

Xĕλōk Morphosyntactic Changes:

A Cheat Sheet

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1 Morphosyntactic & Semantic Changes

0–100 AMC

Pronoun Usage

In contexts where it's unclear whether the referent is male or female, using a gendered 'li' or 'ŝi' is now dispreferred. The current preference is to use 'tiu'. However, like singular-they in English, this isn't generally done with explicitly gendered referents, but rather only with those whose gender is unknown or unspecified.

- (1) 'Se via studento scias, kiu ĝin faris, tiu devas paroli.'
"If your student_i knows who did it, they_i should talk."

Note that, where appropriate, 'si' and its forms are still used.

- (2) 'Iu preterlasis sian pluvombreton!
"Someone_i forgot their_i umbrella!"

Conditional Participles

The formerly-unofficial conditional participle *-unta* is now common and unremarkable. They are not generally used predicatively, as using the conditional verb form with other participles serves those purposes fine, but they are widely used attributively and nominalized.

- (3) a. 'La mortunta knabino'
"The girl who would/could have died"
b. 'La regunto'
"The would-be ruler"

Verbalization of predicate adjectives

Rather than using *esti* as a copula, adjectives are now generally used directly as stative verbs. Nominals continue to use *esti*, however, and *esti* can be included for emphasis for predicate adjectives.

- (4) 'La birdo estas blua' → 'La birdo bluas.'
"The bird is blue."

Widespread adoption of 'far'

To avoid the ambiguity of the Zamenhofian Esperanto 'de', 'far' is adopted as a shortening of 'fare de', to indicate that something was done/made by someone rather than merely owned by or associated with them.

- (5) a. 'La bindaĵo de la libro de Maria ruĝas.'
"The cover of Maria's book (a book which Maria owns but didn't necessarily write) is red."
b. 'La bindaĵo de la libro far Maria ruĝas.'
"The cover of Maria's book (a book which Maria wrote) is red."

Widespread adoption of ‘cit’

To attribute a quote to someone, the preposition ‘cit’ is used (again, replacing Esperanto ‘de’).

- (6) “*Rompu, rompu la murojn inter la popoloj!*” cit Zamenhof estas inspiranta citaĵo.
“Break, break the walls between the peoples!” by Zamenhof is an inspiring quotation.”

Country names don’t end in -ujo

All country names ending in -ujo are replaced with alternatives ending in -io.

- (7) ‘*Francujo*’ → ‘*Francio*’
“France”

Unrelatedly, a few country names change entirely due to reforming their names being a thing in 2010s Esperanto already:

- (8) ‘*Finnlando*’ → ‘*Suomio*’
“Finland”

Free variation between presence and absence of linking -o- in compounds

Linking -o- isn’t completely lost, but it’s beginning to be less common than it is in ordinary Esperanto. Forms of the same word with and without linking -o- are common and generally occur in free variation.

- (9) ‘*rozokoloro*’ ~ ‘*roz koloro*’

Identical adjectival and nominal forms dispreferred

Words where the adjectival and nominal forms are identical and only distinguished by the difference between the final -o and -a are highly dispreferred—as are affixes being applied with both an -o or -a. The less ‘core’ part-of-speech for a given root is formed using another affix that suits it semantically. Popular options include ‘-ulo’ ‘person’, ‘-ano’ ‘member of’, ‘-eco’ ‘quality of’, -ness’, ‘-ema’ ‘inclined toward’, etc. Sometimes compounding performs the same role—for instance, ‘*roza*’ “pink (adj.)” vs. ‘*roz(o)koloro*’ “pink (n.)” vs. ‘*roz(o)floro*’ “rose”

Less-recognized/Ido-loaned suffixes more common

‘-el-’ X-elo = “good/beautiful X”: ‘*skribo*’ “writing”, ‘*skribelo*’ “calligraphy”

‘-oz-’ X-oza = “full of X”: ‘*monto*’ “mountain”, ‘*montoza*’ “mountainous”

‘-end-’ X-enda = “needing to be X-ed”: ‘*pagi*’ “to pay”, ‘*pagenda*’ “needing paid”

‘ali-’ is an official correlative now

The forms ‘*alio*’, ‘*aliu*’, ‘*alia*’, ‘*aliam*’, ‘*aliom*’ ‘*aliel*’, etc. are now officially sanctioned rather than not being official. Because ‘*alie*’ already exists, the form for ‘another place’ is ‘*aliloke*’.

Pro-drop-ness begins: if ‘ĝi’ would be the subject, don’t bother

The inanimate 3rd person pronoun ‘ĝi’ is now pretty much universally dropped when it would be the subject of a sentence. I’m not actually sure to what extent this is done in vanilla Esperanto tbh—I know it’s already a thing for zero-valency verbs like weather verbs, but now it’s a thing for any sentence where ‘ĝi’ would be the subject.

- (10) ‘*Mi bakis kukon. Bongustis.*’
“I baked a cake. It was tasty.”

This is *not* true in instances where it would be blocked by a subject-pivot, though!

- (11) a. #*‘Mi bakis kukon kaj bongustis.’*
 “I baked a cake and was tasty.”
- b. *‘Mi bakis kukon kaj ĝi bongustis.’*
 “I baked a cake and it was tasty.”

100–200 AMC

Intensification suffixes

In Zamenhofian Esperanto, the augmentative ‘-eg-’ and diminutive ‘-et-’ are used as degree modifiers for adjectives, with ‘-eg-’ serving as an intensifier and ‘-et-’ as a downtowner regardless of the semantics of the adjective in question.

Here, however, this usage begins to change, with adjectives being intensified using affixes that are semantically suited to their meaning. This is most apparently different with *‘malgranda’*, meaning “small”. In Zamenhofian Esperanto, *‘malgrandeta’* means “a little small” while *‘malgrandega’* means “tiny”, whereas now *‘malgrandega’* has fallen out of usage and *‘malgrandeta’* has taken over its meaning of “tiny”. The thought process behind this is that the diminutive of “small” should be *smaller* than the bare form of small, not larger, and thus it can serve as an intensifier here.

In addition to this example with *‘malgranda’*, other affixes like ‘-el-’ and ‘-aĉ-’ are used with adjectives that are semantically suited to them (e.g., *‘belela’* has replaced *‘belega’* and *‘naŭzaĉa’* has replaced *‘naŭzega’*).

No more adjective agreement

Pretty much what it says on the tin: adjectives no longer agree with the nouns they modify in number and case.

- (12) *‘La bela virinoj manĝis la dolĉa kukojn.’*
 “The beautiful women ate the sweet cakes.”

Emphatic negation

In addition to ordinary negation with ‘ne’, negation begins to be frequently emphasized by inclusion of *‘neniel’* as well. This roughly corresponds to inclusion of the English negative polarity item “at all”.

- (13) *‘Mi ne volas manĝi tion neniel.’*
 “I don’t want to eat that at all.”

Use of ‘si’ logophorically

In addition to its use as a simple reflexive, ‘si’ is expanded to be used as a logophoric pronoun, also being used in subclauses to indicate that the referent has not changed.

- (14) a. *‘Johano diris, ke si foriru.’*
 “John_i said that he_i has to leave.”
- b. *‘Johano diris, ke li foriru.’*
 “John_i said that he_j has to leave.”

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300–400 AMC
400–500 AMC
500–600 AMC
600–700 AMC
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