

# Grammatical Notes

Academia pro Interlingua

1931

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## Definition of words

### 1. Nouns

Any Latin dictionary gives two forms for each noun, for instance: rosa, rosae = rose; pes, pedis = foot. The first form is called nominative, the second genitive.

The Interlingua nouns are taken from the Latin genitive form, by changing the genitive ending in accordance with the following table:

Latin Genitive ending	Interlingua ending
-ae	-a
-i	-o
-us	-u
-ei	-e
-is	-e

### Examples

Latin nominative	Latin genitive	Interlingua	English	Russki
rosa	rosae	rosa	rose	roza
laurus	lauri	lauro	laurel	lavr
casus	casus	casu	case	slucaj
series	seriei	serie	series	seria
pax	pacis	pace	peace	mir

A few nouns are used in their nominative forms to avoid confusion with other words: “mas” English: “male.”

Nouns used only in the plural in Latin may take the following Interlingua endings:

1. -a, when the Latin nominative plural ends in -a, as: Latin: arma, Interlingua: arma, English: arms.
2. -a or -as, when the plural nominative ends in -ae, as: L.: divitiae. IL.: divitia or divitias. E.: riches.
3. -os, when the plural nominative ends in -i, as: L.: liberi. IL.: liberos. E.: children.
4. -e or -es, when the nominative plural ends in -es, as: L.: majores. IL.: majore or majores. E.: ancestry.

## 2. Adjectives

The Latin vocabulary gives the nominative of the three genders, and in some instances the genitive.

The Interlingua form is obtained:

1. from the nominative neuter:
  1. by leaving it unchanged when it ends by -e;
  2. by changing it to -o when it ends in -um;
2. from the genitive form in all other instances:
  1. by changing to -e the ending -is as in the case of nouns.

## Examples

Latin	Interlingua	English	Russki
celeber celebris celebre	celebre	celebrated	proslavlenny
novus nova novum	novo	new	novy
audax audax audax audacis	audace	audacious	smely

## 3. Verbs

The Latin vocabulary gives the present indicative and the present infinitive. By dropping the ending of the infinitive -re, the Interlingua form is obtained.

There are a few exceptions: dic, duc, es, fac, fer, vol.

## 4. Uninflected words

If they have one single form, this is the Interlingua form: e.g. ab, ad, ante, circa, etc.

If they have a declensional suffix, it may be omitted: secundum = secundo; multum = multo.

## 5. Derivative words and compounds

Many derivative words are in international use. New ones can be freely formed, as in English, from the words already in use, by the attachment of prefixes and suffixes, provided the meaning warrants such formation. For example, the ending -atione denotes a process, -tia denotes a quality, -ico denotes pertaining to, -iza ends a verb denoting the admixture of one thing with another, -tore denotes a person who performs the act indicated by the stem of the word, etc.

The commonest suffixes and prefixes are given below.

### Suffixes

English suffix	Interlingua suffix	English example	Interlingua example
-ism	-ismo	protectionism	protectionismo
-ic	-ico	electric	electrico
-id	-ido	splendid	splendido
-ist	-ista	feminist	feminista
-al	-ale	general	generale
-an	-ano	American	americano
-ary	-ario	aviary	aviario
-aster	-astro	poetaster	poetastro
-ble	-bile	stable	stabile
-el	-elo,-ela	sequel	sequela
-or,-our	-ore	colo(u)r	colore
-tive	-tivo	punitive	punitivo
-ous	-oso	famous	famoso
-ate	-ato	sublimate	sublimato
-er	-tore	maker	factore
-tor	-tore	actor	actore
-ty	-tate	quality	qualitate
-tion	-tione	declaration	declaratione
-cy	-tia	tendency	tendentia
-ce	-tia	elegance	elegantia
-e	-io	spectroscope	spectroscopio
-y	-ia	zoology	zoologia
-fy	-fico	justify	justifica
-esque	-esco	statuesque	statuesco

The ending -ed as in “faced” (having faces) may be rendered with cum: cum vultu or cum superficie; cornered (having corners) cum angulo.

### Prefixes

English prefix	Interlingua prefix	English example	Interlingua example
anti-	anti	anti-suffragist	antisuffragista
auto-	auto-	automobile	automobile
self-	auto-	self-induction	auto-inductione
well-	bene-	well-said	benedicto
co-	co-	co-operator	cooperatore
dis-	dis-	dismember	dismembra
im-	im-	immortal	immortale

English prefix	Interlingua prefix	English example	Interlingua example
in-	in-	inability	inhabilitate
inter-	inter-	interact	interacto
mis-	male-	misform	maleforma
pan-	pan-	pan-asiatic	panasiatico
by- (beside)	para-	by-product	para-producto
pseudo-	pseudo-	pseudonym	pseudonymo
quasi-	quasi-	quasi-official	quasi-officiale
re-	re-	reexamine	reexamina
sub-	sub-	subterranean	subterraneo
super-	super-	superman	superhomine

As indicated above, “bene” may be used to render the prefix “well” either separately or combined: bene consiliato or beneconsiliato or benconsiliato = well-advised; “male” may likewise be used to render ill- or mis-: male famato or malefamato or malfamato = ill-famed; male conceptione or maleconceptione or malconceptione = misconception.

The prefixing of the negative “ne” or “non” may ordinarily be used to denote the contrary. The preposition “sine” may be used to denote lacking, like the suffix “-less” in English.

The pronoun “qui” with a verb indicates the person performing the action, “que” with a verb denotes the instrument used in performing it, “quem” with a verb indicates the person on whom or the object on which the action is performed.

Adjectives may be formed by means of “de”; de fratre = fraterno = fraternal.

Intransitive verbs may be formed with the help of “fi” = become; transitive with the help of “fac” = make. Fi albo = albo fi = albofi = to become white = to whiten (intransitive). Fac albo = albo fac = albofac = to make white = to whiten (transitive). Verbs, however, may be used as transitive or intransitive, if the meaning in that sentence is unequivocal. Other verbs may be formed by means of es = to be; redde = to render = to make; da = to give. Es causa de = to cause; es flexo = to sag; redde triste = to sadden; to make sad; redde nullo = to annul = to render void; da animo = to encourage = to give courage.

## 6. Adoption of additional words

A few Latin words not in international use are also adopted. Also, words are taken from any language if in international use.

## 7. Interrelation of parts of speech

The same word may be used as verb or as noun, either without any change, or with a slight change of the ending in accordance with rules elsewhere given. Adjectives may be used as adverbs.

## Orthography

Latin words retain the old orthography.

Proper names of persons and places maintain their national orthography as far as possible: New York, Washington, Roma, etc.

## Pronunciation

Most Interlinguists are in favour of the old Latin pronunciation.

Vowels are pronounced as indicated below:

- a: as in father.
- e: as in they or as
- i: as in machine.
- o: as in tone.
- u: as in rule.
- y: as French u.
- j: as y in yes.
- a: -as i in aisle.
- o: -as oi in boil.

Consonants are sounded as in English with the exceptions indicated below:

- b: like English b, but like p if followed by s or t.
- c: like k always, as in can, cat.
- g: like g in go, get, give, gate.
- h: silent in th, ph, ch, rh, otherwise like English h.
- q: as qu in quarrel.
- r: as in correct (trilled).
- s: as in sound, so, see.
- t: as in time.
- v: like English w or v.
- x: as ks.
- z: as in zeal.

Other Interlinguists would simplify it, and pronounce:

- y and j: as i in tin.
- ae and oe: as a in fatc or e in get.

- b: always like English b.
- h: silent always.
- ph: as f.
- v: like English v.

The tonic or principal accent should always be on the syllable next to the last one (penultimate), and the secondary accent, when necessary, should be placed where good sound, harmony and elegance demand.

## Grammar

Interlingua has the minimum of grammar. All grammatical elements not necessary, declension, conjugation, etc., are eliminated.

### 1. Nouns

There is no grammatical or artificial gender.

Natural gender is indicated by different names if these are in international use:

Interlingua	English
patre	father
matre	mother
fratre	brother
sonore	sister
prophetissa	prophetess

If different names do not exist, gender is indicated by: mas = male ; femina = female. cane mas = male dog. cane femina = female dog.

There are no cases in Interlingua. The English genitive, expressed by “s” with an apostrophe, is translated by “de”, as: the man’s foot = pede de homine

An “s” marks the plural, but it is omitted when not necessary: tres filios or tres filio = three sons. nos habe uno lingua et duo aure = we have one tongue and two ears.

The plural “s” is necessary in cases like the following: patre habe filios et filias = the father has sons and daughters. but the phrase could be changed to avoid the use of the plural: patre habe plure filio et plure filia.

### 2. Article

There is no definite or indefinite article in Interlingua.

It is translated with a pronoun, like “illo”, “uno”, etc., when it has the value of a pronoun and its use is necessary:

- da ad me libro = give me the book
- da ad me hoc libro = give me this book.
- da ad me illo libro = give me that book.
- da ad me uno libro = give me a book.
- da ad me illo meo libro = give me that book of mine.
- da ad me uno meo libro = give me a book mine.
- da ad me meo libro = give me my book.
- leone es forte = lions are strong.
- hoc leone es forte = this lion is strong.
- ferro es utile = iron is useful.
- hoc ferro es utile = this iron is useful.

### 3. Comparaison of adjectives

Plus, magis, minus, multo, ultra, extra, etc., are used.

- breve = short.
- plus breve quam, magis breve quam = shorter than.
- minus breve quam = less short than.
- multo breve, ultra breve, extra breve = very short.
- maximo breve = shortest.
- minimo breve = least short.
- tam breve quam = as short as.

### 4. Adverbs from adjectives

- cum mente diligente, cum diligente mente, in modo diligente, in diligente modo = diligently
- in modo fraterno, in modo de fratre = fraternally

Or the adjectives may be used as adverbs without any change.

### 5. Numerals

Cardinal Numerals		Ordinal Numerals
uno	1	primo
duo	2	secundo
tres	3	tertio
quatuor	4	quarto
quinque	5	quinto
sex	6	sexto



Cardinal Numeralals		Ordinal Numerals
septem	7	septimo
octo	8	octavo
novem	9	nono
decem	10	decimo
decem-uno, decem et uno	11	decimo-primo
decem-duo, decem et duo	12	decimo-secundo
decem-tres, decem et tres	13	decimo-tertio
viginti, duo decem	20	vigesimo
triginta, tres decem	30	trigesimo
quadraginta, quatuor decem	40	quadragesimo
quinquaginta, quinque decem	50	quingagesimo
sexaginta, sex decem	60	sexagesimo
septuaginta, septem decem	70	septuagesimo
ocoginta, octo decem	80	octogesimo
nonaginta, novem decem	90	nonagesimo
centum	100	centesimo
mille	1 000	millesimo
millione	1 000 000	millionesimo

### Distributive Numerals

- singulo, uno per uno = one by one.
- bino, duo per duo = two by two.
- trino, tres per tres = three by three.
- quatuor per quatuor = four by four.

### Multiplicative Numerals

- simplice = simplex.
- duplo = double.
- triplo = treble.
- quadruplo = quadruple.

### Fractions

- dimidio = one-half.
- uno tertio = one-third.
- uno quarto = one-fourth.

### Numeral Adverbs

- semel, uno vice = once.
- bis, duo vice = twice.

- ter, tres vice = thrice.
- quatuor vice = four times.

## 6. Prounouns

### Personal

- me = I, me.
- te = thou, thee.
- illo = he, she, it, him, her.
- nos = we, us
- vos = you.
- illos = they, them.
- id = it.

### Feminine forms may be used:

- illa = she, her.
- illas = they, them.

### Reflexive

- se = himself, herself, it, itself, self, themselves.
- se ipso = one's self, themselves.

### Relative

- que (nominative, referring to things only) = that, which, what.
- qui (nominative, referring to persons only) = who.
- quod = that, what.
- quem (accusative, referring to persons and things) = what, which (acc.), whom
- utro = whether, whichever (of two).

### Demonstrative

- illo = that (it, he, she, him, her).
- ce, hoc, isto = this, these.
- illos = those.
- ipso = self.
- idem = same.
- tale = such.
- quale = such as.

### Interrogative

- qui? = who?
- que? = which, what?

### Indefinite

- aliquo = some, some one.
- omne = all, every.
- uno = one.
- ullo = some, any.
- nullo = not any.
- nemine = nobody, no one.
- alio = other, else.
- solo = alone, single, one.
- toto = whole, all, entire.
- neutro = neither.
- altero = either, one but not the other of two.
- utroque = either, both of two.

### Possessive

- meo = de me = my, mine.
- tuo = de te = thy, thine.
- suo = his, her, hers, its, their, theirs.
- nostro = de nos = our, ours.
- vestro = de vos = your, yours.

## 7. Verbs

To the present form of the verb add:

- for the infinitive -re
- for the past participle -to
- for the present participle -nte

Rense	Interlingua	English
present	ama	love
infinitive	amare	to love
past participle	amato	loved
present participle	amante	loving

Present:

- me ama = I love.

- te ama = thou lovest.
- illo, illa ama = he, she loves.
- nos ama = we love.
- vos ama = you love.
- illos, illas ama = they love.

The form of the imperative is the same as the one for the present.

Sometimes the idea of the past is indicated in some word of the sentence and in such case there is no need to inflect the verb. “Heri me scribe” can be used for “I wrote yesterday”.

When it is necessary to indicate the past, this can be done by an adverb, as “jam” or “tum”, particularly used for this purpose, or by “in praeterito” or by “e” preceding the verb: me, te, illo, illa, id, nos, vos, illos, illas, jam ama (or) tum ama or e ama. I, thou, he, she, it, we, you, they loved.

Likewise for the future. The idea of time may be implied in some other word of the sentence like: cras nos lege = we will read tomorrow.

If it is necessary to indicate the future, it can be done by the expression “in futuro”, or by the verbs “vol” and “debe” like in English, or by “i” preceding verb: me vol ama, me debe ama, me i ama = I shall or will love.

The subjunctive has no special ending, its idea is expressed by the use of conjunctions like si, que, ut, quod.

The passive form is rendered by the past participle and the verb “es”, to be: es amato = is loved. The passive may be done away with, as in any language, by changing the sentence: filio es amato ab matre = the son is loved by the mother to: matre ama filio = the mother loves the son. It may also be rendered by “quem” and a relative clause: filio es quem matre ama = it is the son whom the mother loves.

## 8. Adverbs

Interlingua	English
alibi	elsewhere
ante	before
bene	well
bis	again
certo	certainly
cras	tomorrow
dextero	at the right
ergo	therefore
heri	yesterday
hic	here
hodie	today

Interlingua	English
ibi	there
in fine	at last
interim	meantime, meanwhile
ita	thus
iterum	again
jam	already
male	badly
multo	much
nam	because, for
nimis	too much
non	no, not
nunc	now
nuper	lately, recently
post	after
primo	at first
quam	as, than
quando	when
quasi	as if, almost, nearly
quia	because
saepe	often
satis	enough
semper	always
sic	so, thus
sinistro	at the left
subito	at once, immediately
tale	like, such
toto	entirely, wholly
tunc	then
tuto	safely
ubi	where
ut	as
usque	till, up to
valde	greatly, very, very much

## 9. Prepositions

Interlingua	English
ab	by, from
ad	at, to
adverso	against
ante	before
apud	near

Interlingua	English
circa	about
circum	around
cum	with
de	concerning, from of
ex	from, out of
extra	outside, without
in	in, into
infra	below, under
inter	among, between
intra	within
juxta	near, next to
ob	on account of
per	by means of, through
post	after, behind
prae	before, in front of
pro	for, on behalf of
sine	without
sub	below, under
super	above, on, upon
trans	across, beyond
ultra	beyond

## 10. Conjunctions

Interlingua	English
ante	before
aut	or
cum	with, when, though, whereas, since
dum	during, until, when, while
ergo	therefore
et	and
etiam	also, even
etsi	although, even if, though
nam	because, for
ne	no, not
nec	nor
nisi	unless
quam	as
quando	when
quasi	as if
sed	but
si non	if not

Interlingua	English
tamen	however, nevertheless, notwithstanding, yet
ubi	where
ut	in order that

## 11. Correlative conjunctions

- aut ... aut = either ... or (exclusive).
- et ... et = both ... and .
- neque ... nec = neither ... nor.
- minus ... quam = less ... than.
- plus ... quam = more ... than.
- tanto ... quanto = as much ... as.
- ut ... ita = as ... so.
- vel ... vel = either ... or (indifferent).

## 12. Interjections

- apage! = get out!
- ecce! = lo!, there he is!
- eheu! = alas!
- eho! = hallo!, hello!
- euge! = bravo!
- heu! = alas!
- heus! = hallo!, ho!
- vae! = woe!

## 13. Interrogative particles

- an?, utro? = whether?, or?
- annon? = or not?
- non? = not?

Examples

- Non es cane simile ad lupo? = Is not the dog like the wolf?
- An negare aude? = Do you dare deny it?

In answering “yes” and “no” the speaker repeats the verb or uses one of the following expressions:

in answering yes:

- certo = certainly.
- etiam = even so.

- ita = true, so, yes.
- ita vero = certainly.

in saying no:

- minimo = by no means.
- non = not so.
- nullo modo = by no means. [no way!]

## Syntax

The order of words in Interlingua presents no great difficulties, grammar and inflection having been reduced to the minimum. It is so nearly similar to the English order of words that one may safely follow that usage without fear of being misunderstood or being too greatly incorrect.

The subject tends to come first, the predicate last, as in English and other languages. The word most expressive of the thought uppermost in mind will likely come first and the others follow in their natural sequence.

The position of the verb is usually not different from that of the English. For the sake of emphasis, the verb may sometimes come first in the sentence, without any introductory words.

- Adverbs tend to follow the verb and to come before the adjective when modifying it.
- Adjectives tend to follow the nouns which they modify, differing in this respect from English usage.
- Demonstrative and interrogative pronouns tend to precede, relative pronouns to follow, the word or words to which they belong.
- Prepositions usually precede their nouns though sometimes placed between a noun and its adjective.
- The negative usually precedes the word which it affects, otherwise it precedes the verb. Frequently it begins a sentence for the sake of emphasis.

A notable difference between Interlingua and English is shown in the absence of agreement of the verb with the subject in respect to number and person, such agreement being dispensed with and regarded as unnecessary. Other agreements usually found in English and other languages are almost wholly absent in Interlingua.

In general, word-order and style may be best acquired by frequent reading of Interlingua literature.