

Iberian Language

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1 Introduction

This is the grammar and initial lexicon of the Iberian language. So what is Iberian?

Iberian is a constructed language, meaning it was not evolved from any existing language. The entire language was created from top to bottom from scratch. While structurally, Iberian mirrors Esperanto in a lot of ways, its purpose is different.

Iberian was created with a double-reason. First of all, I created it for personal reasons. I am intrigued with languages. Perhaps this derives from my daytime interest of programming languages and compilers. I am intrigued with how languages express ideas and how different languages can express an idea in different ways, or how some languages have words and ideas not really found in others. I am also interested in how cultures as a whole are influenced by languages, both their own and the languages of others. The second reason I created this was as an intellectual exercise. I had created one language in the past, and while I am proud of it, it was a first language and was lacking in purpose and in features. With Iberian, I wanted to create a language that could express a lot of meaning in a concise way.

I am not a linguist by training, and in reality the only language I speak fluently is my native language, English. I am slowly gaining a degree of proficiency with French, and I have varying degrees of knowledge with Dutch and German. In the constructed language world, I know the grammar of Esperanto and have a degree of knowledge of the language as a whole. While this hardly qualifies me as a linguist, I do not think you need a degree or credentials to experiment in this world. We all use language everyday, and we are all capable of thoughts and ideas. I think anyone you can understand grammar and think abstractly can enter this world.

Finally, you are likely curious where the name "Iberian" comes from. Yes, it's the name of the peninsula where Spain and Portugal are located, and no this language has no relation to either of those countries or the languages spoken there. The name somewhat just came to mind, and I like it, so here we go.

2 Phonology

This is the phonology of the Iberian language. The phonology is basically derived from English, so native English speakers will likely have the easiest time learning this. Of course, it is not a complete copy of English. I did leave some sounds out, particularly the "th" sound which is difficult for many non-native speakers. I tried to stick to sounds that I knew could be found in other languages.

An important thing to note is the use of diphthongs- multiple letters used to represent a single sound. Going down this path was not my first choice, but I did for a few reasons. First, I wanted to have the "one letter one sound" rule- I did not want to deal with confusing rules about silent letters, when one is long and short, and so forth. However, I also did not want to use the Esperanto method of symbols with the letters, for the simple reason that it is hard to type on most keyboards. Eventually, I would like to add a custom script that can be used in addition to the Latin-based version.

2.1 Vowels

These are the vowels:

a as in "at"

aa as in "cake"

e as in "step"

ee as in "eat"

o as in "open"

oo as in "oops"

oi as in "oil"

i as in "it"

ii as in "ice"

u as in "ought"

w as in "you"

2.2 Consonants

There are the consonants:

b as in "bum"

c as in "cat"

k as in "cat" (heavy emphasis on the k)
d as in "dog"
f as in "fun"
h as in "hat"
j as in "jar"
l as in "log"
m as in "mug"
n as in "nut"
p as in "pack"
r as in "rug"
s as in "snake"
ss as in "snake" (heavy emphasis- draw out the s)
t as in "top"
v as in "van"
z as in "zip"
zs as in "zh"
sh as in "shake"
y as in "yes"

3 Word Endings

Iberian follows Esperanto's model of using roots with endings representing the type of word- a vowel, noun, adjective, or adverb. As a result, you can replace word endings to create new words based on the situation. However, it obviously must make sense. If it is esoteric, it is unlikely that others may grasp your meaning.

The following are the word types:

-o for nouns

-a for verbs (by default, a verb is in the infinitive tense)

-e for adjectives

-je for adverbs

4 Nouns: Numbers, Genders, and Age

This section covers noun-specific endings- endings that convey meaning and context of a noun. The following order is generally used with the endings:

noun + gender + age + number + cases

Throughout this section, we are going to use "homo", meaning "person" as our example.

4.1 Gender

Depending on what languages you have studied, you are probably more than familiar with the beloved gender system: masculine, feminine, and neuter nouns where everything is completely arbitrary and must still agree. Iberian does not have this gender system, and it means something completely different.

Gender corresponds to biological gender of male and female. By default, the gender of a noun is either unknown or irrelevant. The gender endings can be used to convey this information when it becomes relevant. In theory, you can use any gender ending with any noun, but in reality it needs to make sense (after all, you wouldn't have a female table...).

These are the endings:

-ba - Male

-fa - Female

Example:

homo - A person (gender unknown and/or irrelevant)

homoba - A man

homofa - A woman

4.2 Age

As far as I know, there is not an equivalent concept in other languages to this (other than using adjectives). These endings can be used with any noun and indicate age. Unlike gender, this can be used with any noun.

These are the endings:

-dee - Young or new but not brand-new

-dii - Very young or brand-new

-doi - Old

-daa - Very old

Example:

homodee - A child

homodii - A baby

homodoi - A grandparent perhaps

homodaa - A great-grandparent perhaps

homofadii - A female child (notice the gender ending)

4.3 Numbers

Iberian has four numbers:

-s General plural

-ss Infinite plural

-v Group plural

-z Relation plural

This is the meaning of each:

- General plural corresponds to the plural found in most other languages; it simply means there is more than one of something. Any relation is not known.
- Infinite plural is the equivalent of using "all" before a plural noun in English (ie, "all men"). This number is used for making general statements about all of something.
- Group plural denotes more than one of a noun within a group. However, this group is not necessarily related.
- Relational plural is the same as group plural, except a known relationship is implied.

Admittedly, the difference between group and relational plural is fluid. One way to think about it is when talking about people, you could use group plural to represent all people of a country, while using relational plural to represent people of a family. Of course, when talking about the relation of people to other countries, relational plural may become appropriate in this case. It is largely about context. The important thing to remember, however, is that group plural does not imply a relationship, while relational plural does.

5 Articles

Although I went back and forth on this, I think articles are an important part of a language as they convey an interesting degree of meaning. As such, Iberian has the typical definite and indefinite articles. Iberian also includes articles that would correspond to demonstratives in other languages. Articles are very important to the language. They must proceed all nouns.

Like French, articles must agree in number and case. However, they are not required to agree in all cases. They only must agree with the noun in the accusative and genitive cases. Articles are not required to agree with nouns in gender or age. The endings follow this order:

article + number + case

la - a

laa - the

lo - this

loi - that

lee - any

Examples:

la homo - A person

laa homo - The person

laas homos - The people

laass homoss - All of the people

lo homo - This person

loi homo - That person

lois homos - Those people

lee homo - Any person

6 Pronouns

Pronouns are extremely simple in Iberian. There are three persons, with a root for each that can stand alone in the nominative case. All other pronouns can be constructed with the noun endings for number and case. Only the accusative and genitive cases are required to be reflected. The others can be used if it makes sense, but they are not required.

The roots:

Ya - I

Yoo - You

Yi - It (the 3rd person)

The noun endings for gender can be applied to the third person when necessary. These are not strictly required. If you come from an English/Spanish/French or other Indo-European background, this may sound a little strange, but it is not completely foreign. Finnish only has one, ungendered 3rd person pronoun. Examples:

Yiba - He

Yifa - She

A few examples:

- "Ya veraa yin" (I go to him/her)
- "Yoo veraa yan" (You come to me)
- "Ya veraa domolin yan" (I go to my house)

7 Noun Cases

This section covers all the noun cases in Iberian. Although the accusative and genitive cases are very similar to that of existing Indo-European languages, the other cases are unique to the language. As noted previously, when case agreement is required, it only applies to the accusative and genitive cases.

In this section, we will use three words for our examples: "homo" (man), "domo" (house), "erbo" (city) and "vera" (to go).

7.1 Accusative Case

The accusative case denotes the object of the sentence. This case must always be last if multiple cases are being used. The ending is "-n", or if the word ends with a consonant, "-en".

Example: "Laa Homoba veraa laan domon." (The man goes to the house).

7.2 Genitive Case

The genitive case denotes possession. A noun in the genitive case is owned by any nouns following it. The genitive case always comes last except in the accusative case when it comes before. The ending is "-li", or if the word ends with a consonant, "-en".

Example: "Laa homofadeeli homoba veraa yizelin domon." (The young daughter of the man goes to their house).

Same example: "Laa homofadeeli homoba yizelin domon veraa". (Same meaning- notice that word order can be fluid).

7.3 Causation Case

The causation case is meant to give an idea for why the subject performed the action- the cause. Obviously, more information is required for specifics, but these will convey a lot of meaning on their own. Below are the endings. Remember, an "-e" precedes the ending when the word ends with a consonant.

-/-paa - By the subject's will or desire (the default case)

-pee - By the will or command of another

-po - By the wishes of another

-poo - By the force of another

-paanii - By an external force

-paabii - By a moral force

-paalii - By a sudden impulse

-peelii - can (expresses possibility)

Example: "Laa homofadeepoli homoba veraa laan domon." Meaning:

Literally By the wishes or command of another, the young girl of the man goes to the house.

Translation The daughter of the man, by her father's wishes, goes to her house.

7.4 Locative Case

Iberian does not have individual words for prepositional phrases as in other languages. Instead, it has a special noun case denoted by endings. A noun in the locative case expresses both the preposition and its object. An important note: if you are familiar with Esperanto, you may be aware that prepositional phrases are not required to be in the accusative case. This is NOT the case in Iberian. In Iberian, if a prepositional phrase is part of the object, it must be in the accusative case. As usual, the accusative case goes last.

Below are the endings. Once again, an "e" precedes the endings if the word ends in a consonant.

-vaa - to

-va - from

-ve - into

-vee - out of

-vo - in

-vii - at

-voo - about

-vonii - after

-vomii - against

-voi - for

-volii - among

-voomee - during

-votii - with

Example: "La homofadeeli homoba veraa laan domoveen laan erboven."
(The daughter of the man goes out of the house and into the city.)

7.5 Proximal Case

The proximal case expresses direction. Although the meaning will vary with context, it generally denotes the placement of a noun in relation to where the action is taking place. Below are the endings, and as usual, if the word ends with a consonant, an "e" is required.

- fa** - in front of
- faa** - behind or the back of
- fi** - above or north of
- fii** - below or south of
- fini** - east of
- finii** - west of
- fo** - left of
- foi** - right of
- feema** - near to or close by
- feemaa** - far from
- fiima** - here
- filaa** - again
- foo** - over
- faala** - before
- fw** - between
- fwloo** - except
- fwlaa** - from

Example: "La homofadeeli homoba veraa laan domoveefilaan laan erbovefeeman." (The daughter of the man goes once again out of the house and into the city close by.)

Endings can be stacked if it makes sense: "La homofadeeli homoba veraa laan domoveefilaafiman loin erboven." (The daughter of the man goes once again out of the house here and into that city close by.)

8 Verbs

Verbs in Iberian are generally very simple. You may remember that all verbs are by default in the infinitive case ("-a"). Any of the tenses below can be formed by removing the "-a" and replacing it with the proper ending.

-a - infinitive

-aa - present

-e - past

-ee - past passive

-o - future

-oo - future passive

-oi - subjunctive

-i - conditional

-ii - impending

-w - continuing

-aanaa - command

-amii - participle

-alaa - general

8.1 The Tenses

Let's look at each tense in more detail. Each section has a simple example.

8.1.1 Present

The present tense indicates something is happening right now. Example: "Laa homo veraa laan domon." (The man is going home).

8.1.2 Past and Past Passive

The past tenses indicate an action that has happened and is completed.

Past tense example: "Laa homo vere laan domon." (The man went home).

Past passive example: "Laa homo verree laan domon." (The man has gone home).

8.1.3 Future and Future Passive

The future tenses indicate an action that will happen in the future.

Future tense example: "Laa homo vero laan domon." (The man will go home).

Future passive example: "Laa homo veroo laan domon." (The man will have gone home).

8.1.4 Subjunctive

The subjunctive tense expresses a wish or a desire. It is roughly equivalent to using "would" before the verb in English.

Example: "Laa homo veroi laan domon." (The man would like to go home).

8.1.5 Conditional

The conditional tense expresses a condition. A sentence in the conditional tense is made up of two clauses separated by "kii". The first clause expresses the condition, while the second clause expresses the "then" (in other words, "kii" roughly means "then"). The second clause is almost always in the future tense.

Example: "Laa homo veri laan domon kii ya vero laan erbon." (If the man goes home, then I will go to the city.)

You can also add a third clause to express otherwise: "Laa homo veri laan domon kii ya vero domolin yan." (If the man goes home, then I will go to the city; otherwise, I will go to my house).

8.1.6 Impending

The impending tense expresses "when" - When once action occurs, then another action will occur. Sentences in the impending tense are separated in two clauses with "kii" in between them. The first sentence is in the impending tense, and the second is almost always in the future tense.

Example: "Laa homo verii laan domon kii ya vero laan erbon." (When the man goes home, then I will go to the city.)

8.1.7 Continuing

The continuing tense expresses "until". Once again, the sentence is made up of two clauses separated by "kii", with the first in the continuing tense and the second in the future tense. It means that until the continuing action stops, the second action will continue.

Example: "Laa homo verw laan domon kii ya laboro." (Until the man goes home, I will keep working.)

8.1.8 Command

The command tense is used to give commands. It can be used either as a direct command (similar to the imperative in English), or it can be used to indicate that the subject is giving a command to the object.

Example: "Veraanaa domo!" (Go home!)

Example: "Ya demandaanaa laan homon vera laan domon." (I ask the person to go home.)

8.1.9 Participle

A verb in the participle case is one used as a noun. Example: "Laa homo aamaa meenjamii" (The man enjoys eating.)

8.1.10 General

The general tense is unique to Iberian as far as I know (certainly in compared to English). A sentence in the general tense means that it applies to all of the subject; for example, if you talk about people and put the sentence in the general tense, it applies to all people past, present, and future. One could think of this as the stereotypical tense, so one should be careful when using it.

Example: "Laa homo meenjalaa." (All people enjoy eating.)

Note that despite it applying to a plural noun, having the subject in the plural is not necessary.

8.2 Negation

Negation is done by adding the "nee-" suffix.

Example: "Laa homo neeveraa laan domon." (The man does not go home.)

8.3 Extent

In English, the words "very" and "really" are often used to express verb extent-to what extent an action is taking place. Iberian has four endings that can express this. These suffixes go after the tense endings. They can be used with negation, but keep in mind that their meaning will change with the negation.

-tii - the greatest possible extent

-ti - a greater extent (relative to something else)

-to - a lesser extent (relative to something else)

-toi - the least possible extent

Example: "Laa homo aamatii meenja." (The man really enjoys eating OR The man's most favorite thing is eating.)

Example: "Laa homo aamati meenja." (The man really enjoys eating. [though not as much as something else, or maybe it's not his favorite thing])

9 Connectors

Connectors correspond with conjunctions in many languages. They are used to connect ideas, whether between individual words or clauses. Some of the meanings will vary with context, but the list below covers roughly what they mean.

ep - and (used within sentences)

epoo - and (used to separate clauses within a sentence)

kii - a generic connector for certain tenses. It roughly means "then"

koo - as

ook - also

ool - or

epee - but

jii - because

jiidee - so that

epool - in order to

10 Descriptors

Descriptors correspond to adjectives and adverbs in other languages. They describe nouns and verbs, respectively.

10.1 Adjectives

Adjectives describe nouns. All adjectives end in "-e", and like French, they come after the noun they describe. Adjectives must agree with nouns in all numbers and cases (including the extra noun cases).

10.2 Adverbs

Adverbs end in "-je" and are generally just adjectives with the "-e" ending replaced with "-je". They come after the verb they modify and require no special attention.

11 Examples

This section contains various examples of the language in action.

11.1 Genesis 1

Laa startamiivo, God keevote laan Diimon ep laan teeron. Laa teero este neey-
oitovottiin, epoo la neeliimato klozse laan depton, epoo la jiito maajare blaate
laan afofoon.

12 Lexicon

This is the initial lexicon of Iberian. To make things easier, it is essentially an English-Iberian dictionary. Note that this is a work-in-progress.

12.1 A

ability - (n) ozeeno

abuse - (v) eevwma

accept - (v) iyeepeeja

access - (v) efifapa

achieve - (v) eerozsassiila

achievement - (n) eerozsassiilo

acknowledge - (v) ayaana

acquire - (v) iizsota

act - (v) oozeeka, (n) oozeeka

action - (n) oodicwvato

activity - (n) oishoobwlo

actually - (adv) wzaameekaaej

adapt - (v) oijiiya

add - (v) ooywra

adjust - (v) unijora

administer - (v) unutoimusa

administration - (n) ajaashevaako

admire - (v) eruyeva

admit - (v) oijafoila

adopt - (v) ilooya

adore - (v) aacuboola

adult - (n) dimwudo

advance - (v) foihaarima

affect - (v) caashwya

afford - (v) menutwfa
again - (adv) yaavej
age - (n) kaadiimo
agency - (n) kidato
agree - (v) shifika
air - (n) niyo
allow - (v) laameesseemoila
almost - (adv) zsekeveelej
along - (adv) loocoiloozswlej
already - (adv) kehobej
although - (adv) jeejacaalej
always - (adv) zsishacej
amount - (n) yoimoisso
analysis - (n) zsaapoiyo
anger - (n) zozwhooyo
animal - (n) ssicivo
another - (adj) dezele
answer - (n) zobezso, (v) zobezsa
anyone - (pn)
anything - (pn)
apologize - (v) ssissida
appeal - (v) jiissiiva
appear - (v) looyola
apply - (v) zezoola
appreciate - (v) kishwda
approach - (v) lwyeejoiya
approve - (v) dejiina
area - (n) boopooto

argue - (v) loinoosha
arise - (v) miijapiida
arrange - (v) zsetuma
arrive - (v) dajeeyota
art - (n) laashido
article - (n) soonaasoomo
artist - (n) pwdudazso
ask - (v) jekookwla
assist - (v) shazija
associate - (v) shoiriivoida
assume - (v) doomifa
assure - (v) yajoila
attach - (v) vuca
attack - (v) swshwjala
attempt - (v) doojeessacwla, (n) doojeessacwlo
attend - (v) hima
attention - (n) sisswlo
attract - (v) zaareezsapa
author - (n) keerooko
available - (adj) lome
avoid - (v) heheefufula
away - (adj) shwve

12.2 B

be - (v) esta
begin - (v) starta
blow - (v) blaata

12.3 C

chapter - (n) zseeto

city - (n) erbo

create - (v) keevota

cover - (v) klozsa

12.4 D

darkness - (n) neeliimato

deep - (n) depto, (adj) depte

demand - (v) demanda

die - (v) morba

12.5 E

eat - (v) meenja

earth - (n) teero

enjoy - (v) aama

12.6 F

form - (n) yoito

12.7 G

go - (v) vera

12.8 H

heaven - (n) diimo

house, home - (n) domo

12.9 L

light - (n) liimato

12.10 M

mightly, powerful - (adj) maajare

12.11 O

office - (n) laboro

12.12 P

person - (n) homo

12.13 W

water - (n) afo

wind - (n) jiito

work - (v) labora