Ukrainian nouns have gender, which is not logical in the sense that it is not governed by sex. For example, in English all inanimate objects (i.e. things) are neuter (we refer to them by “it”), while all animate objects (people or animals) are either male or female. In Ukrainian, however, the word for “table” – «стіл» is masculine, the word for “book” – «книжка» is feminine, and the word for “window” – «вікно» is neuter. This might be confusing for English learners of Ukrainian. Therefore, identification of gender is an essential skill.

Although there are many exceptions, the general rule for identifying the gender of Ukrainian nouns is the following:

If a noun ends in А or Я – it is feminine

(e.g. вода – water, горілка – vodka, ручка – pen, Оттава – Ottawa, мова - language)

If a noun ends in a consonant – it is masculine

(e.g. стіл – table, комп’ютер – computer, стілець – chair, кіт – cat)

If a noun ends in О or Е – it is neuter

(e.g. вікно – window, село – village, вино – wine, море – sea)

## Український Подкаст «Спілкуймося українською»

---

The Ukrainian Podcast “Let’s Communicate in Ukrainian”

By Natalia Kovaliova and Roman Ivashkiv

University of Alberta

To make things even worse ;-)) Ukrainian nouns change their endings depending on their role in the sentence. For example, when Roman says «Мене звати Роман», he literally names his name: Роман (Roman). But you might have noticed that when Natalia talks to him, she says «Звідки ти, Романе?». She is not just calling his name, but she addresses Roman and asks him a question. Therefore, the functions the word “Roman” performs in these two sentences are totally different. To speak Ukrainian correctly, you will need to learn what functions nouns perform in the sentence and how nouns change their endings depending on the function. There are seven possible changes that every noun can undergo and in Ukrainian grammar they are called **the cases**.

The closest example of something similar in English can be found if you look at the following two sentences:

*His name is Roman. This is Roman’s book.*

The first sentence says what somebody’s name is. The second, however, indicates possession. While the words “Roman” and “Roman’s” are very similar, their endings differ a little bit. The same is true about Ukrainian nouns and their endings.

So what are the Ukrainian cases and their basic functions? We have already dealt with some of them, namely the nominative, the genitive, and the vocative cases.

Nominative – used to name an object or a person (e.g. Це стіл – This is a table)

Genitive – used to indicate possession and also after the preposition «з» (from) (e.g. Я з Канади – I come from Canada)

Dative –

Accusative –

Instrumental –

Locative –

Vocative – used when you address people by their name (e.g. Привіт, Наталю – Hi, Natalia)

In our future podcasts, we will continue to explain some complicated features of Ukrainian grammar. Please, take it easy and don’t get discouraged if Ukrainian grammar seems too complicated. Once you get the basics, it will become easier. Good luck!