

THE GRAMMAR OF SAMBAHSA-MUNDIALECT IN ENGLISH

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Foreword

By Dave MacLeod

Sambahsa is without a doubt the most interesting auxiliary language to have emerged over the past decade. To sum it up in a few short sentences one would have to describe it as a type of regularized Indo-European with borrowings from other language families, but this alone doesn't quite do it justice. To explain what makes Sambahsa unique, one needs to take a quick look at other international auxiliary language projects that have been popular over the past century and a bit.

Since they first became popular in the late 19th century, auxiliary languages have placed simplicity above all else. Volapük was based on a simple grammar, Esperanto was based on a simple regular grammar with 16 primary rules that could be learned in a short time, and just about every project after this has been ridiculously easy to learn, at least compared to so-called "natural" languages with their vast exceptions and intricacies. Esperanto has been fairly popular but still likely only has adherents numbering in the hundreds of thousands, and no other can claim more than a few thousand. Auxiliary languages clearly have not yet aroused the interest of the population as a whole.

At the same time, since the 19th century a language has gone from a speaking population of zero to some seven million: Hebrew, once a liturgical language, since reconstructed and modernized and now a living language. The new state of Israel at its inception could easily have gone with one of many international auxiliary languages and yet went with a language that was not created to be easy, a language appealed to people for its spirit and heritage, and not its simplicity or international character. Along with the revival and strengthening of such languages as Cornish, Welsh, Basque and others, and the sudden flood of adherents to the Na'vi language (a language without even a published grammar and dictionary) after the release of the movie *Avatar*, it would seem that people are willing to take the time to learn a language in spite of any outward difficulty if they find something fulfilling in it, something viscerally pleasing.

This perhaps may be what sets Sambahsa apart from other auxiliary languages proposed over the past decades. Yes, its Indo-European character and international vocabulary is one selling point, but what sets it apart in particular is that it simply doesn't feel like a constructed language. It is terse, it has an orthography that (while actually perfectly regular) is quite complex, and is very precise. Personally I have always imagined Sambahsa to be an example of a language that could have existed somewhere around present-day Armenia, where a kingdom using a descendant of Proto-Indo-European using it has been influenced over the centuries by its Persian, Turkish and Arab neighbors, as well as various countries from the east. At times it feels a bit like Bulgarian, at other times like Persian, and sometimes similar to German as well. What other auxiliary language would dare to include the ablaut in its verbs? In contrast to auxiliary languages that find similarity to living languages in vocabulary alone, the structure itself of Sambahsa feels like a living language.

At the same time, however, Sambahsa is not all that difficult to learn. The orthography is regular, every verb except for three are also regular, pronouns are simple and easy to understand, grammatical cases exist but are not haphazard as

with living languages; in short, any student now struggling to learn a language in school would simply love to have a language as easy as Sambahsa in its place. What has made Sambahsa so intimidating until now has simply been the documentation. Up until about a year ago the documentation for the language was largely in French and entirely contained on a single blog, after which it was moved to a much more friendly wiki-type format yet still quite chaotic in its organization, and only now is a complete grammar and lexicon available in English for anyone to view and study from.

Will the language now succeed in acquiring adherents? We shall soon find out. Sambahsa admittedly requires more study than the average international auxiliary language in the beginning, yet soon smooths itself out and becomes immensely enjoyable; other auxiliary languages tend to be enjoyable in the beginning, but then have a tendency to become somewhat bland, or have unpleasant surprises in store for the learner.

As Steve Rice and Robert Winter have written on the language:

<http://joyoflanguages.blogspot.com/2010/05/sambahsa-guide-to-pronouns-and-articles.html>

“All languages (less frills) and especially all auxlangs are about equal in difficulty; they just load the difficulty differently. Sambahsa drops a piano on you when you ring the doorbell, but after that it’s probably a gracious host. Interlingua is more polite, but whenever you relax, it bludgeons you from behind. Perhaps it’s better to get the shock over with.”

“Sambahsa pushes the envelope. Right up-front it challenges the student and makes it clear: this is not going to be easy. I think Sambahsa is right on the limit of the degree of difficulty that is practical for an international auxiliary language.”

One last note that sets Sambahsa apart from many other auxiliary languages: its creator, Olivier Simon, has been a veritable translating machine. While documentation until now has been spotty, one cannot say the same about examples of the language:

(explication of the vocabulary of the main texts) : <http://sambahsa.pbworks.com/%22Vocabulary-keys%22-to-some-Sambahsa-texts>

(Dictionaries) : http://sambahsa.wikinet.org/wiki/Main_Page

(some bilingual texts): <http://sambahsa.pbworks.com/exempels-tarjten-textes-fr>

& : <http://sambahsa.pbworks.com/tarjems-texten-ex-id-net-fr>

full Sambahsa-English dictionary: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/39063111/Sambahsa-English-Dictionary>

(various downloadable texts on Scribd): <http://www.scribd.com/search?cat=redesign&language=0&q=sambahsa>

With but a single fluent user until recently, there are nevertheless already a few hundred pages of material that can be read in the language. A good sign, considering that the creator of the most popular auxiliary language even today (Esperanto) spent

most of his time after creating the language translating and creating content, while many other projects languished due to excessive tinkering and far too little promotion and content creation. In short, now that the grammar in English has been published Sambahsa has become that much easier to learn, and there are already hundreds of pages of material to read. So why not give it a try?

1 - Sambahsa Pronunciation

1-1 Preliminary definitions:

Sambahsa uses the 26 letters of the Latin alphabet.

Id alphabet [alfAbd]

a, b [be], c [tse], d [de], e, f, g [dje], h [hatc], i, j [jye], k [ka], l, m, n, o, p [pe], q [ku], r, s, t [te], u, v [v], w [we], x, y [ü], z [dzed]

Sambahsa's orthographical and accentual system is quite elaborate; this is because it tries to respect the forms that loanwords have in the source languages, especially West-European languages where orthography plays a key role.

Nevertheless, those rules are entirely regular, and can be mastered through repetition. To ease the learning of those rules, a simpler phonetic transcription system, the Sambahsa Phonetic Transcription (SPT), is used. Words written in SPT are always between brackets []. Be sure to fully understand the SPT before going further.

[a] = like "a" in "car"

[ä] = like "e" in "bed", but often a bit longer

[b] = as in English

[c] = as "sh" in "shoe"

[d] = as in English

[e] = as in Italian or Spanish. Listen to it: <http://tts.imtranslator.net/4Fxa>

[ë] = as "e" in "the"

[f] = as in English

[g] = as "g" in "give"

[h] = as "h" in "hope"

[i] = as "i" in "bit"

[j] = as "si" in "vision"

[k] = as in English

[l] = as in English

[m] = as in English

[n] = as in English

[o] = as in English

[ö] = as “u” in “burn”, but slightly longer

[p] = as in English

[q] = the “ach-laut” of German or the “jota” of Spanish. It is written “kh” in the Sambahsa orthography. Listen to “khako” (“I’m not able to”: [qAko]: <http://tts.imtranslator.net/4Fxf>

[r] = its pronunciation varies from region to region. Nevertheless, “rr” and “rh” have to be pronounced rolled, as in Spanish.

[s] = as “s” in “say”

[t] = as in English

[u] = as “oo” in “book”

[ü] = the “u” of French or the “ü” of German. According to various rules, it can be written with “u” or “y”. Listen to “styr” (steering wheel): <http://tts.imtranslator.net/4Fxm>

[v] = as in English

[w] = as in English

[x] = it is the “ich-laut” of German. Is written “sh” in the Sambahsa orthography. Listen to “ghianshiek” (rock, stone): <http://tts.imtranslator.net/4Fxt>

[y] = as “y” in “you”

[z] = as “z” in “zero”

[§] = as “th” in “thin”

Stressed vowels are written in capital letters in polysyllabic words, and a [:] following a vowel indicates that this one has to be lengthened. Letters in italics can be left unpronounced.

1-2 Other conventions:

“Vowels” (V) are the letters a, e, i, o, u.

“Semi-vowels” are the letters w & y.

The other letters are “consonants” (C). In explanations, the letter (C) refers to semi-vowels too.

A “diphthong” is a group of two letters which produces a particular sound when they stand together, different from the conjunction of the sounds they would have produced individually.

Likewise, a “triphthong” is a group of three letters which produce a new sound when they stand together.

For the purposes of Sambahsa orthography, “ck” is equivalent to “k + k”.

If not otherwise indicated below, the Sambahsa orthographic letters are pronounced like their SPT equivalents.

1. Most complicated cases.

“e”: - [e] when it is stressed or as the first letter of a word.

Examples:

“temos” = [tEmos]; “darkness”
“emerg” = [emErg]; “emerge”

- is unpronounced alone at the end of a word or followed by only “s” or “t” (but can have effects on the preceding letters).

Examples:

“emerge” = [emErdj]; “to emerge”
“crimes” = [krims]
“survivet” = [survlvd]; “(he/it/she) survives”

Nevertheless, before “t” or “s”, “e” is pronounced [ɛ] if this “t” or “s” could not be distinguished from the preceding group of consonants, or simply if the loss of the “e” would result in something unpronounceable.

Examples:

“storgnet” = [stOrnyët]; “stunned”
“changes” = [tcAndjës]; “(thou) changest”

The endings “-quet” and “-ques” always correspond respectively to [kët] and [kës].

Examples:

“blanquet” = [blAnkët]; “blanket”
“techniques” = [tëknlkës]

In all other cases, « e » is [ɛ].

Example:

“kohlen” = [kO:lën]; “hidden”

“h”: - is [h] at the beginning of a word and between vowels.

Examples:

“habe” = [hab]; “to have”
“rahat” = [rahAt]; “rest”

- at the end of a word or before a consonant, it is unpronounced but lengthens the preceding vowel.

Examples:

“bahsa” = [bA:sa]; “language”
« bah » = [ba:]; « speak »

« gh », « bh » and « dh » correspond respectively to [g], [b] and [d]. The “h” is only there to indicate that the preceding consonant cannot be subjected to phonetic or grammatical modification of any kind.

2. Vowels.

“eau” = [o:]; example: “bureau” = [bürO:]

« aa » = [aa]; example: « saat » = [saAt]; « o’ clock, hour »

“ae”, “ay” = [ay]; example: “mae” = [may]; “don’t!”

“ai” = [ä]; example: “caise” = [kätz]; “cheese”

“au” = [Ao] (the “o” is shorter than the “a” before). Example: “Australia” = [aostrAlya]

“ee” = [Eë]; example: “eet” = [Eët]; “(he/she/it) was”

“eu” = [ö]; example: “Europe” = [örOp]

« ie » = [i:] when it is alone at the end of a word; but [ye] in other cases.

Examples:

“publie” = [publ:]; “publish”
“publiet” = [publyEt]; “published”

“oe”, “oi” & “oy” = [oy]; example: “choengju” = [tcOyngju]; “rice alcohol”

“oo” = [oo]; example: “boot” = [boOt]; “boat”

“ou” = [u:]; example: “courage” = [ku:rAdj]

« ue » = [ü:]; example: « continue » = [kontinÜ:]

« ui » = [wi]; example: « tuich » = [twitc]; “empty”

“uy” = [uy]; example: “lastruym” = [lastrUym]; “ship hold”

“u” = [u]; except if there is “e” among the two following letters.

Examples:

“bur” = [bur]; “ashes”
“bureau” = [bürO:]

3. Semi-vowels

“**w**” & “**y**” are respectively [w] and [y] if they are followed or preceded by a vowel.

Example: “wey” = [wey]; ‘we’

Otherwise, “w” is a very short [u] and “y” is [ü].

Examples:

“sehkwn̄t” = [sEkunt]; “they follow”
“type” = [tüp]; “guy”

Nevertheless, alone or followed by “s” at the end of a word, “y” and “ys” are respectively [i] and [is]

Examples:

“baby” = [bAbi]
“babys” = [bAbis]

4. Consonants

“**sch**” = [c]; example: “muraishmusch” = [muräcmUc]; “swamp-fly”

“**ch**” = [tʃ], but [k] before a consonant.

Examples:

“cheus” = [tʃös]; “choose”
“Christ” = [krist]

“**gn**” = [ny]; example: “gnoh” = [nyo:]; “know”

“**kh**” = [q]; example: “khiter” = [qltër]; “evil”

“**ph**” = [f]; example: “philosophia” = [filozOfya]

“**qu**”; “q” never appears alone but followed by “u”. “qu” is [kw] before “a”, “o” and “u”, and [k] before “e”, “i” and “y”.

Examples:

“quod” = [kwod]; “what?”
“quis” = [kis]; “who?”

“**sc**” = [sk], but [s] before “e”, “i” and “y”.

Examples:

“scutt” = [skut]; “shake”

“science” = [syents]

“sh” = [x]; example: “shienciu” = [xyEntsyu]; “overgrown”

“ss” = [s]; example: “permission” = [përmisyOn]; “permission”

“th” = [ʃ] but turns to [t] before or after [s], [c], [j].

Examples:

“thamf” = [ʃamf]; “stench”
“esthetic” = [estEtik]

“c” = [k], but turns to [ts] before “e”, “i” and “y”.

Examples:

“condition” = [kondityOn]
“petrificit” = [pëtrifltsit]; “(he/she/it) petrified”

“g” = [g], but turns to [dj] before “e”, “i” and “y”. “gh” is always [g]

Examples:

“gulf” = [gulf]
“large” = [lardj]

“j” is always [j]

“r” [r] has various pronunciations according to the native background of speakers. The recommended (but not compulsory) form is the “r” as found in the German dialects spoken in Saarland or Luxembourg.

However, “rr” and “rh” have to be rolled, like in Spanish or Italian, while “rl” should be pronounced like a “Japanese” “r”, i.e. where the “r” and the “l” nearly coalesce into each other.

“s” = [s] but turns to [z] between two vowels.

Examples:

“son” = [son]
“decision” = [dëtsizyOn]

« x » = [ks] but can turn to [gz] if it uses the pronunciation.

« z » = [dz]; example: « zangir » = [dzAndʒir]; « chain »

1 - 3 Final remarks:

Some letters, especially the endings, can be slightly modified by a neighbouring sound.

Example: “hands” = [handz]

Some consonants, as well as the vowel [ɛ̃], can even be omitted.

Example: “franceois” (“French”) is officially [frantsɛ̃Oys] but in truth [fransOys] because [t] lies within a consonantal cluster, and because unstressed [ɛ̃] lies near stressed [o].

If a verbal form begins with [sC-], “oi” can be added before it, for reasons of euphonics.

Example : “skap” (to escape) > “oiskap”.

1 – 4 Accentuation in Sambahsa:

Begin with the final syllable of the word and work backward until you reach a syllable that can or must be accented.

Always stressed:

-Vowel before -h or a double consonant (including ck);

-the syllable before final -e.

Examples:

- “prodah” = [prodA:]; “to hand over”
- “recess” = [rɛ̃tsEs]
- “frontdeck” = [frondEk]; “foredeck”
- “taslime” = [tasllm]; “to surrender”

- The first of two vowels together (other than i and u acting as semivowels)

Examples:

- armee = [armEɛ̃]; “army”
- Australia = [aostrAlya]

-The final syllable of words ending in

-in (but not -ing),

-ey

-ie

-ui (when pronounced “wi”),

-oCel (where C is a single consonant).

Examples:

- “hotel” = [hotEl]
- “suadin” = [swadIn]; “fair weather”
- “reling” = [rElIng]; “railing (of a vessel)”
- “kierey” = [kyerEy]; “ram”

a, o, u before a consonant or semivowel (except a single “s”).

Examples:

- “cadaloc” = [kadalOk]; “anywhere”
 - “naval” = [navAl]
- “dayluk” = [daylUk]; “mainland”

Never stressed:

-Prefixes

Examples:

- fortrehc = [fortrE:k]; “for-” = “away”; “to depart for a trip”
- recess = [rëtsEs]; “re-” = “back”
- bevid = [bëvId]; “be-” = factitive meaning; “to show, to prove”.

-The letter “w” used as a vowel

Example: - sehwnt = [sE:kunt]; “they follow”.

-A final syllable ending in

-(i)um,

-ule,

or single –s

Examples:

- “schives” = [civz]; “to shift” (infinitive)
 - “territorium” = [territOryum]
 - “insule” = [Insül]; “island”

- A vowel/semivowel alone at the end of a word.

Examples:

- “okwi” = [Okwi]; “eyes”
 - “baby” = [bAbi]

- E, i, and y as the last vowel of the word followed by a single semivowel (exception: final -ey) or one or several consonants (but not double ones) :

Examples:

- “segheI” = [sEgël]; “sail”

- “tolkit” = [tOlkit]; “he/she/it talked”
- “khitert” = [qltërt] = “evil” (substantive).

In compound words, the stress is the same as if the elements were separate words; the suffixes –ment and -went are considered part of a compound.

Examples:

- gouverne = [gu:vErn]; “to govern”
- gouvernement = [gu:vErnëmënt]
 - nest = [nest]
- corcuksnest = [korkUksnëst]; “crow’s-nest”

These rules do not necessarily apply to proper names.

The use of a hyphen preserves the accentuation on both sides.

Some particles in Sambahsa are called “clitics”; they have no accentuation of their own.

“Proclitics” thus form an accentuational unit with the following word.

Articles and the negation *ne*, when it is unstressed, are proclitics.

“Enclitics” form an accentuational unit with the word before. The particles *ghi*, *ge* are enclitics.

Clitics like the personal pronouns, when they are unstressed, can thus form an accentuational unit with the word before or after them (in general, a verb).

Two clitics (or a proclitic and an enclitic) can come together and form a new accentuational unit.

2 – Declension (declination) in Sambahsa

2 -1 Plural

The simple form is the singular number. The plural number ends in *-s*. If the latter is phonetically incompatible, then *-i* (for animate beings) or *-a* will be used. If all those forms do not match with the stress rules, no endings shall be used. *-um* of names of things turns to *-a* in the plural. The unstressed endings *-es* or *-os* turn to *-si* or *-sa*. According to an optional rule, names of groups of animate beings ending with a letter which is phonetically incompatible with a final *s* (ex: *s*, *ch*, *j*) ought to have no ending for the plural number. Examples:

div (god) = *divs*

urx (bear) = *urx(i)* (as it is a collection of animate beings)

territorium (territory) = *territoria*

daumos (wonder) = *daumsa*

deutsch (German) = *deutsch(i)* (as it is a collection of persons).

prince (prince, son of a sovereign) = *princes*

The sole irregular plural in Sambahsa is for *ok* (eye), plural: *oks* or *okwi* (eyes)

2-2 Declension Cases

In Sambahsa-mundialect, the use of the four-case [declension](#) system is only compulsory for pronouns and articles. The four cases are [nominative](#), [accusative](#), [dative](#) and [genitive](#). The nominative is the case of the subject and of the attribute of the subject.

Example: *Paul est mien prient* = « Paul is my friend »; Both « Paul » and « my friend » are in the nominative.

The accusative is the case of the object of a verb.

Example: *Vido iom* = “I see him”; “him” is in the accusative

Moreover, in Sambahsa, all prepositions are normally followed by the accusative.

In Proto-Indo-European, the accusative was the case used to form adverbs. Thus, the accusative is the case of complements of nouns or adjectives, when no preposition is used.

Ex: *un tri meters longo mur* = « a three meters long wall »

Is regnit tri yars = “he reigned three years”

In the examples above, “three meters / three years” are considered to be in the accusative case.

That’s why the accusative is also the case for absolute constructions :

Iam mater revidus iom pater, ir purts eent noroct = “The mother having seen back the father, their children were happy”.

The dative is the case of the person or object that benefits from the action.

Example: *Dahm un apel ei wir* = « I give an apple to the man »; *ei wir* is in the dative.

The genitive is the case of the possessor of something.

Example: *id apel ios dru*: « The apple of the tree »; *ios dru* is in the genitive.

Most Sambahsa verbs trigger first the accusative and then the dative, the exceptions being the verbs which need “positional anchors” (ex: *arrive ad* = “to arrive at”) and verbs that can introduce an indirect speech. Then, the person object of the narration is in the dative.

Ex: *Is mi antwehrt (od is wois neid de to)* = “He answers to me (that he knew nothing about this)”.

One of Sambahsa-mundialect's major peculiarities is that it uses the same word for articles (“the”) and personal pronouns. It is as if, in English, we did not say *The woman kills the man* but rather *She woman kills him man*. (In sambahsa-mundialect: *la gwena neict iom wir*). Thus, *she kills him* is *la neict iom*. The only exception is for the genitive article which is logically different from the possessive pronoun. Sambahsa-mundialect has four genders (masculine, feminine, neutral, undetermined) which are based, as in English, on the true

nature of the substantive¹, and not arbitrarily as in many other languages. The demonstrative, relative² and interrogative pronouns are constructed following the same patterns. All those pronouns can be listed within a single table, following this order: article & personal pronoun, demonstrative pronoun and relative & interrogative pronouns.

Indeed, those four categories of pronouns nearly always share the same endings. A good method for remembering them can be found here: <http://joyoflanguages.blogspot.com/2010/05/sambahsa-guide-to-pronouns-and-articles.html>

Singular

Case/Gender	Masculine	Feminine	Neutral	Undetermined
nominative	is/so/qui (relative), quis (interrogative)	ia/sa/qua	id/tod/quod	el/tel/quel
accusative	iom/tom/quom	iam/tam/quam	id/tod/quod	el/tel/quel
dative	ei/tei/quei	ay/tay/quay	ei/tei/quei	al/tal/qual
genitive (possessive pronoun not included)	ios/tos/quos	ias/tas/quas	ios/tos/quos	al/tal/qual

Plural

Case/gender	Masculine	Feminine	Neutral	Undetermined
nominative	ies/toy/quoy	ias/tas/quas	ia/ta/qua	i/ti/qui
accusative	iens/tens/quens	ians/tans/quans	ia/ta/qua	i/ti/qui
dative	ibs/tibs/quibs	iabs/tabs/quabs	ibs/tibs/quibs	im/tim/quim
genitive	iom/tom/quom	iam/tam/quam	iom/tom/quom	im/tim/quim

Example: *Is heroy kamyieb trehve tom tajir quei hieb est propost kaupe amulettis.*

(Lit.): "he hero succeeded find that (masculine) merchant to-whom had been proposed buy amulets.

¹ In poetry, some exceptions are permitted. For example, big rivers can be masculine, while trees are feminine, but bear the masculine endings of the euphonic vocalisation.

² Beside "qui/qua/quod", there is a literary relative pronoun "yo(s), ya, yod". It follows the model of "qui/qua/quod" except for the nominative masculine singular "yo(s)". However, this relative can be used only for non-restrictive subordinates, i.e. subordinates whose deletion does not make the sentence meaningless.

"The hero succeeded in finding that merchant for whom someone had proposed to buy amulets."

A demonstrative pronoun for distant objects consists of *c+is, ia, id...* etc. As the *c* must always be pronounced [ts], an additional *i* can be added after *c* if necessary. Thus, we get *cial, ciay*.

A negative pronoun consists of *ne* ("not") + *is, ia, id*. The "e" of *ne* disappears when its presence would create a bisyllabic word. Hence: *neis, niom, nei, nios*, etc... Its nominative plural masculine is *noy*.

Neid can accordingly mean "nothing" when it is alone, or "no" when it stands before a substantive.

The indefinite pronoun is *un*, which can bear the "euphonic vocalisation" endings (see below).

There is a general demonstrative pronoun *to* which refers to a full statement or a full situation which has just been described; its corresponding relative pronoun is *quo*.

Example: *Is capitan liv sien glas ed sorpsit id rum unte oin schtoss, quo ei provoquit un gvaltig kwasadfall. - "To suastahalt alyo glas ?" addihsit is.*

(Eng.): The captain lifted his glass and swallowed the rum at one go, which (quo = the fact he has swallowed his rum at one go) provoked him to a violent coughing fit.

- "Does that (to = "all that I've just revealed to you) deserves well another glass ?" added he.

The preposition of possession ("of") is peculiar in Sambahsa-mundialect for it agrees in number and gender with the possessor. Like every other preposition, it triggers the accusative.

	Number/gender	masculine feminine neutral undetermined			
singular		os	as	os	es
plural		om	am	om	em

Example: *Id mohrt os Louis* = "the death of Louis".

The endings of the "vocalic euphonisation" can be used to express the genitive. A very common formation is *uns* = "of a" from *un* + -s.

A practical solution when several elements are considered owners of a thing is to use *sbei* after that group of "owners" and before the thing owned.

Example: *Paul ed Peter sbei dom*: "The house of Paul and Peter".

The **personal pronouns** of the first and second persons are as follows:

Case	1° singular	2°	1°	2°
	singular plural plural			
nominative	Ego (io, when unstressed)	tu	wey	yu
accusative	me	te	nos	vos
dative	mi	tib	nos	vos

Unlike English, the use of the nominative personal pronouns is not compulsory in Sambahsa-Mundialect if the person can be guessed by the ending of the conjugated verb. The pronouns nevertheless appear for inversion in interrogative sentences:

Example: *Ghehdo io stambhes to?* = Can I prevent this?

Though one can create an interrogative sentence just by putting "kwe" at the beginning:

Kwe ghehdo stambhes to? = Can I prevent this?

Inversion ought to take place after the conjugated element.

Example: *Siem io ghehde stambhes to?* = Will I be able to prevent this?

The **possessive pronouns** for all persons are as follows:

Person/Number	singular	plural
First	mien	Nies (noster)
Second	tien	Vies (voster)
Third masculine	eys	ir
Third feminine	ays	ir
Third neutral	ids	ir
Third undetermined	els	ir

The **reflexive pronoun** is *se* in the accusative, and *sib* in the dative. The corresponding possessive pronoun is *sien*. Theoretically, the reflexive can be used in all persons, as, for example, in Russian.

Example: *Se vidmos in id specule* = “We see ourselves in the mirror”.

But, in practice, it is only used for the 3rd person.

The possessive reflexive pronoun “sien” therefore always refers to the subject of the sentence, and never appears in the nominal group of the subject.

Example :

la mater lieubht sien purts = “The mother loves her children”.

Martin ed eyso prient (not *sien prient !) *tolke con mutu in Sambahsa* = “Martin and his friend talk to each other in Sambahsa”.

“Self” in Sambahsa is *swo*, and it can be suffixed to the pronoun.

Example: *Gnohdi teswo!* = Know !thyself!

“Each other” is *mutu*.

In Sambahsa-mundialect, endings with declensions can be added to substantives and adjectives for purposes of [euphony](#) or literary purposes (ex: [poetry](#)). This system, whose native name is *euphonic vocalisation*, can only be used if it is compatible with the accentuation patterns. For example: *uno smiegdo geront* "a frail old man" instead of *un smiegd geront*. In everyday use, those endings appear only in the words *vasyo* (all of the, every) and *alyo* (another).

Singular

Case/gender	Masculine	Feminine	Neutral	Undetermined
nominative	-o(s)	-a	-o/-um	-is*
accusative	-o/-um	-u	-o/-um	-em*
dative	-i	-i	-i	-i
genitive	-(io)s	-(ia)s	-(io)s	-(e)s

³⁵₁₇ = for animate beings only!

Plural

Case/gender	Masculine	Feminine	Neutral
nominative	-i	-as	-a
accusative	-ens	-ens	-a

dative	-ims	-ims	-ims
genitive	-(e)n	-(e)n	-(e)n

The "undetermined" endings are like those of the masculine if they refer to animate beings.

The masculine singular can have a vocative ending –e (i.e. for the person being called).

3 -Sambahsa conjugation

Sambahsa, like many other languages, has two basic tenses: present and past (or « preterit »). All other tenses are derived from these two.

Its conjugation includes two numbers (singular and plural) and three persons in each, like English.

Unlike many other languages where each verb is called by its infinitive (ex: English *to love*, French *aimer*, Russian *ljubitj*), Sambahsa verbs are indicated by their stem. In this case: *lieubh*, while the “true” infinitive is *liubhes*.

From the verbal stem, you can deduce the whole conjugation, except for the three irregular verbs *ses*, *habe* & *woide*.

In Sambahsa, the conjugation is marked by the use of endings (i.e. suffixes added to the verbal stem) and/or modification of the verbal stem itself.

In English, the subject of a verb is always indicated.

Examples:

I love you
Paul likes cats.

If we wrote just **love you*, this sentence would have a different meaning. **Likes cats* would not be correct, though we may conjecture that “like” is in the 3rd person singular of the present, since “s” is the ending of this person. Sambahsa functions as in this latter case; i.e. the personal pronoun is used only if necessary to avoid confusion or in order to stress the action. As the second person plural of the present tense sounds like the third person singular of the same tense, the corresponding pronoun “yu” = “you” is nearly always employed.

Example:

Lieubho te = I love you

Ego lieubho te = I do love you

Personal pronouns will be explained in the section on declension. As a reminder, their nominative (i.e. subject) forms are indicated in the table below

1 st person singular	Io (Stressed form: Ego)
2 nd person singular	tu
3 rd person singular	Is (male); ia (female), id (thing), el (undetermined)
1 st person plural	wey
2 nd person plural	yu
3 rd person plural	Ies (male); ias (female), ia (thing), i (undetermined)

Conjugated forms will be always indicated in this order.

“Yu” can apply to a group of persons or to a single person as a sign of formal respect. “Tu” (cf. archaic English “thou”) is used only to address close relatives or friends and children, as, for example, in French, Russian or Farsi.

Before endings that begin in “s” or “t”, the final b, k, or g of verbal stems turns respectively to p, c, c. In the same conditions verbal stems ending in ehv, euv, eiv, turn to ehf, euf, eif.

Examples:

Scrib = scrips, script (think of the English words “descriBe”, “descriPtion”)

Dreiv = dreifs, dreift (think of the English words “driVe”, “driFt”)

Endings in “s” or “t” may disappear if the verbal stem already ends with the same letter.

Examples:

Tu deurs (deurs + s) = you dare, thou darest

Is skehpt (skehpt + t) = he waits

3 – 1 Present tense and derived tenses

All regular Sambahsa verbs bear endings in the present tense. The rule is that the stress must always fall on the same place in all persons of the present tense (otherwise, this can’t be a verbal stem). There are small variations within the endings below, so that they can apply to a lot of stress patterns.

The endings of the present tense can be summarized this way:

1 st person singular	-m <i>after a vowel sound alone or followed by [y] / -o / nothing if the former cases can’t apply</i>
2 nd person singular	-s

3 rd person singular	-t
1 st person plural	-m(o)s
2 nd person plural	-t(e)
3 rd person plural	-(e)nt, -e

Those endings are suffixed to the verbal stem to get the present tense conjugation (if necessary with the tiny modifications listed above, ex: g + t = ct, etc.).

However, there is a notable category of verbal stems in Sambahsa which require some alteration before being added the present endings. These are stems with a “nasal infix”. Such forms have an unstressed “e” as their last vowel, between consonants, and at least one of those consonants must be “n” or “m”. This “n” or “m” is called the “nasal infix”.

Examples:

Linekw [lInëkw] = “to leave”
 Presse[m] [prEsëm] = “to press”
 Scinesd [sInësd] = “to split”
 Annem [Anëm] = “to breathe”
 Pregon [prEdjën] = “to imprint”

In the present tense (and in all derived tenses), those verbs lose their unstressed “e” wherever possible. If “s” or “ss”, after the deletion of “e”, finds itself after or before a consonant, it gets deleted too.

Therefore, we get:

Linkwo, linkws, linkwt, linkwm(o)s, yu linkwte, linkwnt [lInkunt]

Premo, prems, premt, premmos, yu premte, preme(nt)

Scindo, scinds, scindt, scindmos, yu scindte, scinde(nt)

Annmo, annems, annemt, annmmos, yu annemt, annment

(Here, *annmt and *annms would be unpronounceable).

Pregno [prEnyo], *pregens* [prEdjëns], *pregent, pregnems* [prEnyëms], *yu pregent, pregne(nt)*

(See the detailed explanation by R. Winter here: <http://sambahsa.pbworks.com/w/page/91471392/Nasal%20infixes%20%28by%20Robert%20Winter%29>)

With all verbs in the present tense (whether with nasal infix or not), an “e” can be put between the stem and the ending if there is no other way to make it pronounceable. Such a case often occurs after “-gn” [ny]. See the case of *pregnems* above, or the present conjugation of the verb *storgn* [storny] “to stun”.

Storgno, storgnes, storgnet, storgnems, yu storgnet, storgne(nt).

Other verbs do not present particular difficulties.

Verbs ending with a stressed vowel sound alone or followed just by “y” conjugate this way:

“Dah–” (to give): *dahm, dahs, daht, dahm(o)s, yu dahte, dahnt*

“Bay–” (to fear): *baym, bays, bayt, baym(o)s, yu bayte, baynt*

Verbs ending with an unstressed “e” often correspond to English verbs ending in “-ate”; ex: “celebre” [cëlEbrë] = “to celebrate”

They conjugate this way:

“Entre–” (to enter): *io entre³, entres, entret, entrems, yu entret, entre(nt)*

Verbs whose last vowel is an unstressed « e » before a consonant (and with no nasal infix) tend to follow a similar pattern:

“Hinder” (to hinder): *io hinder², hinders, hindert, hinderms, yu hindert, hindernt*

*hindere would be impossible because the stress would be altered: *[hindEr]

Verbs ending in a consonant after a stressed vowel represent the largest category.

“behr” (to carry, to bear): *behro, behrs, behrt, behrm(o)s, yu behrte, behrnt*

“kwehk” (to seem): *kwehko, kwehcs, kwehct, kwehkmoss, yu kwehcte, kwehke(nt)*

The verbs “ses” and “habe” have irregular present conjugations:

“ses” (to be): *som, es, est, smos, ste, sont*

“habe” (to have): *ho, has, hat, hams/habmos, habte, ha(be)nt*

3-1-1 Infinitive:

Verbs ending in unstressed “e” do not change: “entre” = “to enter”.

Verbs with a nasal infix lose their unstressed “e” and add “-es”.

Likewise, verbal stems in “ei” or “eu” turn respectively to “i” and “u” and add “-es”.

Examples:

Linekw = linkwes [lɪnkwës] (to leave)

Reik = rikes [riks] (to return to)

Pleuk = plukes [plüks] (to fly)

Other verbs add a final “-e” if it does not alter the accentuation; otherwise, nothing is added.

Examples:

³ « entrem » and « hinderm » could be possible too, but a risk of confusion with « entrems » and « hinderms » could arise. That’s why we prefer “io entre” and “io hinder”.

Sprehg [spre:g] = *sprehge* [spre:dj] (to ask to)
Hinder = *hinder* (to hinder)

The infinitive, in Sambahsa phrases, is used with the same prepositions as with substantives. The only difference is that infinitives have no articles (the, a) and cannot take endings.

Compare: *Tehrbo tod auto* = “I need this car”

And: *Tehrbo kaupe tod auto* = “I need to buy this car”

3-1-2 Present active participle:

The ending is –(e)nd. –(e)nt is possible too, but seldom used, in order to avoid confusions with the ending of the third person plural of the present tense.

Thus: *gwehm-* = “come”; *gwehmend* = “coming”.

The gerund is made by adding the adverb ending “-ye” (with hyphen!).

Gwehmend-ye = “while coming”

As in English, a periphrastic tense can be gotten by using the conjugated verb “ses” + the present active participle.

Som gwehmend = “I am coming”

3-1-3 Past active participle and infinitive:

This construction corresponds to the English use of “having” + past participle.

To get it, one has simply to add “-us” or “-vs” (following the phonetic possibilities) to the verbal stem.

Examples:

“peit’ = “try”; “peitus” = “having tried”
“crehsce” [kre:s] = “grow”; “crehscus” [krE:skus] = “having grown”
“ghyah” = “to become open”; “ghyahvs” [gya:vz] = “having become open”

3-1-4 Imperative:

The imperative of the 2nd person singular corresponds to the bare verbal stem, with or without a final “e”.

Example: *Linekw!* [lInëkw] or *Linkwe!* [linkw] = “leave!”
“Be!” is irregular: *sdi!*

For the 2nd person plural, this is the same form as the present tense (without the personal pronoun you).

Linkwte! [lInkut] = “leave ye!”

For the 1st person plural, the Sambahsa equivalent of English “let’s” is “smad”, before the infinitive.

Smad linkwes! = “let’s leave!”

3-1-5 Future:

There are two possible future forms in Sambahsa.

For the first one, you take the verb in the 2nd person singular of the present tense, and add to it “-ie” + the conjugational endings.

Example:

Permitt = “permit, allow”

Permitts = “you permit”

Then, its future conjugation is *permittsiem, permittsies, permittsiet, permittsiem(o)s, yu permittsiete, permittsient*

“Ses” has *sessiem, sessies, sessiet, sessiem(o)s, yu sessiete, sessient*
« Have » has *habsiem, habsies, habsiet, habsiem(o)s, yu habsiete, habsient*

The other form is analytic; the auxiliary “sie–” (“will”) is used with the infinitive. It is conjugated like above: *siem, sies, siet, siem(o)s, siete, sient*

Examples:

Sient antwehrde = “They will answer”

Siem vide = “I will see”

Sambahsa even has a negative future auxiliary “nie–” much like English “won’t”.

Examples:

Yu niete antwehrde = “You won’t answer”

Niem ghehde = “I won’t be able”

3-1-6 Conditional:

This tense corresponds to the use of “would” in English, and sometimes of the past tense, when expressing a possibility, a condition.

Beware that, in a sentence with *sei* = “if”, if the main clause uses the conditional, the subordinate will do the same (and not use the past tense as in English)

Example : *Sei esiem riche, kaupiem quodlibt* : “If I was rich, I would buy anything I want”.

In Sambahsa, it is made by suffixing “ie” to the verbal stem + the present endings.

Example: “kwehk” = “seem”; then “would seem” = *kwehkiem, kwehkies, kwehkiet, kwehkiem(o)s, yu kwehkiete, kwehkient*

Verbal stems which already end in “-ie” replace it with “icie”.

Example: “publie” = “publish”; “would publish” = *publiciem, publicies, publiciet, publiciem(o)s, yu publiciete, publicient* [publitsyEnt]

“Ses” has *esiem, esies, esiet, esiem(o)s, yu esiete, esient*.

3-1-7 The near future:

This corresponds to English “to be about to” + verb. In Sambahsa, we use the auxiliary “vah–” + present endings before the infinitive.

Example: “to be about to open” is conjugated this way:

Vahm ghyane, vahs ghyane, vaht ghyane, vahm(o)s ghyane, yu vahte ghyane, vahnt ghyane.

3-2 Past tense and derived tenses

There are special endings for the past tense. Moreover, the verb stem often undergoes some alteration. If the stem undergoes such a modification, then the use of the endings is optional.

1 st person singular	-im
2 nd person singular	-(i)st(a)
3 rd person singular	-it
1 st person plural	-am
2 nd person plural	-at
3 rd person plural	-eer (-r if the verb ends in a stressed vowel sound).

Between the verbal stem and those endings, an “s”, called the “sigmatic aorist”, may be used. Its use is not compulsory; nevertheless, it is recommended if the stem ends in a vowel sound and the ending begins likewise with a vowel.

Example: “ghyah” (to become open) + it = (preferably) “ghyahsit” [gyA:sit]

Otherwise, its use may follow Indo-European examples. For example, these two verbs behave like their Latin equivalents:

“scrib” (to write): *scripsim, scripst(a), scripsit, scripsam, scripsat, scripseer* (but “scribim”, etc., are possible).

“duc” (to lead): *duxim, ducst(a), duxit, duxam, duxat, duxeer* [düksEër] (but “ducim”, etc., are possible too).

To predict the possible alteration of the stem, proceed in this order:

1°) Verbs ending with unstressed “e”.

The “e” disappears, and the use of the endings is compulsory

Example: “entre” (to enter): *entrim, entrist, entrit, entram, entrat, entreer*

Verbs ending in « ie » turn it to « ic ».

Exemple: “publie” (to publish): *publicim, publicist, publicit, publi(c)am, publi(c)at, publi(ce)er*

2°) Verbs with « nasal infix ».

The stem loses both the unstressed « e » and the nasal infix.

Examples:

“linekw” (leave) = “likw” (left)
“pressem” (press) = “press” (pressed)
“annem” (breathe) = “ann” (breathed)

Moreover, the “Von Wahl rules” (see below) apply when it is possible:

“scinesd” (split; present tense: scindo) = sciss (split)

This appears indeed in the Romance languages, where the verbal stem is “scind-”, but the stem for derived words is “sciss-” (ex: “scission”)

The use of the past tense endings is here optional.

3°) Verbs whose stressed vowel is “ehC”, “ei” or “eu” undergo an “ablaut”, i.e., those vowels turn respectively to “ohC”, “i” and “u”.

Examples:

Ghehd (to be able) = ghohd
Peit (to try) = pit
Pleuk (to fly) = pluk

4°) Verbs whose stressed vowel is “aC”, “au” or “ay”, can undergo an ablaut and turn respectively to “ieC”, “ieu” and “iey”. Nevertheless, this ablaut is optional.

Examples:

“ghyan” (to open) = “ghyien” [gyen]
“sayg” (to say) = “sieyg”
“aur” (to hear) = “ieur” [yör]

5°) Other verbs can follow the “Von Wahl rules”, which can change their final consonants.

Verbal stem final consonants	Past tense final consonants
-d	-s
-dd/-tt	-ss
-rt/-rr/-rg	-rs
-lg	-ls
-ct	-x

Examples:

“decid” (decide) = “decis”
 “permitt” (permit) = “permiss”
 “curr” (run) = “curs”
 “volg” (turn round) = “vols”
 “connect” = “connex”

Indeed, this phenomenon appears (irregularly) in English: “decide” but “decision”, “permit” but “permission”...

6°) The remaining verbs have the same stem in the present and the past tenses and must therefore bear the past endings.

An important category among them is the verbs ending with a stressed vowel sound.

Ex: “gwah—” (to go to) [notice the use of the sigmatic aorist in certain persons]:
Gwahsim, gwahst(a), gwahsit, gwahsam, gwahsat, gwahr

Irregular verbs:

“Habe” has “hieb” as a past form, either with or without endings.

There is a third irregular verb in Sambahsa: “woide” (to know a certain fact, a certain thing; cf. French “savoir”, Spanish “saber”, German “wissen”).

It has the particularity of being conjugated in the present tense as in the past tense.

Thus, I know, you know, etc., is *woidim, woidst(a), woidit, woidam, woidat, woideer*.

Or, with the personal pronouns and without the endings, *io woid, tu woid*, etc.

The future is *woidsiem, woidsies*, etc., the conditional, *woidiem, woidies*, etc.

The past tense form is *wois* (by application of the Von Wahl rules), with or without the endings.

The verb “ses” has two different past tenses. The first one, the “imperfect”, refers to a lasting situation (cf “was being”, “used to be”):

Eem, ees, eet, eem(o)s, yu eete, eent [Eëm, Eës, Eët...]

The other one, the “simple past”, refers to a single event:

Buim, buist(a), buit, buam, buat, buir.

Example: *Eem in in id garden quando buim hihn ab id keraun* = “I was (being) in the garden when I was hit by the thunderbolt”.

3-2-1 The passive participle:

Modern Sambahsa uses only the (former past) passive participle. A “present” passive participle can still be found in compounds. It consists of “-men” suffixed to the (present) verbal stem, if it is compatible with the accentuation.

Examples: “almen” = “pupil” (cf. “alumnus” = “who is bred up”; “al-” = “to put upright, to breed up”)

“deimen” = “(milk) nurse” (cf. Latin “femina” = “woman”; from “deih” = “to suck at”)

Nowadays, the (former past) passive participle is used everywhere. It consists of either “-t” or “-(e)n” suffixed to the verbal stem, sometimes with modifications. “-t” and “-en” have no difference in meaning.

The modifications are

- a) For verbs in “ehV”, “ei” and “eu” which undergo ablaut (as the irregular verbs in English)

Thus:

“peit” (to try) = pit/piten (tried)
“kwehr” (to do) = kwohrt/kwohrn (done)
“neud” (to use) = nudt/nuden (used)

On the contrary, verbs in “a”, “ay”, “au” have no ablaut:

“nak” (to reach) = nact/naken (reached)
“aur” (to heard) = aurt/aur(e)n (heard)
“sayg” (to say) = sayct/saygen (said)

- b) The “-t” forms of the verbs subjected to the “Von Wahl rules” are the same as their past forms.

Examples:

“decid” (to decide) = decis/deciden
“permitt” (to permit) = permiss/permitten
“connect” (to connect) = connex/connecten

- c) When there is no ablaut, verbal stems ending in “v” undergo modifications for their “-t” forms.

Verbs in “-uv” and “-ov” lose their final “v” and put “t” instead.

Example: “mov” (to move) = mot/moven

For other verbs, the “v” turns to “w”.

Example: “resolv” (to resolve) = resolwt [rëzOlut]/resolven

These forms may seem difficult to remember; in fact, just think of the English forms “move” and “motion”, “resolve” and “resolution”.

- d) Verbs with a nasal infix lose this infix and the unstressed “e”, and can be subjected to the “Von Wahl rules” above.

Examples:

“posen” (to lay down) = post/posen
“suppressem” (to suppress) = suppresst/suppressen
“pineg” (to paint) = pict/pigen
“confuned” (to confuse) = confus/confuden
“scinesd” (to split) = sciss/scisden
“annem” (to breathe) = annt/annen
“pregen” (to imprint) = prect/pregen

Irregular verbs:

“ses” = est/esen
“habe” = habt/haben
« woide » = wois/woiden

3-2-2 Use of the passive participle:

As in English, a “composed past” can be made with the verb “habe” + the past participle.

There is a difference with the English “present perfect”.

The Sambahsa “composed past” refers only to actions that took place in the past (even if their effects still last in the present time), and not to actions that have continued until presently. Otherwise the present tense is used.

Compare:

Ho myohrst mien cleicha in mien auto = “I have forgotten my keys in my car”
(action took place in the past, but its consequences are still going on)

Smos prients pon nies miegve = « We have been friends since our childhood »
(**hams est prients pon nies miegve* may imply that we are not friends anymore).

The other function of the passive participle is, as its name implies, the construction of passive sentences.

The more frequent way of forming the passive uses the verb “ses”, but, if the action is still going on, the verb “bih” (to become) is preferable. Sambahsa “ab” = “by”

Compare:

Id dwer est ghyant, ia fensters sont brohct: « The door is open(ed), the windows are broken »

And:

El mus biht praess ab el cat: “The mouse is being eaten by the cat”.

Another possibility is to the active form with the reflexive pronoun “se”.

Tod buk se suapehrnt / Tod buk suapehrnt-se = “This book sells good”

3-3 Verbal affixes:

Sambahsa uses many optional verbal prefixes (though they did not exist in IE) in order to avoid heavy sequences of infinitives. Hyphens can be used to avoid the formation of new diphthongs or triphthongs.

Bi-: to begin to (“inchoative”)

Example: *Id luce biattract insects:* “The light begins to attract insects”

Na- = to keep on -ing(“continuative”)

Example: *Is nieudh urgent-ye namove:* “He needed urgently to keep moving”.

Re- = re- (the same as in English)

Vi = corresponds to the English adverb “finally”

Example: *Is viemers ex id wed:* “He finally emerged out of the water”

Za- = to stop doing

Example: *Ibs sclavs buit permitten za-ermes:* “The slaves were allowed to stop rowing”.

The following prefixes are special because they change the tense of the verb:

ee-: before a verb in the present, corresponds to English “used to”. This prefix, which already existed in IE, is called “augment”.

Example: *Hermann ee(-)gwaht id scol siens urb*: “Hermann used to go to the school of his town”.

Sa(l)-: to be about to + verb

Sa(l) is always written with the hyphen, as is often the case with *ee-*

Example: *Is wir sa-khierk* = “The man was about to drown”

Here are two widespread verbal suffixes, which already existed in Indo-European:

-skw: “desiderative”, has a general meaning of “to intend to do”, “to like to”; this is a shortened form of *eiskw*.

It can be suffixed to verbs if it does not alter the place of the stressed syllable.

Example: *les nauts gwahskweer id maykhana* = “The sailors wanted to go to the inn”.

-eih: “factitive”.

Examples: *Is kaupt tod wogh* = He buys this car. *Kaupeihm iom tod wogh* = I make him buy this car.

Note that it triggers a double accusative. Verbs ending in *-ie* turn to *-iceih*. Stems in *ei* turn it to *i* for euphonics.

Not all the verbs ending in *-eih* are factitive (ex: *credeih* = to believe; *vergeih* = to avoid). Otherwise, one can use the English system with “to make” (*kwehre*) or “to have” (*habe*).

-eih can be suffixed to adjectives; ex: *rudh* = “red”, *rudheih* = “to make red”

3-4 Some literary verbal forms:

Due to its Indo-European heritage, Sambahsa has some verbal forms only encountered in literary usage.

The optional endings of the present indicative:

If these are compatible with the accentuation, verbs can bear these endings in the present indicative:

1° person singular: *-mi*

2° person singular: *-si*
3° person singular: *-ti*
3° person plural: *-nti*.

The corresponding forms for « ses » are: *esmi, essi, esti, sonti*.

The other conditions for the use of these forms are that the verb stands in absolute initial position in the clause, and that this clause contains no adverb. Finally, this optional ending only serves to describe events actually taking place, not to general statements. Those conditions are seldom fulfilled.

Old forms of imperative:

In the 2° person singular of the imperative, an option can be to suffix “-di” to the verbal stem in the “zero-grade”, i.e. verbs in “eu” and “ei” turn them to “u” or “i”, and verbs with nasal infix lose their unstressed “e”.

Examples:

“kludi!” = “listen!” instead “kleu(e)!”
“ihdi!” = “go!” instead “eih(e)!”

An imperative of the 3° persons is possible by suffixing “-u” to the conjugated verb, if this does not alter the accentuation.

Examples:

Is maurdher nehct: “The murderer perishes” / *Is maurdher nehctu!*: “Let the murderer perish!”

I slougs behrnt gwaur bermens: “The servants carry heavy burdens” / *I slougs behrntu gwaur bermens!*: “Let the servants carry heavy burdens!”

Otherwise, it’s possible to use the verbal stem conjugated with “-e” as sole ending, and with a subject in the sentence.

Gwive is roy!: Long live the king!

Subjunctive mood:

In clauses expressing a wish, a hope, the subjunctive mood can be used. However, it only exists in the singular.

1° & 3° person singular: *-a*
2° person singular: *-as*

This ending can be used as a “negative imperative” with the prohibitive adverb *mae*.

Example: *Mae klehptas!* [may klE:ptas] = “Don’t steal!” or “Thou shalt not steal!”

Only “ses” has a full subjunctive conjugation: *sia, sias, sia, siam(o)s, siate, siant*.

The future participle :

Future participles can be gotten by using the synthetic form of the future tense and the corresponding ending.

Ex: *gwehmsie* + *nd* = *gwehmsiend* = “who/what will be coming”.

The near future active participle:

It is marked by the ending “tur”. To form it,

- Add “-ur” to the passive participle in “t” of verbs which use the “Von Wahl rules”, or which end with “v”

Example: *cedd* = *cessur* “going to yield”

Emov = *emotur* “going to emote”

- Add “-ur” to the 3rd person singular of the present.

Example: *baht* = *bahtur* “going to speak”

The future active participle of “ses” is *butur*.

The old infinitive formations:

Two old infinitive formations are possible, on the same base as the future active participle below (i.e. use of the passive participle in “t” or of the 3rd person singular of the present) if this does not alter the accentuation.

The first formation ends in *-(t)um* and expresses an idea of purpose (in order to).

Examples:

Abgwahsit pinctum in id widu: “He goes off to paint in the timberland”

Gwehmo essum con vos: “I come to eat with you”

Or, it can correspond to the English formations in *-ing*, used as a gerund:

Example: *Deictum exact reuls sienims almens*: “Showing exact rules to one’s pupils”

The other formation ends in *-tu* and can be translated as “to be -ed”. It often comes after adjectives of quality.

Example: *Un garden amat spehctu*: « A garden (that is) pleasant to be looked at »

Sometimes, it appears as an adjective of obligation.

Example: *la kwehrtu opsa*: “The tasks to be done”

The durative:

There is a durative suffix *-neu* that corresponds in general to the use of the English present perfect progressive with “since” or “for”.

Example: *Stahneum her pon trigim minutes*: “I’ve been standing here for thirty minutes”

Its past is made with the augment *ee(-)*

Example: *Eeghangneut apter iom pon Orléans*: “He had been walking behind him since Orleans”.

The eventive :

It means “not to stop doing”. It consists in repeating the first consonant (or sC, Cw, Cy or Cv) before the stem with the addition of *i-* or *ei-*. It has an imperfect in *ee-*

Example : *didehm* from *dehm*.

The intensive :

“to do little by little”. It consists in the reduplication of the stem (with the deletion of the occlusives in the middle). It has an imperfect in *ee-*

The iterative :

“To start to keep on doing” : there is an ablaut in “o”; i.e. “eh” = “oh”, “ei” = “oi”, “eu” = “ou” + suffixing of “ye”. It has an imperfect in *ee-*.

The perfect:

A perfect tense (which often corresponds to the English present perfect) can be obtained by prefixing the first letter of the verbal stem followed by “e” to the verb conjugated in the past tense. Likewise, the past perfect uses the augment *ee-*.

Example: *Lelikwst id vetus wastu* = “Thou hast left the olde city” (from the verb *linekw*).

3 – 5. Sambahsa conjugated verbs.

Sambahsa verbs are conjugated in different tenses, the most important ones are present and past (or “preterit”). There are, as in English, two numbers and three persons.

Sambahsa takes its conjugational system from Proto-Indo-European (PIE), a reconstructed language spoken more than 2000 years ago, at the very root of the majority of the languages spoken today in Europe, as well as of Iranian and North-Indic (Hindi, Bengali, etc.) languages. Though we don’t possess any document written in PIE, its probable grammar can be deduced with a reasonable degree of certainty through the comparison of its daughter languages. Among these are Sanskrit and Old Greek, whose grammar is known with utmost precision and which share undoubted similarities. Many of these common features can be found, among others, in Latin and Anglo-Saxon, the language from which English is ultimately derived.

Modern English has almost no conjugational endings, and the most known auxlangs (artificial languages meant for international communication) tend to use no conjugational endings, or conjugational endings that only indicate the tense, but not the person nor the number. However, most modern Indo-European languages (except English, the most spoken ones are Portuguese, Spanish, French, German, Russian, Parsi, Hindi, Bengali, and the amount of their speakers exceed the number of Anglophones) still have conjugational endings that indicate three persons and two numbers, at least for the present indicative and often for a past tense. Sambahsa, as a modern language based on Indo-European, ought to follow this pattern, and not the model reconstructed for “classical” PIE, that included one additional number (dual), one or two sets of endings beyond the active conjugation (medio-passive and/or passive) and several tenses that used endings grouped in one of those three categories: indicative, perfect and aorist.

However, it is not a mere sentiment of naturality that has led to the preservation of conjugational endings in Sambahsa; other considerations, based on motives of precision and brevity, have been decisive too. As an example, many auxlangs will use a verbal system that can be described as follows:

Personal pronoun + Verbal stem + Tense ending

While Sambahsa tends to have :

Verbal stem + Personal & Tense ending

This means that Sambahsa is one syllable shorter than many other auxlangs.

Other auxlangs, in the present tense, can go on without conjugational ending.

Personal pronoun + Verbal stem

This system is indeed the easiest one, but it is not devoid of defects. Especially in the 3rd person, when the personal pronoun is replaced by a substantive, a reader may have difficulties identifying the verb at first sight (a little like in the English sentence: *Doctors help rape victims*) and this can provoke uncertainties as to the real meaning of the sentence. On the contrary, many Sambahsa present tense endings are consonantal, which means that they don’t lengthen the number of syllables but still help to identify the conjugated form as a verb.

Here are the conjugational endings of Sambahsa for the present tense:

	Sambahsa	Indo-European
1 st person singular	-o / -m / nothing	*-o / *-m
2 nd person singular	-s	*-s
3 rd person singular	-t	*-t

1 st person plural	-m(o)s	*-mos
2 nd person plural	-t(e)	*-te
3 rd person plural	-(e)nt / -e	*-nt

Many of these IE endings are still to be found among modern languages.

When the ending is clearly distinct from the stem, Sambahsa needs not use personal pronouns. The major exception is for the 2nd person plural, which sounds virtually like the 3rd person singular. Since this person is mostly used for courtesy, the usage of the pronoun “yu” is particularly recommended.

The choice of the different options is conditioned by the necessity of preserving the initial stress of Sambahsa verbal stems.

The past endings are less well attested:

	Sambahsa	Indo-European (perfect endings)
1 st person singular	-im	*-a
2 nd person singular	-(i)st(a)	*-tha
3 rd person singular	-it	*-e
1 st person plural	-am	*-mé
2 nd person plural	-at	*-té
3 rd person plural	-(ee)r	*-ér

Here, unlike the present tense, there are more divergences, because Indo-European had in fact several sets of endings for different tenses whose number was reduced in its daughter languages. Hence, the Sambahsa endings may be indeed closer than PIE to the ones found in other IE languages.

Example of Latin (simple past tense) : *-i, -isti, -it, imus, istis, erunt*

And of Icelandic : *(nothing), -st, (nothing), -um, -udh, -u*

Furthermore, the main feature of Indo-European verbs in the past tenses is that they commonly underwent certain modifications of their stems. Sambahsa still displays many of those phenomena, and the rule is that a verb that undergoes a modification of its stem in the past tense can drop the conjugational endings in this tense but must therefore use the personal pronouns.

Example : *ghehd* = to be able, can. Thus *ghehdo* = I can (the use of the personal pronoun is not required)

In the past tense, *ghehd* turns regularly to *ghohd*. For “I could”, we get either *ghohdim* (with ending) or *io ghohd* (without ending but with personal pronoun, as in English).

The main verb families will be analysed gradually, as one has to proceed when he/she meets a Sambahsa verbal stem he/she wants to conjugate. Only the tenses that present difficulties (mostly present and past) will be shown.

Before going further, it shall be remembered that conjugational endings beginning with *-s* or *-t* can change the final letter of the verbal stem:

-b + s / t = -ps / -pt ; *-k / -g + s / t = -cs / -ct*. And, with verbs whose stem is in *ehv, eiv* or *euv, v + s / t = -fs / -ft*.

These changes may look arbitrary at first sight, but it helps to remember the English pairs :

Describe / description
Drive / drift

Normally, the present endings are added directly to the bare stem. However, when this system leads to something completely unpronounceable, an “e” can be inserted. This occurs for stems in “-gn” [ny] used with endings in consonants.

Example : *sehgn* + *t* = *sehgnēt* [sE:nyët]

On the contrary, remember that, in Sambahsa, “w” can work as both a vowel and a consonant. Thus:

Sehkw + *t* = *sehkwēt* [sE:kut]

Last but not least, for reasons of euphony or etymology, an *s* can be inserted between the past tense ending and the verbal stem, which can undergo the alterations mentioned above for consonants plus *s*. This “*s*” is called “the sigmatic aorist”.

Ex: *absorb* + (*s*) + *it* = *absorpsit*

C = consonant V = vowel

1st category of verbs : nasal infix

The nasal infix is the letter “n” or “m” found in the verbal stem, and which disappears in the past tense.

See the excellent analysis by Robert Winter:

<http://joyoflanguages.blogspot.com/2010/06/sambahsa-in-six-minutes-1-nasal-infixes.html>

Such verbal stems end this way: *-Cen –Cem -neC -meC*

The “e” is always unstressed.

In the present tense, this unstressed “e” disappears everywhere possible.

Moreover, if “s” or “ss” comes in contact with the final “n” or “m” after the deletion of this “e”, the “s” or “ss” disappears too.

Examples : *posen* = **posn* = *pon-* *pressem* = **pressm* = *prem*

(compare the English words “postpone” and “position”).

The infinitive is obtained by suffixing “-es” to this stem without “e”.

Examples: *posen* = *pones* [pons] *brinegh* = *bringhes* [bringz]

The past tense is obtained simply by removing the “e” and the nasal infix.

Examples: *posen* = *pos* *brinegh* = *brigh*

The conditional tense is obtained by suffixing “ie” to this verbal stem without “e”.

However, one should not forget that “the Von Wahl rules” (see below) apply to the stems with nasal infixes.

Example :

*scinesd = *scisd = (after applying the Von Wahl rule according to which d becomes s) sciss*

The past passive participle is made by suffixing –t (which can trigger the Von Wahl rules) or –en to the verbal stem without unstressed “e” or infix.

Examples:

Scinesd = sciss / scisden

Posen = post / posen

The nasal infix system may seem complicated, but still survives in English among irregular verbs.

Examples: *bring = brought think = thought*

But Sambahsa : *brinegh = brigh tanek (to concentrate) = tak*

This irregularity occurs among words of Romance origin like “picture” vs “paint”.

- **Linekw = to leave**

Present tense: *linkwo, linkws, linkwt, linkwm(o)s, linkwte [llnkut], linkwnt*

In Sambahsa, “w” is never stressed.

Infinitive: *linkwes*

Past tense: either *io likw, tu likw...*

Or : *likwim, likwsta/likwist/likwst, likwit, likwam, likwat, likweer.*

The latter form is recommended since a final “w” is difficult to pronounce as a semi-vowel standing alone.

Past participle: *likwt / likw(e)n*

- **surprind = to surprise**

Present tense: *surprindo, surprinds, surprindt, surprindmos, surprindte, surprinde(nt)*

Infinitive : *surprindes [surprIndz]*

Past tense: either : *io surpris, tu surpris*

Or: *surprisim, surprisist/surprissta, surprisit, surprisam, surprisat, surprisseer*

Past participle: *surpris / surpriden*

- **interrumep = to interrupt**

Present tense : *interrumpo, interrumps, interrumpit, interrumpmos, interrupte, interrump(e)nt*

Infinitive : *interrumpes*

Past tense : *io interrup, tu interrup...*

Or : *interrupim, interrupist/interrupst(a), interrupit, interrupam, interrupat, interrompeer*
[interüpEer]

Past participle : *interrupt / interrupen*

- **sisen = to let (+ infinitive)**

Present tense : *sino, sins, sint, sinmos, sinte, sine(nt)*

Infinitive : *sines* [sins]

Conditional : *siniem, sinies, siniet, siniem(o)s, yu siniete, sinient*

Past tense : *io sis, tu sis...*

Or : *sisim, sisist, sisit, sisam, sisat, siseer*

Past participle: *sist / sisen*

- **annem = to breathe**

Present tense : *annmo, annems, annemt, annmmos, annemt, annment*

*annmt and *annms would be unpronounceable; thus, the unstressed “e” is kept.

Infinitive : *annmes* [Anmës]

Past tense: *io ann, tu ann...*

Or : *anim, annst(a)/annist, annit, annam, annat, anneer*

Past participle: *annt / annen*

- **clihen = to tilt**

Present tense: *clihno, clihns, clihnt, clihnmos, clihnte, clihne(nt)*

Infinitive: *clihnes* [klɪns]

Past tense : *io clih, tu clih*

Or : *clihsim, clihst(a), clihsit, clihsam, clihsat, clihr*

Notice the use of the sigmatic aorist to avoid a sequence of two vowels.

Past participle: *cliht / clihn*

- **pregen = to impregnate**

Present tense: *pregno, pregens, pregent, pregnems, pregent, pregnant*

Surely the most complicated sambahsa verb. In SPT:

[prEnyo, prEdjëns, prEdjënt, prEdjëms, prEdjënt, prEnyënt]

Infinitive : *pregnes* [prEnyës]

Past tense: *io preg, tu preg..*

Or : *pregim, precst(a)/pregist, pregit, pregam, pregat, pregeer*

Past participle: *prect / pregen*

2nd category of verbs : unstressed “e”

This category often includes verbs of Romance origin that ended in –are in Latin. They correspond to English nouns ending in “-ation”; it is frequently enough to subtract this suffix and to add “e” instead, to get the Sambahsa verb. However, endings in “-ication” form a special sub-category (see below) while other nouns in “-cation” replace this ending with “-que” in Sambahsa.

Example: “provocation” = *provoque* (to provoke).

This unstressed ending “e” means that there is no ending for the 1° person singular of the present tense. Instead, one has to use the unstressed personal pronoun “io”.

The 1st person plural ending is thus “-ms”, because *-mos would change the accented syllable.

As the 2° person plural is similar to the 3° person singular, one has likewise to use the personal pronoun “yu” before it.

The ending of the 3° person plural “nt” can be dropped if the meaning is evident (ex: when the subject is mentioned in the sentence).

The infinitive is very simple since it corresponds to the verbal stem itself. Likewise, to get the past participle, one has just to suffix “-t” or “-n”.

For the conditional, the “e” is dropped before suffixing “ie”.

All verbs of this category must bear the endings of the past tense. The final “e” must be dropped, except if its absence would result in a phonetic change of the last consonant of the verbal stem (ex: endings in “ge” and “ce”).

- **exclame : to exclaim**

Present : *io exclame, exclames, exclamet, exclamems, yu exclamet, exclame(nt)*

Infinitive : *exclame*

Conditional : *exclamiem, exclamies, exclamiet, exclamiem(o)s, yu exclamiete, exclamient*

Past tense : *exclamim, exclamist, exclamit, exclamam, exclamat, exclameer*

Past participle : *exclamet / exclamen*

- **lance : to launch**

Present : *io lance, lances, lancet, lancems, yu lancet, lance(nt)*

Infinitive : *lance*

Past tense : *lancim, lancist, lancit, lanceam [lantsěAm], lanceat [lantsěAt], lanceer*

Past participle : *lancet / lancen*

- **change : to change**

Present : *io change, changes, changet, changems, yu changet, change(nt)*

Infinitive : *change*

Past tense : *changim, changist, changit, changeam [tcandjěAm], changeat [tcandjěAt], changeer*

Past participle : *changet / changen*

- **murmure : to murmur**

Present : *io murmure [murmŮr], murmures, murmuret, murmurems, murmuret, murmure(nt)*

Infinitive : *murmure*

Past tense : *murmurim [murmŮrim], murmurist, murmurit, murmuram, murmurat, murmureer [murmŮrEër]*

Past participle : *murmuret / murmuren*

There is a **sub-category of verbs endings with « ie »**. Those verbs often correspond to English nouns ending in “-ication”. Example: “publication” = *publie* “to publish”.

Since “ie” is a stressed diphthong, they share some features with the verbs whose stress falls on the last syllable. Furthermore, this “ie” may turn to “ic-” for euphonic reasons, and, notably, in the conditional tense.

All verbs of this category follow the same pattern :

- **publie : to publish**

Present : *publiem, publies, publiet, publiem(o)s, yu publiete, publient*

Conditional: *publiciem, publicies, publiciet, publiciem(o)s, yu publiciete, publicient*

Infinitive : *publie*

Past tense: *publicim, publicist/publiet(a), publicit, publiam, publiat, publieer*

Past participle: *publiet / publien*

3rd category of verbs : ehC

These are verbs whose inner vowel is “eh”, followed by one or several consonants (verbs ending with only “eh”, like *deh*, belong to the category of verbs ending with a stressed vowel sound). According to the few statistical data that exist for Sambahsa, they may represent the most widespread category. Their functioning consists in the ablaut of the inner consonant, much like English “swear, swore, sworn”. However, while “ablaut” is considered irregular in English, it is a fully normal system in Sambahsa. The “eh” of the verbal stem turns to “oh” in the past tense and in the past participle.

Thus : *ghehd = ghohd = ghohdt / ghohden*

This ablaut means that the use of the past tense endings is optional.

The infinitive is “e” suffixed to the verbal stem. However, the use of both the past tense endings and the infinitive ending is disallowed if they change the accentuation or/and pronunciation of a consonant within this verbal stem.

- **ghehd : to be able to**

Present : *ghehdo, ghehds, ghehdt, ghehdmoss, yu ghehdte, ghehde(nt)*

Infinitive : *ghehde*

Past tense: *io ghohd, tu ghohd...*

Or : *ghohdim, ghohdist/ghohdst(a), ghohdit, ghohdam, ghohdat, ghohdeer*

Past participle : *ghohdt / ghohden*

- **spehc : to look at**

Present : *spehco* [spE :ko], *spehcs, spehct, spehcmoss, yu spehcte, spehce(nt)* [spE:ts(ënt)]

Infinitive : *spehce*

Past tense : *io spohc, tu spohc*

Or : *spohcim, spohcist/spohcst(a), spohcit, spohcam, spohcat, spohceer*

Past participle: *spohct / spohcen*

- **kwehk : to seem**

Present : *kwehko, kwehcs, kwehct, kwehkmoss, yu kwehcte, kwehke(nt)*

Infinitive : *kwehke*

Past tense : *io kwohk, tu kwohk, ...*

Or: *kwohkim, kwohcst(a)/kwohkist, kwohkit, kwohkam, kwohkat, kwohkeer*

Past participle : *kwohct / kwohken*

- **sprehg : to talk to, ask to**

Present : *sprehgo, sprehcs, sprehct, sprehgmos, yu sprehcte, sprehge(nt)*

Infinitive : *sprehge*

Past tense : *io sprohg, tu sprohg,...*

Or: *sprohgim, sprohcst(a) / sprohgist, sprohgit, sprohgam, sprohgate, sprohgeer*

Past participle : *sprohct / sprohgen*

- **kwehr : to do, make**

Present: *kwehro, kwehrs, kwehrt, kwehmos, yu kwehrte, kwehrt*

The form with "nt" is preferred because it is monosyllabic.

Infinitive : *kwehre*

Past tense : *io kwohr, tu kwohr...*

Or : *kwohrim, kwohrst(a) / kwohrist, kwohrit, kwohram, kwohrat, kwohreer*

Past participle: *kwohrt / kwohrn*

- **tehrb : to have to**

Present : *tehrbo, tehrps, tehrpt, tehrbmos, yu tehrpte, tehrbe(nt)*

Infinitive : *tehrbe*

Past tense : *io tohrb, tu tohrb...*

Or : *tohrbim, tohrpst(a) / tohrbist, tohrbit, tohrbam, tohrbat, tohrbeer*

Past participle: *tohrpt / tohrben*

- **trehv : to find, meet**

Present: *trehvo, trehfs, trehft, trehmos, yu trehfte, trehve(nt)*

Infinitive: *trehve*

Past tense: *io trohv, tu trohv*

Or : *trohvim, trohfst(a) / trohvist, trohvit, trohvam, trohvat, trohveer*

Past participle : *trohft, trohven*

- **sehkwa : to follow**

Present : *sehkwo, sehkwos, sehkwat, sehkw(o)s [sE :kum(o)s], yu sehkwte [sE :kut], sehkwnt*

Infinitive : *sehkwe*

Past tense : *io sohkw, tu sohkw...*

However, because of the difficult pronunciation of the final « -kw », forms with conjugational endings are preferred :

Sohkwim, sohkwst(a) / sohkwist, sohkwit, sohkwam, sohkwat, sohkwbeer

Past participle: *sohkwat / sohkwnt*

- **skehpt : to wait for**

Present : *skehpto, skehpts, skehpt, skehptmos, yu skehpte, skehpte(nt)*
 The “t” of the ending is merged within the “t” of the verbal stem.
 Infinitive : *skehpte*
 Past tense: *io skohpt, tu skohpt*
 Or: *skohptim, skohptst(a) / skohptist, skohptit, skohptam, skohptat, skohpteer*
 Past participle: *skohpt / skohpten*

- **sehgn : to muse, dream**

Present : *sehgn, sehgues, sehgnat, sehgnems, yu sehgnat, sehgne(nt)*
 An “e” has been added before the ending in order to facilitate pronunciation.
 Infinitive : *sehgne*
 Past tense: *io sohgn, tu sohgn...*
 However, since the final “gn” is difficult to pronounce, forms with conjugational endings are preferred:
Sohgnim, sohgnist, sohgnit, sohgnam, sohgnat, sohgneer

4th category of verbs: eu & ei

The inner vowel of the verbs is “ei” or “eu”, but their ablaut is respectively “i” or “u”. (This disappearance of the letter “e” is called the “zero-grade”.) Their infinitive is made by suffixing “-es” to this “zero-grade” form, unless it changes the pronunciation of a consonant within the stem.

- **kheiss : to feel**

Present: *kheisso, tu kheiss, kheisst, kheissmos, yu kheisste, kheisse(nt)*
 “tu” is compulsory before “kheiss” since the ending can’t be heard.
 Infinitive: *khisses* [qlsës]
 Past tense: *io khiss, tu khiss...*
 Or: *khissim, khisst(a) / khissist, khissit, khissam, khissat, khisseer*
 Past participle: *khisst / khissen*

- **deik : to show, indicate**

Present: *deiko, deics, deict, deikmos, yu deicte, deike(nt)*
 Infinitive: *dikes* [diks]
 Past tense : *io dik, tu dik...*
 Or : *dikim, dicst(a)/dikist, dikit, dikam, dikat, dikeer*
 Past participle: *dict / diken*

- **eiskw : to intend, want, seek**

Present: *eiskwo, eiskws, eiskwt, eiskwm(o)s, yu eiskwte* [Eyskut], *eiskwnt*
 Infinitive: *iskwes* [Iskwës]
 Past tense: *io iskw, tu iskw*
 De facto, because of its difficult pronunciation, this form is always replaced by the next one:
Iskwim, iskwst(a) / iskwist, iskwit, iskwam, iskwat, iskweer
 Past participle: *iskwt / iskwn*

- **sneigv : to snow**

Present : *sneigvt* : Since “v” is not directly after “ei”, it does not turn to “f”

Infinitive: *snigves*

Past tense: *snigv(it)*

Past participle: *snigvt / snigven*

- **neic : to kill, slay**

Present : *neico, neics, neict, neicmos, yu neicte, neice(nt)*

Infinitive: *nices* [nltsēs]

Past tense: *io nic, tu nic*

Or: *nicim, nicst(a) / nicist, nicit, nicam, nicat, niceer*

Past participle: *nict / nicen*

Verbs in “eu” do not show major differences. Do not forget that “u” is pronounced [ü] if one of the next two letters is “e”.

- **beud : to appeal to, seek, beg**

Present : *beudo, beuds, beudt, beudmos, yu beudte, beude(nt)*

Infinitive: *budes* [büdz]

Past tense: *io bud, tu bud..*

Or: *budim, budst(a) / budist, budit, budam, budat, budeer*

Past participle: *budt / buden*

Eu can appear at the end of a verbal stem. In the past tense, the “sigmatic aorist” is often used.

- **kleu : to listen to**

Present: *kleum, kleus, kleut, kleum(o)s, yu kleute, kleunt*

In the first person singular, “m” is used instead “o” because the verb ends with a stressed vowel sound.

Infinitive: *klues* [klü:s]

Past tense: *io klu, tu klu(st)...*

Or: *klu(s)im, klusist/klust(a)/kluist(a), klu(s)it, klu(s)am, klu(s)at, klur*

“eer” is shortened to “r” after stressed vowels.

Past participle: *klut / klun*

“ei” is quite rare alone at the end of a verbal stem and, for reasons of accentuation, appears instead as “eih”.

- **credeih : to believe**

Present: *credeihm, credeihs, credeiht, credeihm(o)s, yu credeihte, credeihnt*

Infinitive: *credihes* [krēdl:s]

Past tense: *io credih, tu credih...*

Or: *credihsim, credihst(a), credihsit, credihsam, credihsat, credihr*

Past participle: *crediht / credihn*

5th category of verbs : a

Their inner vowel is “a”, or the diphthongs “au” or “ay”. Their ablaut is particular in that the “a” turns to “ie” only in the past tense, but not for the past participle, which keeps “a”. Furthermore, this ablaut, though recommended, is optional, and these “a” verbs can undergo the application of the “Von Wahl rules” (optionally for the past tense, but obligatorily for the past participle in “t”). These “a” verbs can be considered a transition between the ablaut verbs and the verbs that are subjected to the Von Wahl rules.

For the infinitive, the same rules apply as for the verbs in “ehC”.

The best illustration is given by the following verb:

- **salg : to go out of**

Present: *salgo, salcs, salct, salgmos, yu salcte, salge(nt)*

Infinitive: *salge*

Past tense:

We can either use the ablaut: *io sielg, tu sielg...*

Or, with endings: *sielgim, sielcst(a)/sielgist, sielgit, sielgam, sielgat, sielgeer*

Or, we can use the Von Wahl rule according to which, *lg = ls* in the past tense.

Thus: *io sals, tu sals...*

Or, *salsim, salsst(a)/salsist, salsit, salsam, salsat, salseer*

(the form with ablaut is more common)

Past participle: *sals* (von Wahl rule) / *salgen*

- **nak : to reach**

Present : *nako, nacs, nact, nakmos, yu nacte, nake(nt)*

Infinitive: *nake*

Past tense: *io niek, tu niek...*

Or: *niekim, niecst(a)/niekist, niekit, niekam, niekat, niekeer*

Nakim, nacsta... are possible but in fact never used.

Past participle: *nact* / *naken*

- **jawab : to reply**

Present: *jawabo, jawaps, jawapt, jawabmos, yu jawapte, jawabe(nt)*

Infinitive: *jawabe*

Past tense: *io jawieb, tu jawiepst...*

Or: *jawiebam, jawiepst(a)/jawiebist, jawiebit, jawiebam, jawiebat, jawiebeer*

Jawabim, etc appears seldom.

Past participle: *jawapt* / *jawaben*

- **ghyan : to open**

Present: *ghyano, ghyans, ghyant, ghyanmos, yu ghyante, ghyane(nt)*

Infinitive : *ghyane*

Past tense : *io ghyien [gyen], tu ghyien...*

Or : *ghyienim, ghyienst(a)/ghyienist, ghyienit, ghyienam, ghyienat, ghyieneer*

Theoretically: *ghyanim*, etc.

Past participle: *ghyant / ghyanen*

- **ghang : to walk**

Present: *ghango, ghanes, ghanct, ghangmos, yu ghancte, gchange(nt)*

Infinitive: *ghange*

Past tense: *io ghieng, tu ghiencst...*

Or: *ghiengim, ghiencst(a)/ghiengist, ghiengit, ghiengam, ghiengat, ghiengeer*

Rare: *ghangim*, etc.

Past participle: *ghanct / ghangen*

- **salv : to save**

Present: *salvo, salvs, salvt, salvmos, yu salvte, salve(nt)*

Infinitive: *salve*

Past tense: either with *sie/v*, with or without endings, or with *sa/v* + endings.

Past participle: *salwt* [sAlut], by application of the rule for “v” of past participles (see below); *salven*.

- **trag : to drag, pull, draw**

Present: *trago, tracs, tract, tragmos, yu tracte, trage(nt)*

Infinitive: *trage*

Past tense: *io trieg*, etc, with or without endings.

However, because of the proximity with Latin, a widespread form is to use *trag* + sigmatic aorist + endings. Thus, we get:

Traxim, tracst(a)/traxist, traxim, traxam, traxat, traxeer

Past participle: *tract / tragen*

The next verb will illustrate, even for other verb categories, the issue of stems ending with unstressed *-er* or *-el*.

- **safer : to travel**

Present: *io safer, safers, safert, saferms, yu safert, safernt*

In the 1st person singular, there is no ending, and the personal pronoun is used, because *saferm could create a confusion with *saferms*.

Infinitive: *safer*

No “e”, because this would shift the stress.

Past tense: *io siefer, tu sieferst...*

Here, all past endings can be used on either *saf(e)r* or *sief(e)r* because the pronunciation of the “f” (consonant within the verbal stem) remains unchanged when it stands close to “r”.

Past participle: *safert / safern*

Verbs in *ay* have an ablaut in *ieu*.

- **sayg : to say**

Present: *saygo, saycs, sayct, saygmos, yu saycte, sayge(nt)*

Infinitive: *sayge*

Past tense: *io sieyg, tu sieycst*

Or, with endings : *sieygim, sieycst(a)/sieygist, sieygit, sieygam, sieygat, sieygeer*

Saygim is nearly never used.

Past participle: *sayct / saygen*

“ay” can appear at the end of a stem:

- **bay : to fear**

Present: *baym, bays, bayt, baym(o)s, yu bayte, baynt*

Infinitive: *baye*

Past tense: *io biey, tu bieyst...*

Or : *bieyim, bieyst(a)/bieyist, bieyit, bieyam, bieyat, bieyr*

Bayim or *baysim* are possible in theory, but never used.

Past participle: *bayt / bayn*

Verbs in “au” behave much like verbs in “ay”.

- **aur : to hear**

Present: *auro, aurs, aurt, aurm(o)s, yu aurte, aurnt*

Infinitive : *aure*

Past tense : *io ieur, tu ieurst...*

Or : *ieurim, ieurst(a)/ieurist, ieurit, ieuram, ieurat, ieureer*

Past participle : *aurt / aur(e)n*

- **kau : to notice**

Present : *kaum, kaus, kaut, kaum(o)s, yu kaute, kaunt*

Infinitive: *kaue*

Past tense: *io kieu, tu kieust...*

Or, with endings and, when needed, the sigmatic aorist : *kieusim, kieust(a)/kieusist, kieusit, kieusam, kieusat, kieur/kieuseer*

Kau is seldom used without ablaut.

Past participle: *kaut / kaun*

6th category of verbs : Von Wahl rules

The final consonants of these verbs undergo modifications for the past tense and the past participle in “t”. These are as follows:

Verbal stem final consonants	final consonants after modification
-d	-s
-dd/-tt	-ss
-rt/-rr/-rg	-rs
-lg	-ls
-ct	-x

Moreover, verbs ending with “v” undergo the following modifications for their past participle in “t”.

If “v” comes after “a” or a consonant, “v” turns to “w”.

Examples: *solv* = *solwt*; *lav* = *lawt*

Otherwise, “v” disappears. Example: *mov* = *mot*

Those rules may look difficult at first sight, but they only encompass within a regular framework irregularities often seen in English.

Decide : *decision*; *permit* : *permission*; *convert* : *conversion*; *solve* : *solution*; *move* : *motion*

- **clud : to close**

Present : *cludo*, *cluds*, *cludt*, *cludmos*, *yu cludte*, *clude(nt)*

Infinitive : *clude*

Past tense: *io clus*, *tu clusst*...

Or: *clusim*, *clusst(a)/clusist*, *clusit*, *clusam*, *clusat*, *cluseer*

Past participle: *clus* / *cluden*

- **sedd : to sit**

Present: *seddo*, *sedds*, *seddt*, *seddmos*, *yu seddte*, *sedde(nt)*

Infinitive: *sedde*

Past tense: *io sess*, *tu sesst*...

Or : *sessim*, *sesst(a)/sessist*, *sessit*, *sessam*, *sessat*, *sesseer*

Past participle: *sess* / *sedden*

- **permitt : to permit, allow**

Present: *permitto*, *permitts*, *permitt*, *permittmos*, *yu permitte*, *permitte(nt)*

Infinitive: *permitte*

Past tense: *io permiss*, *tu permisst*...

Or : *permissim*, *permisst(a)/permissist*, *permissit*, *permissam*, *permissat*, *permisseer*

Past participle : *permiss* / *permitten*

- **volg : to turn oneself**

Present : *volgo*, *volcs*, *volct*, *volgmos*, *yu volcte*, *volge(nt)*

Infinitive : *volge*

Past tense : *io vols*, *tu volsst*...

Or : *volsim*, *volsst(a)/volsist*, *volsit*, *volsam*, *volsat*, *volseer*

Past participle: *vols* / *volgen*

- **curr : to run**

Present: *curro*, *currs*, *currt*, *currm(o)s*, *yu currte*, *curre(nt)*

Infinitive : *curre*

Past tense: *io curs*, *tu curst*..

Or : *cursim*, *curst(a)/cursist*, *cursit*, *cursam*, *cursat*, *curseer*

Past participle : *curs / curren*

7th category of verbs : final stressed vowel sound

Those verbs all end with a final stressed vocalic sound, i.e., a vowel, or “h” just after a vowel. Those ending with ending with “h” are numerous. We can mention: *deh* = “to put”; *stah* = “to stand”; *gnoh* = “to know”; *dah* = “to give”; *bah* = “to speak”; *bih* = “to become”; *ghyah* = “to be open”. Verbs of the same category without “h” are less common: *syoh* = “to sew”; *brai* = “to bray”.

All those verbs follow the same pattern:

- **gwah : to go to**

Present: *gwahm, gwahs, gwaht, gwahm(o)s, yu gwahte, gwahnt*

Infinitive: *gwahe*

Past tense: *gwahsim, gwahst(a)/gwahsist, gwahsit, gwahsam, gwahsat, gwahr*

Past participle: *gwaht / gwahn*

8th category: other verbs

They follow the general rules and must bear conjugational endings in the past tense, since their stem undergoes no change.

- **styr : to steer**

Present: *styro, styrs, styrt, styrm(o)s, yu styрте, styr(e)nt*

Infinitive: *styre*

Past tense: *styrim, styrst(a)/styrist, styrit, styram, styrat, styreer*

Past participle: *styrt / styryn*

For pure reasons of etymology, some verbs may use the “sigmatic aorist” in the past tense. Such are *em* (to take [figurative sense]) = *emsim, emsist...* or *duc* :

- **duc = to lead**

Present: *duco, ducs, duct, ducmos, yu ducte, ducent*

Infinitive : *duce* [dûts]

Past tense : *duxim, ducst(a)/duxist, duxit, duxam, duxat, duxeer*

Past participle : *duct / ducen*

We hope that this sketch of Sambahsa conjugated verbs will help you to cope with 90 % of situations. Otherwise, just recall that a Sambahsa verbal stem must fulfil two requirements:

- the stress must fall on the same place for all persons in the present tense.
- In all tenses, and except for nasal infix verbal stems, the unstressed “e” of final CeC can be dropped unless this changes the pronunciation of the preceding consonant.

4 - Sambahsa words

4-1 Adjectives:

Adjectives behave roughly the same as in English. They are not obligatorily declined, come before the substantive as an epithet, but after it if they introduce a preposition.

Ex: *Uno sneigvcovohrn calive* = “a snow-covered cabin”; but: *Un calive covohrno med un tenu sneigvlyegher* = “A cabin covered with a thin snow-layer”.

The comparative is made by suffixing *-er* to the adjective (*-ter* if the adjective ends with a vowel sound) if it is compatible with the accentuation. Otherwise *meis* = “more” must be used. “Than” is *quem*.

Examples: *Age est meis difficil quem kwehre neid* = « To act is more difficult than to do nothing ».

Dreu est legver quem stal = « Wood is lighter than steel »

Equality is indicated with *tem.... quem*.

Maria est tem bell quem tu = “Maria is as beautiful as thou”.

Inferiority is indicated thanks to *min(s)* or *minter*:

Id weter est minter srigo quem ghes = « The weather is less cold than yesterday ».

The superlative uses, according to the possibilities, *-st* or *meist*.

Ne trohveer id minst trace iom slougs: “They did not find the slightest trace of the servants”

Tod rock est id meist dreupic bayna quanta habmos endersoken = “This rock is the most crumbly one among all that we have examined”

Som yunst in mien swoin = “I am the youngest one in my team”

Only *lytil* (little) and *megil* (great) display some irregularities. They drop their final “-il” to form an adverb (*lyt* = “a little”, *meg* = “a lot, very”) and their comparatives and superlatives: *lyter/lytst*, *meger/megst*.

4-2 Adverbs:

The particle *-ye* (always with the hyphen!) serves to form adverbs, with adjectives as well as with substantives. Ex: *end-ye* = "finally, in the end". If the meaning is obvious, adjectives can be used alone. Ex: *deub in id forest* = "deep in the forest". Some adverbs do not need the adding of *-ye*. Ex: *tik* (only), *ops* (often), *just*, *it(han)* (thus), *bfuyi* (continually), *sigwra* (assuredly), *oku* (quick), *ja* (already), *semper* (always), *tun* (then), *(ya)schi* (too)....

Another kind of adverbs can be made by prefixing *a-* to substantives. Ex: *apart*, *atop*...

Adverbs of quality (ex: "many/much" = *baygh*; "too" = *pior*) shall behave like adjectives when they refer to a noun (and thus can bear the optional declensional endings), but like an adverb (with the possible adjunction of *-ye*) when they refer to an attributive adjective.

Examples : *Piora kowpic chifans sont vierdnic pro sieune* = « Too many copious meals are harmful for health »

Pior-ye kowpic chifans sont vierdnic pro sieune = "Too much copious meals are harmful for health"

4-3 Correlatives:

Many useful words can be obtained by affixing certain particles to the interrogative pronouns or words like *anghen* "a person", *ject* "a thing", *loc* "a place".

Examples:

"Someone" is "semanghen" (some + person) or "semquel" (rare) from "some" = "sem".

"*semanghen hat klohten ia clenods*" = "Someone has stolen the jewels".

Halfway between "some" and "any", there is "gvonc" suffixed to the interrogative pronoun.

"*Ne has clus id dwer. Quelgvonc ghehdiet entre id dom*" = "You haven't closed the door.

Any-/Someone could enter the house!"

"cada" is "each" as undetermined. In the example below, it is merged with "anghen":

"*Cadanghen poitt iskwas asyle in alya lands*" = "Any-/Everyone is entitled to seek asylum in other countries".

"-quid" (cf. Sanskrit "cid") suffixed to the interrogative pronoun expresses "any" with an idea

of total uncertainty.

Ex: "*BP lehct quodquid*" = "BP's telling anything at all"; cf. French: "BP raconte n'importe quoi". (pejorative meaning).

"-kwe" suffixed to the interrogative pronoun corresponds to English "-ever".

"*quodkwe*" = "whatever".

"libt" suffixed to the interrogative pronoun is "any" with an idea of "whichever you want" (cf. "libet" in Latin, "-libo" in Russian):

"*Cheus quodlibt fustan*" = "Choose any skirt (the one you prefer)"

Most common forms:

Cause: why? = "*ma?*". That's why = "*itak*"

Manner: *kam?* = how? (and "like"), *it(han)*, *katha* = thus; *ka* = as a

Means: The adverbs consist of *med* ("with, through" + instrument) suffixed to the pronoun in the genitive. Thus: *quosmed* = "with what? by which means?"; *tosmed* = with that, through that means.

Number: *quayt?* = how much/many?; *tant* = so much/many

Person: *quis*, *qua*, *quel* = who? (declined); *semanghen*, *semquis*, *semqua* = "someone"; so-and-so, quidam = *fulan*; "everyone" = *vasyanghen*; no-one = *nimen*, *neanghen*.

Place: The ending to indicate a place is "-er", a direction towards "-tro" and a direction from "-tos" or "-ois" (the latter is an old ablative plural ending)

Thus, we get:

Quer, *quetro*, *quetos/quois* = where, whither, whence

Her, *hetro*, *hetos/hois* = here, hither, hence

Ter, *tetro*, *tetos/tois* = there, thither, thence

Cer, *cetro*, *cetos/ciois* = yonder, to yonder, from yonder

(below are given the forms that can be encountered in texts)

Somewhere = *semloc/semquer*, *semtro*, *semtos*

Everywhere = *quantloc/quantter*, *quanttro*, *quanttos/quantois*

Nowhere = *neidloc/nequer*, *netro*, *netos*

Elsewhere = *alyer*, *altro*, *altos/alyois*

Left/Right are *lev(ter)/dex(ter)* and can give rise to forms such as *levtro/dextro*, *levtos/dextos*.

Somehow irregular are *exo* (outside) = *extro/extos* and *eni* (inside, within) = *entro/entos* or *intro/intos*.

An adverb of direction (cf. English “-wards”) can be made by suffixing *–worts*.

Example: *Vasya fluvs sreunt marworts* = “All rivers flow to the sea/seawards”.

The corresponding adjective is in *–wort*.

An adverb of location can rarely be made by suffixing *–i*.

Examples:

Ghomi = on the ground

Urbi = downtown

Dom i = in the house

Hemi = at home

“up” is *ub* and “down” is *ghom*, from *(di)ghom* = “the earth, the ground”. *Ghom* has an irregular comparative: *niter*.

Unte both means “through where?” and “through, during”.

Quality: *qualg?* = which?; *solg*, *talg* = such

Thing: *quod* = “what?” (declined). “Something” = *semject*, *semquod*; “everything” = *quant(o/um)*; “nothing” = *neid* (declined). “nothing at all” = *khich*

Time: *quan(do)?* = when?; *kun* = when, as; *yando* = sometimes; *ops* = often; *yant* = as soon as; *tun* = then; *semper* = always; *naiw(o)* = never

Totality: “All, every” can be translated by *quant*. If it bears the optional declensional endings, it can serve as a relative pronoun too.

Example: *Danko mien oncle ob quanta radhs mi hat daht* = “I thank my uncle for all advice he has given to me”.

“All the” is *vasyo* (declined according to the euphonic vocalisation) while “whole” is *hol*.

“Completely, totally” is *alnos*. “All the others” is *ceters*.

Examples:

Vasyas gwens kament magvens = “All (the) women like children”.

Id hol urb buit alnos destruct. Circa mil survivors ghohd ses bohrge, bet ceters dohlg mane ep id stet = « The whole city was completely destroyed. About one thousand survivors could be put in safety, but all the others had to stay on the spot”.

“Each” is *ielg*, but when one refers to a group of two, one can use *ieter*. “Any, every” is *cada*.

4-4 Some common invariable words in Sambahsa:

Au: or

Bad: finally, at last; *ne... bad* = not yet

Bet: but

Circa: about, approximately

Dind: afterwards, then

Dar: still

Ed: and

Eti: furthermore

Fauran: immediately

Ghi: has no definite meaning. It often appears in second position in a clause and serves to emphasize the preceding word. It is sometimes suffixed to the preceding adverb or pronoun. It can be translated as “then” or “because”, f.e.: “*Is ne kieup id wogh, isghi ne hieb denars*”: “He didn’t buy the car because he had no money”.

Hatta: even (as an adverb)

Ja: already

Ka: as a, like

Kafi: enough (synonym: « sat »)

Kam: “like” and “how”

kay: in order to. Often use as “to” before a verb.

Ke(m) : (clitic) : expresses a wish.

lakin: however, nevertheless

lyt: a little; from the adjective “lytil” = “little”

meg: a lot, much, very; from the adjective “megil” = “great, big”.

Menxu: while

Ne: not (appears generally before the verb; sambahsa sentences have only one negation or negative pronoun).

Neti: no more, not... anymore.

No: no!

Nun: now

Od: that (as in “I know that...”). As in English, it can be often omitted.

Oku: quick, rapidly

Okwivid-ye: obviously

Perodh: forward

Pior: too much/many

Quayque: although

Quasi: nearly

Sei: if (introducing a condition). For example: “If it rains, I will stay home” = “*Sei seuyt, mansiem domi*”. “If, whether” is “*an, kweter*”.

Stayg: suddenly

Taiper: “at present”

Tem... quem: as.... as. “Tem” alone is “so (much)”, while “quem” corresponds to “than”.

Tik: only

Tsay: back, again

We : “or”; this disjunctive particle separates two clauses. To separate nouns, use “au”.

Ya: yes!

(ya)schi: too, also. (« *schi* » can be suffixed to the first word of the clause, if it is a pronoun or an invariable word, and if it is phonetically compatible)

Yed: yet

4-5 Most common prepositions in Sambahsa:

Unless otherwise indicated, all prepositions trigger the accusative in Sambahsa.

Ab: by (after a passive verbal construction). It turns (seldom indeed) to “*af*” before “h”. Sometimes, it can mean “starting from” too.

Ad: at

Ant: in front of

Apo: off (can be shortened to « *ap* » before vowels)

Apter: behind

Aun: without

Bayna: among

Bi: at (a seller, an artisan), in (an author's work), next to. Often coalesces with the pronoun in the dative or accusative forms. Hence we get the following forms: *bi + ei = bei*, *bi + ay = bay*; *bi + el = bil*; *bi + im = bim*

Cis: this side of

Con: with (accompanied by)

Contra: against

De: about

Do: (in)to

Due: due to

Ender: beneath

Engwn: along

Ep: on (before “h”, it can turn to “*ef*”)

Ex: out of (“outside” is *exo*)

In: in (“within” is *eni*)

Inter: between

Kye: in the direction of, towards. It merges with the following determinant or pronoun of the third person. Thus, we often find “*kyid*” = towards the, towards it.

Med: with (an instrument)

Nieb: beside

Ob: because (of)

Per: through

(Per)ambh: around

Po: for (in exchange for, in order to get)

Pon: since, for

Pos: after

Pre: before (in time)

Pro: for

Prokwe(m): near

Prosch: close to, near (with an idea of movement)

Protie(v): against

Samt: with (to denote circumstance, description; ex: “a blue-eyed man” = “un wir samt blou okwi”)

Sub: under

Tiel: till (but, before a verb, we use “*hin(a)*”)

Trans: beyond

Ud: from

Uper: over

Unte: within a certain time/space. For example: “unte id wer” = “during spring”; “unte id dwer” = “through the door”. Can be used as an interrogative and relative pronoun too.

Ye: has no definite meaning, it expresses a circumstance, a condition. Examples: “ye mien surprise” = “to my surprise”; “ye mieno mayn” = in my opinion”.

As an hyphenated suffix to adjectives and even substantives, it serves to make adverbs.

4-6 Numbers:

From 1 to 10: *oin*, *dwo*, *tri*, *quar*, *penk(we)*, *six*, *sept(a)*, *oct(o)*, *nev*, *dec*.

The suffix *-dem* corresponds to English “teen”: *oindem*, *dwodem*, *tridem*... and so on.

Likewise, *-gim* corresponds to “ty”: *dwogim*, *trigim*... 100 is *cent(om)*, and 1000 is *mil*

Ordinal numbers are made thanks to *-t* or *-im* if the former is incompatible. So: “third” = *trit*, “fourth” = *quart*, but “seventh” is *septim*. The first of two (Old English “former”) is *preter*, and the second is *alter* (cf. Old English “other”) or *dwoter*. Otherwise, “first” is *prest* and “second” is *second* or *dwot*. “last” is *senst*, and “latter” is *senter*.

Only the last component needs to bear the ordinal ending. Ex: *id dwogim prest* = the 21st one.

A multiplicative adjective can be made with the suffix *-(en)s*: “once” = *oins*, “twice” = *dwis* (irregular), “thrice” = *tris*. Otherwise, one can normally use the word “ker”. Ex: *dwo kers* = “two times”.

There is a distributive adjective in Sambahsa, made by suffixing *-(e)n*. Irregular forms are *ein* (1), *dwin* (pair for quantities) (2), *douzen* (12) and *tusent* (1000).

Numbers ending with *-dem* or *-gim* use *-tia* instead. For example : *dwogimtia* = “a score”.

It is used to count substantives too, which do not have a singular form. Ex: *Mi ho kaupen trin bruks* = “I’ve bought myself three pairs of pants”.

If the distributive is used as a quantity, then the following substantives and adjectives are in the genitive plural. Ex: *Un centen wolfen gwiviet in France* = “A hundred of wolves would live in France”

Million and *milliard* (= US billion) only exist as distributives. When the distributive is followed by an other number, then the substantive no longer has to be in the genitive.

Ex: *Oino million octcent nevgim oino mil quarcent mensci (and not menscen) habiteer in Vancouver in mil nevcent nevgim six* = “1891400 people (“humans”) lived in Vancouver in 1996”.

A part can be indicated by suffixing *-del*. Ex: *tridel* = “the third (of something)”. “Half” (as a substantive) is *dwidel*.

“half” (as an adjective), can be rendered with *pwol*, often used as a prefix. *Pwolter* = 1,5.

Other ,5’s are gotten by using the ordinal form of the next number after *pwol*.

Ex: *pwolpenkt* = 4,5.

Other words relating to quantities:

Alter: “the other”; ex: *alter buk*: “the other book” and *alyo* (which is declined according to the euphonic declension) is “another”. Ex: *alyo buk* = “another book”. Both words don’t need any article.

Maung: “much/many”. *Pelu* is literary while *much* is colloquial. *Baygh* (much/many/a lot) can be used both as an adverb or as an adjective. However, it shouldn’t be used before an adjective followed by a substantive. (Would *baygh smulk magvi* mean “many small children” or “very small children”?)

Oik: a few, some

Pau: “little” as an adverb; while *pauk* means “(a) few” as an adjective.

Pwol: “half, semi-“ (in compounds). *Pwolter* = “one and a half”

Sem: some

Words referring to the members of a pair:

In Sambahsa, “both” is *bo*, and its emphatic form (“the two”) is *amb(o)*.

The Sambahsa suffix *-ter* expresses the choice between the members of a pair; it corresponds to English *-ther*.

Auter... au: either.... or

Ieter: either, each (of two)

Kweter: whether

Neter... ni....: neither.... nor.

Neuter : neither, none of both

Oiter: one of two

Quoter: which of both? Can theoretically work as a relative pronoun too.

Uter: a(n) (when referring to the member of a pair).

4-7 Expressing the time in Sambahsa:

To indicate a date within the month, one ought to put *dien* before the cardinal number of the date.

Ex: *Dien oindem september dwomil oin, ein plav criesch in ieter tor ios World Trade Center:*
“On September eleven 2001, a plane crashed in each of the two towers of the WTC”.

The names of the days of the week (*hevd*) in Sambahsa are:

Mingo: Sunday
Mundie: Monday
Ardie: Thursday
Credie: Wednesday
Khamsi: Tuesday
Juma: Friday
Sabd: Saturday

The names of the months (*munt*) are *januar, februar, mart, aprile, mai, jun, jul, august, september, october, november, december*.

To indicate the hour, the best way to be understood worldwide is to put the number of the hour before *saat*, followed by the number of minutes.

Ex: *penkdem saat trigim dwo* = 15:32.

An adverb indicating a period of time can be formed by suffixing *-s*.

Ex: *El fur gwohm nocts* = “The thief came by night”.

The present period of time can be indicated by suffixing *ho-*.

Ex: *honoct* = “tonight”, *hovesper* = “this evening”, but “today” = *hoyd* and “this morning” is *todeghern*.

A verb indicating the period of time spent can be made by prefixing *(u)per-*.

Ex: *Ne wehnmos upernocte in tod hotel* = “We don’t feel like overnighing in this hotel”.

4-8 Some useful verbs in Sambahsa:

Antwehrd: to answer

Au: to lack, to be without

Ay: “to consider as” with a double accusative: “*Ia iey John un allieit*” = “She considered John as an ally”.

With no accusative, it means “say” in dialogues.

“*Quer est John?*” *iey ia* = “Where is John?” she said. (cf. Latin “ait”)

Bah: to speak, to say

Beud: to appeal to (someone), to beg

Dak: to get, to receive

Daum: to wonder

Dehbh: to suit, to be advisable to

Dehlg: must

Deulg: to owe

Eih: to go

Eiskw: to seek to, to want, to intend

Em: to take (figuratively)

Entre: to enter

Fortrehc: to leave (for a travel)

Ghehd: to be able to

Ghend: to take

Gwah: to go to. Ex: *Peter gwaht Paris* = “Peter goes to Paris”

Gwehm: to come

Khak: cannot

Kwehk: to seem

Kwehr: to do

Lass: to let

Leips: to miss (a deadline)

Leit: to go, to run (figurative meaning)

Linekw: to leave

Magh: may, can

Mank: to be lacking

Mehld: to point out (something to someone), to pray

Miss: to miss (someone)

Mutt: to take place, to have grounds to

Naudh: to need, to require

Permitt: to permit, to allow

Poitt: to have the right to, to be entitled to

Prehg: to pray, to ask

Preim: to take (in), to receive

Reik: to return to

Sagv: to know how to

Salg: to go out of
Sayg: to say, to tell
Sisen: to let + infinitive
Skap: to escape from, to depart from
Skeul: to have an obligation, to be obliged
Solle: must (probability)
(oi)sprehg: to talk to, to ask
Tehrb: to need, to have to
Tolk: to talk, to explain
Trehc: to move, to displace oneself
Vid: to see
Vol: to want
Wan: to need, to lack
Wehkw: to talk to, to express oneself
Wehl: to want someone to
Wehn: to feel like doing, to desire

4-9 Syntax:

Sambahsa word order generally follows the English syntax, i.e. Subject – Verb – Object. A different order can be followed if the declensional or conjugational endings allow this. In compounds, the qualifier precedes the qualified item. Ex: *weirnav* = “warship”, as *weir* = war and *nav* = ship. For quantities, the thing measured can be put after the unit of measure. Ex: *Dwo botels vin* = “Two bottles of wine”

As in English, *od* = “that” (when it introduces indirect speech) and the relative pronoun in the accusative can be omitted if the meaning is not altered. When the relative clause rather expresses a wish, the clitic *ke(m)* can be used instead of *od*.

la mi sieyg (od) ia eet sieug = She told me (that) she was sick.

Sambahsa uses approximately the same rules as English for the sequence of tenses.

la dugter (quam) ays mater lieubht sessiet un gohd mater = The daughter (whom) her mother loves will be a good (« successful ») mother.

Most Sambahsa prepositions can be used as conjunctions.

Eemos noroct pre is gwohm = We were happy before he came

Pre fortrehce, mae myehrste clude id dwer = Before departing, don't forget to close the door.

I way fortrohc pre cludus id dwer = They unfortunately departed before having closed the door.

In Sambahsa, the difficulty is not to forget that the same words both serve as a determinant and as a personal pronoun of the 3° person. Thus, such a personal pronoun ought not to be placed just before an adjective or a substantive.

lo iens iey prients im animals = (lit.) I them considered friends of the animals.

Interrogative sentences are either made by putting the subject (including an optional personal pronoun) after the verb, or by beginning the sentence with *kwe*.

Apposition is indicated differently :

- if the noun refers to the whole name, then they both follow the same case.
- If it doesn't refer to the whole of it, the genitive, or a preposition replacing it, must be used.

Example : *id citad Montréal* = "the city of Montreal" but *id tribunal os Montréal* = "the court of Montreal".

5 - Word formation in Sambahsa:

Unlike other artificial languages (ex: Esperanto), Sambahsa relies more on loanwords (i.e. words taken from other languages) than on compounds. Sambahsa has so many source languages that it is impossible to have a fully regular derivation system. Nevertheless, some useful affixes can be listed.

5-1 Prefixes

In general, most prepositions can be used as prefixes, and Sambahsa tends to follow the usage of major European languages. Prefixes are never accentuated. Here are some prefixes which are not prepositions or whose meaning is different.

Ab: before a verb, means "away"; ex: *abcurr* = "to run away"

Apo: indicates the 4th generation. Ex: *apopater* = "great-grandfather".

Be: makes transitive verbs (as in English)

Begh(i)s: means "deprived of"

Bfu: negative prefix before words of Sinitic origin.

Cum: corresponds to the English prefix "god-" in names of relatives. Ex: *cummater* = "godmother"

Dus: means "ill-", "bad". Ex: *dusmenos* = "ill-disposed" from *menos* = "mind disposition".

En-: means "to put into". Ex: *enquestion* = "to put into question, to question"

Ender: diminutive of action. Ex: *endervid* = "to catch a glimpse of"; *enderghyan* = "to half-open"

Eti: indicates the 5th generation.

For: corresponds to the English adverb "astray"

Ga: - before a verbal stem with ablaut: indicates the result of an action

- before a verbal stem with ablaut: indicates the object of an action. With the suffix – *os*, this meaning is pejorative.

Before a noun: indicates a sum. Ex: *behrg* = cliff; *gabehrg* = mountain range

Ken: means “empty of”

Mu: prefix of Arabic origin; can be used to indicate the doer of an action when prefixed to a word of “Muslim” origin. Ex: *mussafer* = “traveller” from *safer* = (to) travel

Muta: means “to change”; ex: *mutamayn* = “to change opinion”

Ni: means “down” but generally in a figurative sense. Ex: *niklad* = “to download” from *klad* = “to load”.

(oi)s-: The first meaning of this prefix is “to put out/off” and is the contrary of *en-*. Ex: *oischalt* = to switch off; *(en)schalt* = to switch on.

The reduced form *s-* got confused with a peculiarity of Indo-European, the “s mobile”, whose exact meaning is still debated among linguists. This formation is still living in Sambahsa-Mundialect. Examples:

Brehg (to break) / *sprehng* (to burst) *spraneg* (transitive form)

Tanek (to concentrate) / *staneke* (to stanch)

Prehg (to pray) / *sprehg* (to ask someone)

Daum (to wonder) / *staun* (to be astonished)

Or: means original, primeval, primitive.

Par: idea of completion, of fulfilled action. Ex: *parkwehr* = “to achieve” from *kwehr* = “to do”.

Peri: means “thorough”. Ex: *perigumt* = “thoroughfare” from *gumt* = “coming”

Pro-: indicates the 3rd generation. Ex: *pronepot* = “grandnephew”. Before a verb, it means “in front of, preceding” and triggers the dative. Ex: *Is mi prighieng* = “He was walking in front of me”.

Rhayr: negative prefix (but often used as an independent adverb) before adjectives of Arabic origin. Ex: *rhayr yakin* = “unsure” from *yakin* = “sure, certain”.

Step : “step-” (family after a second marriage). Ex : *steppater* = “stepfather”.

Sua -: means “well”. Ex: *suakwohrt* = “well done” from *kwohrt* = “done”.

Ud: as “out” in English, indicates the capacity of doing better than someone else.

Example: *Ho udsnaht iom* = “I’ve outswum him”

With the reflexive pronoun (*sib*), indicates the way of getting something.

Ex: *Id mafia sib udtehrct id silence schahiden* = “The Mafia gets the silence of witnesses by threatening them”.

5-2 Suffixes:

Because Sambahsa’s wordstock is a mixture of so many sources, it is impossible to have a fully regular system. This is due to the fact that most Romance words (words from Latin and its daughter-languages) have kept their own formation rules.

However, some basic rules shall help to identify the function of each derived form. An important feature of Romance derived forms is that they're based on the "perfect stem" (or "thema perfectic" in Occidental-Interlingue) of verbs.

This perfect stem is predicted this way:

- Verbs ending with an unstressed *e* use *-at-* instead. Thus, from *forme* (to form) we get *format-* and derived forms like *formation*, *formative*, *formator*...
- Verbs ending with *ie* use *-icat-* instead. Thus from *publie* (to publish) we get *publication*.
- Verbs ending with *ue* use *-ut-* instead. This applies to verbs whose past participle in "t" ends with *wt*.
- Verbs ending with *eih-* use *-it-* instead. Ex: *addeih* (to add) produces *addit*, hence *addition*.
- The perfect stem of other verbs corresponds to their past participle in "t". Ex: *scinesd* (to split) gives *sciss*, hence we get *scission*, *scissible*...

Those rules are not absolute since Sambahsa tends to follow the forms seen in Romance languages and English (ex: the major exception is the perfect stem of *posen*, which is *posit*), but they are very practical, because they provide reliable guidelines for the inclusion of the international scientific vocabulary in Sambahsa, even when the word is not present in the dictionaries.

Most common derivation processes:

To express a quality, a state:

Some simple adjectives suffix an *-e* and undergo ablaut. Ex: *long* gives *longe* [londj] (length), *deub* [döb] (deep) gives *dube* [düb], *slab* (weak) gives *sliebe* (weakness). But this system works only if there is a phonetic difference between the adjective and its derived form.

Other adjectives can suffix *-(e)t*. Ex: *mild* gives *mildet* (pity), and *mynder* (proud) gives *myndert* (pride).

Other like suffixes are *-os* and *-ia*, and *-or* and *-(i)tat* for Romance words.

To express an action:

If the verbal stem alone is not enough (ex: *hehlp* = "(to) help"), *-(e)n* can be added to it, and *-sa* to verbs ending with a stressed vowel sound. Romance verbs add *-ion* to the perfect stem.

To indicate the doer of an action:

The most used suffix is *-er* on the verbal stem. Its Romance equivalent is *-or* suffixed to the perfect stem. A practical set of verbal suffixes are *-ant* to indicate the one who performs an action, *-eit* to indicate whom this action is directed at (cf. English *-ee*) and *-at* to indicate the object or result of this action. Ex: *telephonant* is the one who phones and *telephoneit* is the one who is phoned to. Their conversation is a *telephonat*.

Other suffixes:

Ar: - indicates a collection

- for names of professions, means “maker of”. Ex: *stolar/stular* (joiner) from *stol/stul* (chair)

Asc: means “to become ...”. Ex: *khakasc* = “to become bad” from *khak* = “bad”.

At: means “years old”. Ex: *Som trigimat* = “I’m 30 years old”.

Av: on a verbal stem (verbs in *ei* and *eu* turn them to *i* and *u*; stems with nasal infix lose their unstressed “e”), means “inclined to, prone to”. Its Romance equivalent is *-ace*.

Ber: means berry, fruit. Ex: *vinber* = “grape”

-ble: on a perfect stem without final *-t*, corresponds to English adjectives ending “-ble” = “which can be...”. The corresponding substantive is in *-bilitat*.

Other verbs suffix *-et* to the stem if there is no risk of confusion with any other conjugated form. Ex: *dyehrcet* [dyE:rtsët] = “glimpsable” from *dyehrc* = “to glimpse”. Others verbs add *-im*.

-del: On a number, indicates a fraction. Ex: *tridel* = “the third part”.

-dem: Indicates a determined region, like English “dom”. Ex: *roydem* = “kingdom”

-eus: Adjective of quality; corresponds to English “-ous”. Substantive in *-ositat*.

-en: Adjective of “substance”. Ex: *golden* from *gold*.

-fred: means “free from”.

-ia: quality, science, country

-ic: forms adjectives. Its corresponding substantive ends in *-ique*.

-iev: means “fruit”, “grain”.

-iko/-ika: means “young male/female”. Ex: *potiko* = “galant” from *poti* = “sir”; *potnika* = “miss” from *potnia* = “lady”. .

-il: means “susceptible to, open to”. Has an active value when it is suffixed to the perfect stem, and a passive one when it is suffixed to the verbal stem.

-in: - female suffix

- indicates “forest of”.

-(i)sk: adjective of origin. Ex: *coschmarisk* = “nightmarish” from *coschmar* = “nightmare”.

-isme: state of a thing, theory, ideology. The adherent/practitioner has the suffix *-iste*.

-ko/-ka: make diminutives (male/female) on an accentuated syllable. Ex: *Ritka & Hanko* = “Hansel & Gretel”.

-log: corresponds to English “-logist”.

-ment: corresponds to English words of Romance origin ending in “-ment”. For accentuational purposes, this suffix counts as an separate substantive within a compound.

-mon: on a verbal stem, means “who can”.

-ner: masculine suffix. Ex: *Eireanner* = “Irishman” from *eirean* = “Irish”

-nic/-nica: slight pejorative (male/female). Ex: *drehnknic* = “drunkard”.

-os: on a verb, can mean “game of”. Ex: *skeulkos* = “hide-and-seek”

-smee: always on a personal pronouns, to emphasize oppositions. Ex: *Weysmee habmos naiwo likwno nies parents* = “We (not you) have never left our parents”.

-ster: feminine suffix

-ure: on the perfect stem, means “result, quality”.

-went : makes adjectives; corresponds to English “-ful”. For accentuational purposes, this suffix counts as an separate substantive within a compound.

The nasal infix:

This peculiarity has been already seen in the part on conjugation. Nearly all these verbs are transitive, for the initial meaning of the nasal infix was “to equip something/one with”. Ex: *yuneg* = “to join, to hitch up” from *yug* = “yoke”.

5-3 Formation of compounds.

The Sambahsa order follows the English order; ex: *weir-nav* = “war-ship”.

Adjectives of quality with one element can be made by suffixing *-t* (or even *-(e)n*), much like English “-ed”. If there is more than one element, then there is no suffix at all. Ex: *un penkwekwł wogh* = “a five-wheeled wain”. A simple way to express a quality is to use the preposition *samt* (see above). Likewise, names of doers can go without a suffix if they contain more than one element. Ex: *nebhskrehb* = “sky-scraper” from *nebh* = “cloud” and *skrehb* = “to scrape”.

5-4 Choice of new words.

The primary source for the vocabulary of Sambahsa is its direct ancestor Indo-European. Not all words have been reconstructed, but many ideas can be obtained by looking at older IE languages, and above all Sanskrit, Old Greek, Latin.

The other source of vocabulary for Sambahsa is loanwords, i.e. words found in at least two different linguistic branches. The spectrum stretches from Western Europe up to Eastern Asia. Thus, the influence of French, English and German on the “modern” (that is to say “compared with old IE”) appearance of Sambahsa has been decisive. But, for the vocabulary,

the influence of other European languages has been as important. German has given a relevant amount of vocabulary to East European languages. Baltic languages share some common basic wordstock. And the Balkanic languages are the best example of a “Sprachbund” due to their common history (Byzantine and Ottoman dominations).

Moreover, the Balkan Sprachbund is the gateway to the second biggest area of shared vocabulary, that ought to be called the “Muslim” languages. The spread of Islam (and of the Arabic language) has taken back and fostered the old Persian heritage which has endured until the XIX^e century. That’s why Arabic and Persian words found in Hausa, Swahili, Turkish, central Asian languages, Urdu or Indonesian are present in Sambahsa too. The Sanskritic sphere plays a role in Sambahsa too, but to a lesser extent. Finally, the Sinitic languages (i.e. languages like Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, that were influenced by Chinese) provide a minor part of Sambahsa’s vocabulary. This reduced importance is due to the fact that Chinese loanwords undergo considerable phonetic alterations, and that loss of trans-linguistic recognizability makes them less interesting for an international language.

This guideline is not absolute; other parameters are taken into account. Among these are precision, recognizability, shortness and avoidance of the risk of confusion with a preexisting word.

In sum, the basic vocabulary of Sambahsa is pan-European and contains a balanced number of cognates with many languages of this continent. See, as an example: <http://www.pagef30.com/2010/06/swadesh-list-comparing-english-french.html> which gives 52% of shared basic vocabulary with English, 46% with French, and about 30% with Lithuanian.