

A Reference  
Grammar of the Iridian Language

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## PREFACE



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## ABBREVIATIONS

|      |                      |
|------|----------------------|
| 1    | first person         |
| 2    | second person        |
| 3    | third person         |
| 4    | fourth person        |
| ABL  | abilitative mood     |
| ADE  | adessive             |
| AGT  | agent                |
| ANIM | animate              |
| ATT  | attributive          |
| BEN  | benefactive focus    |
| COND | conditional          |
| CTPV | contemplative aspect |
| CV   | converb              |
| EXCL | exclusive            |
| EXPL | expletive            |
| G    | generic number       |
| GEN  | genitive             |
| GER  | gerund               |
| HORT | hortative mood       |
| INAN | inanimate            |
| INCL | inclusive            |
| INCP | inceptive            |
| INF  | infinitive           |
| INST | instrumental case    |
| IPF  | imperfective aspect  |

|       |                      |
|-------|----------------------|
| IV    | instrumental focus   |
| LOC   | locative             |
| LV    | locative focus       |
| NEG   | negative             |
| NZ    | nominalizer          |
| OPT   | optative mood        |
| PAT   | patient              |
| PERM  | permissive mood      |
| PF    | perfective aspect    |
| PL    | plural               |
| PROSP | prospective aspect   |
| PV    | patientive focus     |
| QUOT  | quotative mood       |
| REF   | reflexive focus      |
| RET   | retrospective aspect |
| RZ    | relativizer          |
| S     | singular             |
| SBJ   | subjunctive mood     |
| STR   | strong form          |
| SUP   | supine               |
| WK    | weak form            |

---

# AN OVERVIEW OF IRIDIAN

## 1.1 Word Classes

Traditional Iridian grammar classifies words into three types: **lóihnelý** (verbs), **zesztelý** (nouns), and **múisztelý** (function words)



# PHONOLOGY

## 2.1 Vowels

### 2.1.1 Oral Vowels

Iridian has seven pairs of corresponding long and short vowels. With the exception of /ɐ aː/ and /u uː/, long vowels are tenser than their short counterparts. In addition standard Iridian also features the high central vowel [ɨ] as an allophone of [ɛ] and [ɪ] in unstressed positions.

**Table 2.1:** Vowel inventory of standard Iridian.

|       | FRONT     |         | CENTRAL | BACK |
|-------|-----------|---------|---------|------|
|       | Unrounded | Rounded |         |      |
| Close | ɪ iː      | ʏ yː    | (ɨ)     | u uː |
| Mid   | ɛ eː      | œ øː    |         | ɔ oː |
| Open  |           |         | ɐ aː    |      |

Phonetic realization is generally consistent with orthography as seen in Table 2.2 below.

**Table 2.2:** Orthographic representation of vowels.

|     | Short | Long |     | Short | Long |
|-----|-------|------|-----|-------|------|
| /a/ | a     | á    | /u/ | u     | ú    |
| /e/ | e     | é    | /y/ | y, ÿ  | ý    |
| /i/ | i     | í    | /ø/ | au    | áu   |
| /o/ | o     | ó    |     |       |      |

Note that since **y** is used to represent palatalization of a consonant in coda position, word-final short /y/ sound is written as **ÿ**.

The rounded vowels /ɤ y:/ and /œ ø:/ are diphthongized to [ɤ̯ y̯] and [œ̯ ø̯] at the end of a word.

### 2.1.2 Diphthongs

Iridian has three phonemic oral diphthongs: **av** [aʊ], **ei** [eɪ], **ou** [oʊ]. In addition, the diphthongs **oi** [ɔɪ] and **ui** [ʊɪ] also occur phonemically, but their occurrence is marginal, normally appearing only in fixed expressions such as interjections and expletives.

- (1) **Avui!** ‘Damn it!’

[ʔəˈvʊɪ̯]

- (2) **pšehui**, ‘annoying’

[ˈpʃexʊɪ̯]

- (3) **Oi!** ‘Hey!’

[ʔɔɪ̯]

- [ɔɪ̯] and [ʊɪ̯] can be found in the interjections such **avui!** [ʔəˈvʊɪ̯] (‘Damn!’) and **oi!** [ʔɔɪ̯] (‘Hey!’), often followed by an emphatic glottal stop.
- Diphthongization of word-final [ɤ y:] and [œ ø:] (see *supra*).
- L-vocalization in coda position. This is however analyzed as a vowel-approximant sequence and not as a diphthong. E.g.,: **aktvel** [ʔextˈvew] ‘current’.

### 2.1.3 Nasal Vowels

Iridian has three nasal vowels: **a** [ẽw̃], **e** [ẽw̃] and **o** [õ]. Nasal vowels are not distinguished for length. In addition, nasal consonants in coda position are normally deleted, and the preceding vowel becomes phonemically nasal. In cases of nasal coda deletion, **a** [ẽ] and **e** [ẽ] are also diphthongized to [ẽw̃] and [ẽw̃]. Unstressed [ẽw̃] is further reduced to [õw̃]. This brings the inventory of nasal and nasalized consonants in Iridian to the following: /ẽw̃ ẽw̃ õw̃ ĩ õ ũ/

**bięc**

[bʲẽw̃ts̃]

‘cat’

### 2.1.4 Vowel length

Vowel length is phonemic in Iridian.

### 2.1.5 Vowel reduction

The short vowels /ɛ/ and /ɪ/ are reduced to [ɪ̥] in unstressed positions. In less careful speech, this could even be the elision of the vowel and the formation of consonant clusters or the realization of the preceding consonant as syllabic (especially if it is a liquid or a nasal).



(4) **piáščem**  
[ˈpʲa:ɕtɕɛm] or [ˈpʲa:ɕtɕɛm]

In a word-final position, it is especially common in casual speech to drop the [ɨ] and lengthen the preceding consonant or, if it is a plosive, to aspirate it. This pronunciation, however, is not considered standard.

- (5) a. **róme**  
[ʁo:mi] vs [ʁo:mi:]  
b. **kante**  
[kxanti] vs [kxantʰ:]

2.2 Consonants

Table 2.3: Consonant inventory of standard Iridian, excluding allophones.

|                | Labial | Alveolar | Postalv. | Palatal | Velar |
|----------------|--------|----------|----------|---------|-------|
| Plosive        | p b    | t d      |          |         | k g   |
| Nasal          | m      | n        |          |         |       |
| Liquid         |        | r l      |          |         |       |
| Sib. Fric.     |        | s z      |          | ʃ ʒ     |       |
| Non-Sib. Fric. | v      |          |          |         | x     |
| Affricate      |        | ts       | tʃ       |         |       |
| Glide          |        |          |          | j       |       |

Iridian has an extensive system of consonant allophony. Table 2.4 shows the full range of consonants used in Iridian, with the phonemes in parentheses appearing only as allophones.

Table 2.4: Full consonant inventory of standard Iridian.

|                    | Labial | Alveolar    | Postalv. | Palatal | Velar   |
|--------------------|--------|-------------|----------|---------|---------|
| Plosive            | p b    | t d         |          | (c ɟ)   | k g     |
| Nasal              | m (ɱ)  | n           |          | (ɲ)     | (ŋ)     |
| Liquid             |        | r (ʁ) l     |          | (ʎ)     |         |
| Sib. Fric.         |        | s z         |          | ɕ ʑ     |         |
| Non-Sib. Fricative | v      |             |          | (ç)     | x (χ)   |
| Sib. Affricate     |        | ts (dz)     | tʃ (dʒ)  | (tɕ dʑ) |         |
| Non-Sib. Aff.      |        | (tʰ θ dʰ ð) |          | (cç ɟʝ) | (kx gɣ) |
| Approximant        | (β)    | (ð)         |          | j       | (w)     |

Absent in both tables is the glottal stop [ʔ] which occurs in only two cases: (1) before an onset vowel, e.g., **avt** [ʔaʊt] ‘car’; and (2) between two vowels that do not form a diphthong, e.g., **naomešá** [nəʔəmɪʃaː], ‘to whisper.’

### 2.2.1 Phonetic realization

#### *voicing*

Iridian consonants are generally affected by two systems of phonological opposition: a primary distinction between voice and unvoiced consonants, and a secondary distinction between hard and soft consonants (i.e., normal and palatalized consonants).

Consonant voicing is phonemic. Voiced consonants are called muddy or dark (**mrknie**) while unvoiced consonants are called clear (**hocke**). Iridian has a strong tendency to devoice consonants, a process called **niehockvo** (clearing, lightening).

Voiced consonants are devoiced when followed by a voiceless obstruent, or in word-final position, unless followed by a vowel or a voiced obstruent. Conversely, voiceless obstruents become voiced when followed by another voiced obstruent.

|                |           |           |
|----------------|-----------|-----------|
| <b>avt</b>     | [ʔɛft]    | ‘car’     |
| <b>szkad</b>   | [ʃkɛt]    | ‘serious’ |
| <b>kdavidy</b> | [gdevʲɪc] | ‘clean’   |
| <b>ryz</b>     | [rɪs]     | ‘rice’    |

#### *palatalization*

Iridian consonants can either be hard (**suhne**) or soft (**gem**). Consonants are hard by default but become soft when followed by the vowels **i** or **í**. The vowel **y** is normally used to indicate non-palatalizing /i/, although it is used to indicate palatalization word-finally or before **i**.

The use of **-y** is a remnant of word final short \***i** from Old Iridian that has since disappeared. The same process has caused the shortening of long \***i** to /ɪ/. This sound change did not distinguish between palatalizing and non-palatalizing \***i** so that \***seni** ‘tooth’ and \***seny** ‘blanket’ both merged to modern Iridian **seny** /seɲ/.

Softening involves palatal articulation of labial consonants (e.g., **be** [bɛ] vs **bie** [bʲɛ]) or the change to a palatal consonant for non-labials (e.g., **te** [tɛ] vs **tie** [tɕɛ]). Table 2.5 shows how non-labials are affected by palatalization in Iridian.

Note how sounds produced using the same manner of articulation merge to the corresponding palatal consonant, keeping the voiced/voiceless distinction, such that both sibilant pairs **s-z** and **sz-zs** soften to /ɕ z/, the plosive

Table 2.5: Soft and Hard Consonants

| SERIES           | HARD     |          | SOFT          |               |
|------------------|----------|----------|---------------|---------------|
|                  | Unvoiced | Voiced   | Unvoiced      | Voiced        |
| <i>t series</i>  | t [t]    | d [d]    | ty, ti [c]    | dy, di [j]    |
| <i>k series</i>  | k [k]    | g [g]    | ky, ki [c]    | gy, gi [j]    |
| <i>s series</i>  | s [s]    | z [z]    | sy, si [c]    | zy, zi [z]    |
| <i>sz series</i> | sz [ʃ]   | zs [ʒ]   | szy, -i [c]   | zsy, -i [z]   |
| <i>c series</i>  | c [t͡s]  | dz [d͡z] | cy, ci [t͡c]  | dzy, -i [d͡z] |
| <i>cs series</i> | cs [t͡ʃ] | dc [d͡ʒ] | csy, -i [t͡c] | dcy, -i [d͡z] |
| <i>h series</i>  | h [x]    | —        | hy, hi [ç]    | —             |
| <i>n series</i>  | —        | n [n]    | —             | ny, ni [ɲ]    |
| <i>l series</i>  | —        | l [l]    | —             | ly, li [ʎ]    |

pairs **k-g** and **t-d** to /c-ʒ/, and the affricates **c-dz** and **cs-dc** to /t͡c d͡z/.<sup>1</sup> Some dialects, however may realize soft **cs-dc** as /c ʒ/.

stops

Initial stops are affricated when following a pause, so that the velar pair /k g/ are realized as /k͡x g͡ɣ/, the palatal pair /c j/ as /c͡ç j͡j/ and the dental pair /t d/ as /t͡θ d͡ð/ (the last pair is written without the diacritics in the examples). This sound change can be traced to the initial aspirated stops \*k<sup>h</sup>, \*g<sup>h</sup>, \*t<sup>h</sup> and \*d<sup>h</sup> in Old Iridian weakening to affricates. The labial stops /p b/ are unaffected by this process as most instances of \*p<sup>h</sup> and \*b<sup>h</sup> have merged to /b/ or /v/ in modern Iridian.

|              |           |          |
|--------------|-----------|----------|
| <b>gulag</b> | /g͡ɣʊlɛx/ | ‘gulag’  |
| <b>kaszt</b> | /k͡xɔʃt/  | ‘blood’  |
| <b>tom</b>   | /t͡θɔm/   | ‘powder’ |
| <b>dum</b>   | /d͡ðʊm/   | ‘house’  |
| <b>tieho</b> | /c͡çɛxɔ/  | ‘god’    |
| <b>giola</b> | /j͡jɔlə/  | ‘marble’ |

The velar stops /k g/ are lenited to the velar fricatives /x ɣ/ intervocalically, before a voiceless stop, after a vocalized l if followed by another vowel or a voiceless stop, or before the nasal consonants /n/ or /m/ if following a vowel immediately. This lenition also occurs word-finally unless followed

<sup>1</sup>This merger and word-final devoicing results, for example, to **-ety**, **-edy**, **-eky**, and **-egy** all being pronounced as /ɛc/

by a voiced obstruent, in which case, subject to word-final devoicing, they merge to [x].

|                 |              |             |
|-----------------|--------------|-------------|
| <b>seg</b>      | /sex/        | ‘flower’    |
| <b>jekom</b>    | /ˈjexɔm/     | ‘bed’       |
| <b>naga</b>     | /nɐɣɐ/       | ‘farm’      |
| <b>agnoszce</b> | /ʔɐɣˈnɔʃtɕɐ/ | ‘agnostic’  |
| <b>akta</b>     | /ʔextɐ/      | ‘show’      |
| <b>szelk</b>    | /ʃɛwx/       | ‘beginning’ |

This lenition can also be observed with the voiced stops /b/ and /d/ which become the approximants /β/ and /ð/ (written without the diacritic hereafter) intervocalically or between a vocalized /l/ and another vowel.

|               |          |              |
|---------------|----------|--------------|
| <b>nada</b>   | /nɐðɐ/   | ‘box’        |
| <b>lobacs</b> | /lɔβɛtʃ/ | ‘earthquake’ |
| <b>álba</b>   | /ɔ:wβɐ/  | ‘hands’      |

#### *nasals*

Iridian has two nasal consonants /m n/ and three further allophones /ɲ ɳ ɲ/. /n/ cannot appear before bilabials and similarly /m/ cannot appear before velars. The labiodental /ɲ/ is the allophone of /m/ and /n/ before labiodentals and /ɳ/ is the allophone of /n/ before velars. The palatal /ɲ/ is an allophone of /n/ in environments affected by **niehockvo**.

|                 |              |            |
|-----------------|--------------|------------|
| <b>niho</b>     | /ɲuxɔ/       | ‘nothing’  |
| <b>tramvek</b>  | /ˈtrɛ̃wɲvɛx/ | ‘tramway’  |
| <b>sinvonie</b> | /ɕɪɲvoˈɲiʔɐ/ | ‘symphony’ |
| <b>bankišt</b>  | /ˈbɛ̃wɲɕɪʃt/ | ‘banker’   |

#### *liquids*

Iridian has two liquids: the rhotic /r/ and the lateral /l/.

The rhotic /r/ is realized in one of three ways. Word-initially it is pronounced as the uvular fricative [ʁ] (or as the uvular trill fricative [ʀ], depending on the speaker, but both transcribed here simply as [ʁ]). The realization as [ʁ] is also often used when pronouncing words emphatically. When in the coda position and before a pause [r] is realized as /ʒ/. This pronunciation was originally that of a voiceless alveolar trill [ɾ] but this has simplified to [ɾ] and finally to [ʒ] in Standard Iridian. The [ɾ] or [ɾ] pronunciation may nevertheless persist in some southern dialects, primarily due to Czech influence. Note that [ʒ] is not affected by word-final devoicing. Elsewhere /r/ is realized as the flap [ɾ]. Palatal /rʲ/ is in general more stable, realized simply as [rʲ], although when in the coda position and if not followed by a vowel, it is realized as [ʒ].

The lateral /l/ is actually the velarized alveolar lateral approximant [ɭ]. Nonetheless the sound has been transcribed throughout as /l/. In the coda position /l/ is completely vocalized and is transcribed here as [w]. The palatalized /ɭʲ/ is the palatal lateral approximant [ʎ] and is transcribed as such.

|                |           |            |
|----------------|-----------|------------|
| <b>lievout</b> | [ʎɛ'vout] | ‘pregnant’ |
| <b>mielko</b>  | [mʲɛwkɔ]  | ‘sugar’    |
| <b>ór</b>      | [o:ʒ]     | ‘hour’     |
| <b>gitáry</b>  | [ʎʷitɛʒ]  | ‘guitar’   |
| <b>rád</b>     | [ɾɛt]     | ‘building’ |

### *fricatives*

The voiceless labial fricative /f/ is not a native phoneme in Iridian and occurs only as an allophone of /v/ in environments affected by **niehockvo**. Loanwords containing /f/ are normally assimilated to /v/.

|                  |               |              |
|------------------|---------------|--------------|
| <b>vóto</b>      | /ˈvo:tɔ/      | ‘photograph’ |
| <b>vase</b>      | /vɛsɛ/        | ‘phase’      |
| <b>kávémaszt</b> | /ˈkɔ:vɛ:mɛʃt/ | ‘coffeeshop’ |
| <b>Vránca</b>    | /ˈvrɛw̃tɛ/    | ‘France’     |

/v/ is realized as the labiodental approximant /ʋ/ after an obstruent. The sequence **kv** and **gv** is further lenited to the labialized velar fricatives /x<sup>w</sup> ɣ<sup>w</sup>/. The voiceless /x<sup>w</sup>/ (from both **kv** and **hv**) is in free variation with /ɱ/, with the latter being the more common pronunciation, especially among younger speakers. For simplicity both /x<sup>w</sup>/ and /ɱ/ will be transcribed as /ɱ/.

|                |            |                          |
|----------------|------------|--------------------------|
| <b>kvártir</b> | /ˈma:rcɪr/ | ‘apartment’              |
| <b>dvrápe</b>  | /tʷɔ:ɾpɛ/  | ‘cloud’                  |
| <b>szviêce</b> | /ʃviɛw̃tɛ/ | ‘candle, electric light’ |

Modern Iridian has lost the distinction between /h/ and /x/, with both ⟨ch⟩ and ⟨h⟩,<sup>2</sup> historically representing /x/ and /h/, respectively, merging to the velar fricative /x/. This becomes /ç/ before voiceless stops word-initially or when following a front vowel, or before the front vowels /i/ and /ɪ/. The palatal /ç/ is the prepalatal [ç̟], intermediate between /ç/ and /ɕ/. The sequence ⟨hl⟩ is realized as /ɬ/.

<sup>2</sup>Most instances of ⟨ch⟩ have been replaced with ⟨h⟩ following various spelling reforms.

|         |          |             |
|---------|----------|-------------|
| hluvek  | /ʰlʉvɛx/ | ‘apartment’ |
| hvadiem | /ʰmaʃɛm/ | ‘mirror’    |
| hrona   | /xɾɔˈnɐ/ | ‘three’     |
| hteny   | /çtɛɲ/   | ‘person’    |
| neiht   | /neɪçt/  | ‘color’     |

*affricates*

Iridian has two phonemic affricates, /t͡s/ and /t͡ʃ/. Both of them are unvoiced, although the voiced counterparts /d͡z/ and /d͡ʒ/ may occur marginally in loanwords, or more rarely in **niehockvo** environments, where voiceless obstruent become voiced when preceding voiced obstruents. In addition, there are four additional affricates that occur allophonically: /k͡x g͡ɣ/ as allophones of /k g/ and /t͡ɕ d͡ʒ/ as palatalized allophones of /t͡s d͡z/ or /t͡ʃ d͡ʒ/.

*aspiration*

Iridian consonants are not aspirated.

2.3 Phonotactics

2.3.1 Syllable structure

Ignoring the possible complexity of the onset, nucleus or coda, the basic structure of an Iridian syllable is CV(C), with C representing a consonant and V a vowel. Iridian has relatively few phonotactic constraints, allowing, at a maximum, syllables of the form (C)<sup>2</sup>CV(C)<sup>3</sup>. Nevertheless, most syllables fall in either of the four groups CV, CVC, CCV and CVCC

Table 2.6: Blevin’s criteria as they apply to Iridian.

| PARAMETER        |      |
|------------------|------|
| Obligatory onset | Yes  |
| Coda             | No   |
| Complex onset    | Yes  |
| Complex nucleus  | Yes* |
| Complex coda     | Yes  |
| Edge effect      |      |

2.3.2 Onset

Iridian does not allow a null onset (vowel in the syllable onset), i.e., the most basic Iridian syllable should be of the form CV. Words that superficially appear as having a null onset syllable in the initial position are actually preceded by a glottal stop. An epenthetic glottal stop is also added between

vowels in a sequence that do not otherwise form diphthongs, or before a vowel in a word-initial position in loanwords.

|               |               |            |
|---------------|---------------|------------|
| <b>Americ</b> | /ʔemɛˈrʲitɕɛ/ | ‘America’  |
| <b>uide</b>   | /ʔyðɛ/        | ‘gong’     |
| <b>ekt</b>    | /ʔɛxt/        | ‘forehead’ |

Table 2.7: Allowed word-initial CC clusters

|    | p | b | t | d | k | g | m | n | r | l | s | z | sz | zs | v | cs | dc | c | dz | h |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|---|----|----|---|----|---|
| p  |   |   | + |   |   |   |   | + | + | + | + |   | +  |    |   |    |    |   |    |   |
| b  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | + | + |   |    |    |   |    |    |   |    |   |
| t  |   |   |   |   |   |   | + |   | + | + |   |   |    |    | + |    |    |   |    |   |
| d  |   |   |   |   |   |   | + | + | + | + |   |   |    |    | + |    |    |   |    |   |
| k  |   |   | + | + |   |   |   | + | + | + | + |   | +  |    | + |    |    |   |    |   |
| g  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | + | + | + |   |   |    |    | + |    |    |   |    |   |
| m  |   |   |   |   |   |   | + |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |   |    |    |   |    |   |
| n  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | + |   |   |    |    |   |    |    |   |    |   |
| r  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |   |    |    |   |    |   |
| l  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |   |    |    |   |    |   |
| s  |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |   |    |    |   |    | + |
| z  |   | + |   | + |   |   | + | + | + | + |   |   |    |    | + |    |    |   |    |   |
| sz | + |   | + |   | + |   | + | + | + | + |   |   |    |    | + | +  |    | + |    | + |
| zs |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |   |    |    |   |    |   |
| v  |   |   | + | + | + |   |   | + | + | + | + |   | +  |    |   |    |    | + |    |   |
| cs |   |   | + |   | + |   |   |   |   | + |   |   |    |    |   |    |    |   |    |   |
| dc |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |   |    |    |   |    |   |
| c  |   |   | + |   | + |   |   | + | + | + |   |   |    |    |   |    |    |   |    | + |
| dz |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |    |    |   |    |    |   |    |   |
| h  |   | + |   |   |   |   |   |   | + | + |   |   |    |    | + |    |    |   |    |   |

+ allowed cluster

The following CC clusters are allowed to be in onset position:

- Stop followed by a liquid:
  - /pr/: **pragy** /prɛc/, ‘sand’; **pramou** /prɛˈmoʊ/, ‘petal’
  - /tr/: **trâ** /trɛw̃/, ‘bread’; **truig** /trɪx/, ‘ball’
  - /kr/: **krova** /ˈkrɔvɛ/, ‘egg’; **kramy** /krɛmʲ/, ‘toe’
  - /pl/: **plan** /plɛn/, ‘plan’; **ploika** /ˈplɔxɛ/ ‘knot’
  - /tɫ/:<sup>3</sup> **tlyk** /tɫɪx/, ‘pig’; **tlum** /tɫum/
  - /kl/:<sup>4</sup> **klug** /tɫux/, foot; **klúbe** /tɫuːbɛ/, ‘club’

<sup>3</sup>This is realized as /tɫ/ or even /ɫ/.

<sup>4</sup>Realized as /tɫ/ in Standard Iridian or as /kl/ in some dialects.

- (g) /br/: **brok** /brɔx/, ‘female teenager’; **bremy** /brɛmʲ/, ‘ugly’  
 (h) /dr/: **drono** /drɔnɔ/, ‘brother’; **drúi** /dry:/ ‘enemy’  
 (i) /gr/: **grec** /grɛts/, ‘flag’; **gryny** /grɪn/ ‘peace’  
 (j) /bl/: **bloht** /blɔxt/, ‘mud’; **bleu** /bløʏ/ ‘neck’  
 (k) /dl/<sup>5</sup>: **dleva** /tʰlɛvɛ/, ‘low’; **dlouhe** /tʰlouɥɛ/ ‘duck’  
 (l) /gl/: **gloibek** /glɔbɛx/
2. Dental or velar stops followed by /v/:<sup>6</sup>  
 (a) /tv/:  
 (b) /dv/:  
 (c) /kv/: **kvártir** /'mɔɾciɾ/, apartment; **kveno** /'mɛnɔ/, ‘kitten’  
 (d) /gv/: **gvarusz** /ɣʷvɛ'ruʃ/, ‘speech’; **gvecs** /ɣʷɛtʃ/, ‘dinner’
3. /k/ or /p/ followed by /t/ or its soft counterpart; /k/ followed by /d/ or its soft counterpart:  
 (a) /kt/: **kto** /ktɔ/, ‘smile’; **ktiesz** /kɛʃ/, ‘ache’  
 (b) /pt/: **pteva** /ptɛvɛ/, ‘leaf’; **ptiará** /pɛɾɛ/, ‘count’  
 (c) /kd/<sup>7</sup>
4. /k/ or /p/ before /s/ or /ʃ/ or their soft counterparts:  
 (a) /ps/:<sup>8</sup> **psychologa** /psɪxɔlɔ'ɣɛ/, ‘psychologist’;  
 (b) /pʃ/: **pszehuj** /pʃɛɥu/, ‘annoyance’; **pszêcem** /pʃɛwtɛm/, ‘grain’  
 (c) /ks/:<sup>9</sup>  
 (d) /kʃ/: **kszêtvá** /kʃɛwtvɛ/, ‘chain’; **kszêvet** /kʃɛvɛt/, ‘basket’
5. Dental stops followed by /m/:  
 (a) /tm/: **tmeny** /tmɛɲ/, ‘belt’; **tmou** /tmou/, ‘waist’  
 (b) /dm/:
6. /p/, /d/, /k/ or /g/ followed by /n/:  
 (a) /pn/:  
 (b) /dn/:  
 (c) /kn/:  
 (d) /gn/:<sup>10</sup> **gnasz** /knɛʃ/, ‘school’; **gnuma** /knɔmɛ/, ‘mattress’
7. /m/ followed by /n/ or /ɲ/ followed by /l/:  
 (a) /mn/: **mnuks** /mnɔtʃ/, ‘husband’; **mnouvaty** /'mnouɥvɛ/, ‘hunch-back’  
 (b) /nl/:<sup>11</sup> **nlâsz** /ɲɛʃwʃ/, ‘castle’; **nlúi** /ɲɥ:/, ‘horse’
8. /ʃ/ followed by a voiceless stop:

<sup>5</sup>This has merged to **tl** in Standard Iridian.

<sup>6</sup>/v/ is realized as /ʋ/ in this context. See section of stops for details on **kv** and **gv**.

<sup>7</sup>This is always realized as /gd/.

<sup>8</sup>This is a marginal cluster, occurring only in mostly Greek loanwords.

<sup>9</sup>This is another marginal cluster, occurring only in mostly Greek loanwords.

<sup>10</sup>Realized as /ɣn/ after a vowel-final word and /kn/ elsewhere.

<sup>11</sup>This is realized as palatal /ɲɥ/.



- (a) /ʃp/:
- (b) /ʃt/
- (c) /ʃk/:
- 9. /z/ before /b/ or /d/:
- (a) /zb/
- (b) /zd/:
- 10. /ʃ/ or /z/ followed by a nasal, a liquid, or /v/:
- (a) /ʃm/:
- (b) /ʃn/:
- (c) /ʃr/:
- (d) /ʃl/:
- (e) /ʃv/:
- (f) /zm/:
- (g) /zn/:
- (h) /zr/:
- (i) /zl/:
- (j) /zv/:
- 11. /ʃ/ before the affricates /tʃ/ or /tʃ/:
- (a) /ʃtʃ/:
- (b) /ʃtʃ/
- 12. /ʃ/ or /s/ before the affricates /x/:
- (a) /ʃx/:
- (b) /sx/
- 13. /v/ before the affricates /s/ or /ʃ/, /n/, the stops /t/, /k/, or /d/, the liquids /r/ or /l/, or the affricate /tʃ/:
- (a) /vs/:
- (b) /vʃ/:
- (c) /vn/:
- (d) /vt/:
- (e) /vk/:
- (f) /vd/:
- (g) /vr/:
- (h) /vl/:
- (i) /vtʃ/:
- 14. /tʃ/ before /k/, /t/, or /l/:<sup>12</sup>
- (a) /tʃk/:
- (b) /tʃt/:
- (c) /tʃl/:
- 15. /tʃ/ before /k/, /t/, /l/, /r/ /n/ or /x/:

<sup>12</sup>CC clusters beginning with /tʃ/ have all simplified to /ʃ/.

- (a) /tsk/:
  - (b) /tst/:
  - (c) /tsr/:
  - (d) /tsl/:
  - (e) /tsn/:
  - (f) /tsx/:
16. /x/ before /t/, /l/, /r/ or /v/:
- (a) /xt/:
  - (b) /xl/:
  - (c) /xr/:
  - (d) /xv/:<sup>13</sup>

Three-consonant clusters are subject to more constraints.

Table 2.8: Allowed CCC clusters.

|      | v | z | sz | p | b | k |
|------|---|---|----|---|---|---|
| pr   |   |   | +  |   |   |   |
| pl   |   |   | +  |   |   |   |
| br   |   | + | +  |   |   |   |
| tr   | + |   | +  |   |   |   |
| tl   |   |   | +  |   |   |   |
| tv   |   |   |    |   |   |   |
| dr   |   | + |    |   |   |   |
| dv   |   |   |    |   |   |   |
| kr   |   |   | +  |   |   |   |
| kl   |   |   | +  |   |   |   |
| kv   |   |   |    |   |   |   |
| gr   |   | + |    |   |   |   |
| sh   | + |   |    | + |   | + |
| szp  |   |   |    |   |   |   |
| szt  |   |   |    |   |   |   |
| szk  |   |   |    |   |   |   |
| szh  | + |   |    | + |   | + |
| szr  | + |   |    | + | + | + |
| szc  | + |   |    | + | + | + |
| szcs | + |   |    | + | + | + |

1. /f/-voiceless stop-liquid clusters
- (a) /fpr/:
  - (b) /ftr/:
  - (c) /fkr/:

<sup>13</sup>This is realized as /ʌ/.

- (d) /fpl/:
- (e) /ftl/:
- (f) /fkl/:
- 2. /f/, followed by a stop, followed by /v/
  - (a) /fkʷv/:
  - (b) /ftʷv/:
  - (c) /fdʷv/:
- 3. /z/-voiced stop-/r/ clusters
  - (a) /zbr/:
  - (b) /zdr/:
  - (c) /zgr/:
- 4. /v/ followed by a stop, followed by a liquid:
  - (a) /vtr/:
  - (b) /vdr/:
  - (c) /vkr/:
- 5. /v/ followed by /f/, followed by a liquid or a voiceless stop:
  - (a) /vfr/:
  - (b) /vft/:
  - (c) /vfk/:
  - (d) /vfp/:
- 6. Stop followed by /f/ followed by /t/, /ts/ or /tʃ/:

- (a) /bftʃ/:
- (b) /bft͡s/:
- (c) /bft/:
- (d) /pftʃ/:
- (e) /pft͡s/:
- (f) /pft/:
- (g) /kftʃ/:
- (h) /kft͡s/:
- (i) /kft/:

### 2.3.3 Nucleus

### 2.3.4 Coda

## 2.4 Prosody

### 2.5 Consonant Alternations

A large part of consonant palatalization in Iridian is due to palatalization, with a coda consonant getting in contact with /j/, an unrounded front vowel, or a /j/-glide.

## 2.5.1 Simple palatalization

## 2.5.2 Mutation of labials

## 2.5.3 Mutation of dentals and velars

## (6) /k/ and /g/

k~c

**Marek** ‘Marek’**Marcie** ‘Marek-GEN’

k~č

g~ž

## 2.5.4 Compound alternations

## 2.5.5 Consonant~zero alternations

## 2.5.6 Voicing and devoicing

## 2.6 Vowel Alternations

## 2.6.1 Compensatory vowel lengthening

## 2.7 Other Phonological Processes

## 2.8 Phonological Processes

## 2.8.1 Assimilation of loanwords

## 2.8.2 Vowel~zero alternation

Vowel~zero alternations refer to an extensive series of morphophonological changes in Iridian causing certain vowels to disappear in certain contexts. Vowels that alternate with zero (i.e., that disappear in certain morphological contexts) are said to be *unstable* vowels.

Below is a comprehensive list of environments that trigger vowel zero alternations. Here C represents any phonologically permitted consonant or consonant cluster, V a short vowel and VV a long vowel or a diphthong,

*\_cvcvc stems*

The final V is generally unstable in the following environments

1. Stem has the same vowels. Examples: **daman** → **damna** ‘lips’; **ploit** → **poilte** ‘pancake’; **poviasztak** → **poviesztkam** ‘I ate’
2. V<sub>2</sub> is a short vowel. Examples: **zsedym** → **zsedme** ‘beard’; **elaim** → **elme** ‘fog’
3. Stressed vowels and most loanwords do not follow this rule. Examples **majoniez** → **majonieza** ‘mayonaise’ but **mobil** → **mubla** ‘phone’

4. Where the deletion would cause the resulting consonant to be geminated or to be a voiced/unvoiced pair of the same consonant, the preceding vowel is lengthened. In the case of voiced/unvoiced pairs, only the voiced consonant is kept. Example: **uidet** → **úide**
5. The presence of a soft consonant in the last or the penultimate consonant position normally inhibit vowel~zero alternation.

*Stem-final vowel~zero alternation*

*Suffix-initial vowel~zero alternation*

1. *\_CVCVC* or *\_CVVCVC* stems. The final V is generally unstable in the below contexts
- 2.
3. Suffix-initial vowel~zero alternation

### 2.8.3 Vowel~vowel alternation

Vowel~vowel alternations form an integral part of Iridian morphophonology. These changes can be grouped into two broad categories: (1) pluralizing ablaut, which involves the raising or fronting of stem vowels to form the plural of most native nouns and (2) marginal apophony involving the vowels /ε/ and /ɔ/.

The first category is one of the most common processes in Iridian, used in the formation of marked plurals. In general, it involves the fronting of back vowels (e.g., o to oi), the raising of low front vowels (ai to oi) and the diphthongization of high front vowels. This change does not affect vowel length, so that long vowels remain long and short vowels remain short. This process is discussed in detail in the chapter on nouns.

The second category involves the short vowels /ɔ/ and /ε/, and in some cases /ʌ/. This class of changes is normally observed in the following:

1. In *\_VC* final words, where C is a soft consonant, if followed by a consonant final suffix, or if metathesis or vowel~zero alternation causes the deletion of the initial vowel of the suffix /ʌ ε ɔ/ become /ε ɪ ʊ/. The soft consonant remains as soft, although this is not reflected in the orthography
- (7) a. +sztraty + ak → szovtretka (I) walked
2. Short /ɔ/ in a stable position alternates with /ʊ/ and short /ε/ in a stable position after a soft consonant with /ɪ/, when followed by a voiced plosive after the deletion of an unstable vowel.
- (8) a. **lobek** 'apple' → **lubka** 'apple-PAT'
- b. **hotel** 'hotel' → **hotela** 'hotel-PAT'
3. In *\_PaC* final words, where C is a voiceless obstruent (either phonemically or because of assimilation) or a nasal, /ʌ/ becomes /ε/ and /ε/ becomes

/ɪ/ and the voiceless consonant is voiced when followed by a vowel-initial suffix.

- (9) a. **szviad** ‘star’ → **szvieda** ‘star-PAT’  
 b. **pian** ‘fire’ → **piena** ‘fire-PAT’
- (10) a. **miet** ‘pot’ → **mida** ‘pot-PAT’  
 b. **máliek** ‘bonfire’ → **málīga** ‘bonfire-PAT’

#### 2.8.4 Reduplication

Reduplication is a process whereby the stem or a part of the stem of a word, or the word itself is repeated with little or no change.

Reduplication is only partially productive in Iridian. Most noun reduplicated noun forms, for example, have fossilized meanings.

|                        |   |                                 |
|------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| <b>borsz</b> ‘thunder’ | → | <b>boborsz</b> ‘rumbling sound’ |
| <b>mán</b> ‘child’     | → | <b>mánen</b> ‘grandchild’       |
| <b>maty</b> ‘mother’   | → | <b>mádaty</b> ‘godmother’       |

#### 2.8.5 Metathesis

*slot a infixes*

Slot A prefixes (grammatical voice and copulative form) metathesize the root when the onset is a cluster of two or more consonants subject to the below rules. In the examples we assume a affix of the type ?VC. The glottal stop is deleted when the infix is added. The subscripts *n* and *s* are used to for phonemes relating to the infix and the stem respectively.

- Liquid-final clusters:  $C_sLV_s + ?V_nC_n \rightarrow C_sV_nLC_sV_n$   

|                           |   |                         |
|---------------------------|---|-------------------------|
| <b>trápe</b> ‘cloud’      | → | <b>turtápe</b> ‘cloudy’ |
| <b>tresz</b> ‘write (st)’ | → | <b>torveszé</b>         |
| <b>szran</b> ‘drink (st)’ | → | <b>szirnaná</b>         |
- Nasal-final clusters:  $C_sNV_s + ?V_nC_n \rightarrow C_sV_nNC_sV_n$   

|                      |   |                       |
|----------------------|---|-----------------------|
| <b>dnoja</b> ‘money’ | → | <b>duntoja</b> ‘rich’ |
|----------------------|---|-----------------------|

## 2.9 Orthographic representation

### 2.9.1 Alphabet

The Iridian language uses the Latin script with the following 31 letters: **a, b, c, cs, d, dc, dz, e, f, g, h, i, j, k, l, m, n, o, p, q, r, s, sz, t, u, v, w, x, y, z, zs**.

In addition, the following vowel digraphs are also used but they are not considered as separate letters: **ai, oi, ui**.

The digraphs **dc** and **dz** as well as the letters **f, q, w** and **x** are marginal and are only used for loanwords.

Iridian uses two types of diacritics, the acute accent ( ´ ), which is used to mark long vowels, and the circumflex accent ( ^ ) used to mark nasal vowels. Accented characters are not considered as separate letter.

Table 2.9: The Iridian alphabet.

| SYMBOL       | name       | IPA  | SYMBOL       | name            | IPA  |
|--------------|------------|------|--------------|-----------------|------|
| <b>A a</b>   | á          | /ɒ/  | <b>N n</b>   | en              | /n/  |
| <b>Á á</b>   | necs ko á  | /ɔ:/ | <b>O o</b>   | ó               | /ɔ/  |
| <b>Ai ai</b> | ái         | /æ/  | <b>Ó ó</b>   | necs ko ó       | /ɔ:/ |
| <b>Ái ái</b> | necs ko ái | /æ:/ | <b>Oi oi</b> | oi              | /ø/  |
| <b>B b</b>   | bé         | /b/  | <b>Ói ói</b> | necs ko ói      | /ø:/ |
| <b>C c</b>   | cet        | /ts/ | <b>P p</b>   | pé              | /p/  |
| <b>Cs cs</b> | cset       | /tʃ/ | <b>Q q</b>   | kvé             | –    |
| <b>D d</b>   | dé         | /d/  | <b>R r</b>   | er              | /r/  |
| <b>Dc dc</b> | ódcet      | /dʒ/ | <b>S s</b>   | es              | /s/  |
| <b>Dz dz</b> | ódzet      | /dz/ | <b>Sz sz</b> | esz             | /ʃ/  |
| <b>E e</b>   | é          | /ɛ/  | <b>T t</b>   | té              | /t/  |
| <b>É é</b>   | necs ko é  | /e:/ | <b>U u</b>   | ú               | /u/  |
| <b>F f</b>   | fý         | –    | <b>Ú ú</b>   | necs ko ú       | /u:/ |
| <b>G g</b>   | gé         | /g/  | <b>Ui ui</b> | ui              | /ʏ/  |
| <b>H h</b>   | há         | /x/  | <b>Úi úi</b> | necs ko úi      | /y:/ |
| <b>I i</b>   | í          | /ɪ/  | <b>V v</b>   | vé              | /v/  |
| <b>Í í</b>   | necs ko í  | /i:/ | <b>W w</b>   | vénék           | –    |
| <b>J j</b>   | jóit       | /j/  | <b>X x</b>   | iks             | –    |
| <b>K k</b>   | ká         | /k/  | <b>Y y</b>   | ýpsýlon         | /ɪ/  |
| <b>L l</b>   | el         | /l/  | <b>Ý ý</b>   | necs ko ýpsýlon | /i:/ |
| <b>M m</b>   | em         | /m/  | <b>Z z</b>   | zet             | /z/  |
|              |            |      | <b>Zs zs</b> | zses            | /ʒ/  |





## VERBS

### 3.1 Categories

Finite verbs (**lounehlý**) are marked for the following grammatical categories:

1. *Aspect*. Iridian has three primary aspects: perfective, imperfective and contemplative; and two secondary ones: retrospective and prospective.
2. *Voice*. Iridian has a strong tendency to leave the topic of the sentence unmarked, instead encoding the primary information on the verb. Due to this, voice must be explicitly marked on the verb. Iridian has the following grammatical voices:: agentive, patientive, benefactive, instrumental, locative and reflexive.
3. *Mood*. Besides the unmarked indicative, Iridian has the following grammatical moods: subjunctive, conditional, hortative, optative, abilitative, permissive and non-volitive. In addition, secondary prefixes are used to express what would otherwise could be considered as moods: inceptive, causative and reciprocal.

Verbs are also marked for person, although this is done by the addition of clitic pronouns and not through a separate conjugation paradigm. Iridian verbs are not marked for tense, gender, or number.

Iridian verbs have four classes of non-finite forms: the gerund, the converb, the supine and the generic nominal formed with **-ou**. The non-finite verb forms are derived from the uninflected verb stem except the generic nominal in **-ou** which can only be formed from a fully-inflected verb stem. A fifth class exists—the infinitive—but this form is largely defunct and is only used in certain compound constructions. Infinitives end in **-á** and is used as the citation form of a verb.

### 3.2 Verb stems and citation forms

The citation form of a verb is the uninflected infinitive, a fossilized form rarely used outside of a very few periphrastic construction. The uninflected infinitive is formed by the verb stem and the infinitive markers **-á** or **-é**, depending on the quality of the stem vowel.

### 3.3 Agglutination vs conjugation

Iridian is superficially an agglutinative language. However, agglutination only exists in its full form in the indicative mood and in a reduced form in the optative moods. The conditional, quotative and subjunctive has entirely dropped the agglutination, instead using fusional conjugation paradigm. These system are normally called Type I, Type II, and Type III paradigms respectively.

Nevertheless, Iridian verbs are analyzed to have eight primary affix slots. Five of these slots are for suffixes and are numbered from one to five counting from the stem. There are three prefix slots, used for both infixes and prefixes, labeled A to C starting from the stem. Table 3.1 shows the affix slots used for these three groups of grammatical moods.

Table 3.1: Verbal affix slots.

| SLOT | INDICATIVE              | OPTATIVE        | OTHER           |
|------|-------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| C    | Negation                | Negation        | Negation        |
| B    | Secondary verb prefixes | –               | –               |
| A    | Voice                   | –               | –               |
| 0    | Stem                    | Stem            | Stem            |
| 1    | Secondary pronoun       | –               | Paradigm ending |
| 2    | Mood                    | Voice           | –               |
| 3    | Aspect                  | Aspect          | –               |
| 4    | Primary pronoun         | Primary Pronoun | –               |
| 5    | Non-finite ending       | Mood            | –               |

#### 3.3.1 Stem

There are two types of verb stems in Iridian: verbal and nominal. Iridian does not have a clear distinction between nominals and verbals. In this sense, verbal stems refer to stems that can be used on their own as imperatives. On the other hand, nominal stems refer to stems that could be used on their own as nouns or adjectives.

Examples of verbal stems include **piaštá** ‘to eat’, **vyté** ‘to go’, **kravná** ‘to cry’, **cselé** ‘to leave’, etc. Examples of nominal stems include **pledý** ‘red’, **aro** ‘water’, etc.

Some stems contain an unstable vowel

### 3.3.2 Type I paradigm

*indicative mood*

The simplest construction other than the unmarked stem involves a prefix for voice, and suffixes for the modality, aspect and the primary pronoun. Slot 4 suffixes have a strong tendency to be dropped when evident from context. As such in the unmarked indicative mood, most verbs would have only the affixes for voice and aspect.

#### (1) **poviaštak**, ‘(I) ate.’

| C | B | A    | STEM  | 1 | 2 | 3   | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|------|-------|---|---|-----|---|---|
| - | - | <ov> | piašt | - | Ø | -ak | Ø | - |

Slot 1 is used for secondary clitic pronouns, i.e., the object of the verb. Secondary clitic pronouns are also often dropped, however, and the inanimate 3rd person pronouns are almost never used.

#### (2) **voideškem**, ‘I saw you.’

| C | B | A     | STEM | 1  | 2 | 3   | 4   | 5 |
|---|---|-------|------|----|---|-----|-----|---|
| - | - | <oiv> | vyd  | eš | Ø | -ek | -em | - |

There is a separate conjugation paradigm for the negative, synthesized with slot 3 aspect suffixes. There are, however, some 60 irregular verbs that use the negative prefix **ná-/náí-** instead of the negative aspectual suffixes, in addition to stative or copulative verbs, which can only be used with the prefix **ná-/náí-**.

#### (3) a. **voidešoitem**, ‘I didn’t see you.’

| C | B | A     | STEM | 1   | 2 | 3     | 4   | 5 |
|---|---|-------|------|-----|---|-------|-----|---|
| - | - | <oiv> | vyd  | -eš | Ø | -oit- | -em | - |

#### b. **nájemnoutalý**, ‘Your place is closed.’

| C   | B   | A | STEM  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4    | 5 |
|-----|-----|---|-------|---|---|---|------|---|
| ná- | je- | - | mnout | - | Ø | - | -alý | - |

*imperative mood*

The Iridian imperative mood has two forms: a singular and a plural. Unlike the indicative mood, there is no separate conjugation paradigm for the negative; instead the prefix **ná-/náí-** is used, analyzed as a slot C prefix.

(4) a. **piašte**, ‘Eat!’

| C | B | A | STEM  | 1 | 2  | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|-------|---|----|---|---|---|
| - | - | ∅ | piašt | - | -o | - | - | - |

b. **nápiašet**, ‘Don’t eat!’

| C  | B | A | STEM  | 1 | 2   | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|----|---|---|-------|---|-----|---|---|---|
| ná | - | ∅ | piašt | - | -et | - | - | - |

*copulative form*

Verbs have two copulative forms in Iridian. The copulative in **je-** is a slot B prefix while the copulative in **ut/uit** is a slot A infix. If not followed by the prefix **je-** requires an epenthetic **-o/-eu**, analyzed as a slot 5 suffix.

(5) **jemožlam**, ‘I am living.’

| C | B   | A | STEM | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4   | 5 |
|---|-----|---|------|---|---|---|-----|---|
| - | je- | - | možl | - | - | - | -am | - |

(6) **Marek jesorto**, ‘Marek is standing.’

| C | B   | A | STEM | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5  |
|---|-----|---|------|---|---|---|---|----|
| - | je- | - | sort | - | - | - | ∅ | -o |

## 3.4 Voice

Iridian often prefers to encode information on the verb instead of through case marking on nouns. As such, all verbs must be explicitly marked for voice.

**Table 3.2:** Suffixes used to mark grammatical voice.

|              | ENDING |
|--------------|--------|
| Agentive     | -aš-   |
| Patientive   | -in-   |
| Benefactive  | -éb-   |
| Locative     | -á-    |
| Instrumental | -      |
| Reflexive    | -      |
| Reciprocal   | -      |

### 3.4.1 Agentive voice

The agentive voice is used if the subject of the verb is the agent of the action.

#### (7) **Sa piašček.**

already eat-AV-PF

‘(I) already ate.’

The affix -aš- assimilates to the consonant ending the root, with the vowel /e/ normally dropped, subject to the following rules:

- č: for roots ending with c, č, k, t
  - jelcá + -aš- → jelč-, ‘to dance’
  - zdieká + -aš- → zdič-, ‘to blow’
  - piaštá + -aš- → piašč-, ‘to eat’
- z: for roots ending with b, l, m, n, r<sup>1</sup>
- ž: for roots ending with d, g, z, ž
  - baž- + -aš- → báž-, ‘to give’
  - stojá + -aš- → stóž-, ‘to go’
- š: for all other endings<sup>2</sup>

Where the assimilation involves the deletion of the final consonant in the root, the preceding vowel is lengthened in compensation if the resulting root would then end in an open syllable.

#### (8) **Udúšek.**

(instead of \***udušek**)

‘(I) took a shower.’

<sup>1</sup>This change does not involve the deletion of the final consonant in the root.

<sup>2</sup>-h + -aš-, -s + -aš- and -š + -aš- both simplify to -š-, while the rest retain the final consonant.

- (9) **Piašček.**  
 (not \***piášček.**)  
 ‘(I) ate.’

If the remnant vowel is the i-glide **-ie-** or the diphthongs **-ei-** and **-ou-**, the remaining vowel would simplify to **í, í** and **ú**, respectively. Consider for example the verb **zdieká** ‘to blow’:

- (10) **Lest zdičalí.**  
 wind blow-AV-PROG  
 ‘The wind is blowing.’

Nevertheless the vowel [ɐ] in the root resurfaces in the following cases:

- Verbs ending in **-irná:**
- Verb root ending in a consonant cluster with a final liquid, nasal, or v

#### 3.4.2 Patientive focus

A verb in the patient focus (glossed **PAT**) indicates that the topic of the sentence is the patient of the verb.

- (11) **Marek vindekem.**  
 Marek <PV>see-PF-1s  
 ‘I saw Marek.’

#### 3.4.3 Benefactive focus

The benefactive focus (glossed **BEN**) is used when the subject of the sentence is the benefactor or director object of the verb. Verbs often change meaning when used in the benefactive focus.

- (12) **Mač sega nazdébik.**  
 mother flower-PAT buy-BEN-PF  
 ‘(I) bought my mother flowers.’

- (13) **Kova piaštébalí.**  
 cow eat-BEN-PROG  
 ‘(I am) feeding the cows.’

The benefactive is also used idiomatically with verbs of judgment including **novietá** ‘to like’

- (14) **Dá čehóvám zánovitébál.**  
 1s sports-AGT NEG-like-BEN-PROG  
 ‘I don’t like sports.’

## 3.4.4 Locative Focus

- (15) **Jé kopnažalíc.**  
 you laugh-LOC-PROG-3S.ANIM  
 ‘He is laughing at you.’

## 3.4.5 Instrumental Focus

## 3.4.6 Reflexive Voice

The reflexive voice (glossed REF) is used when the patient of the verb is also the agent of the action. Morphologically, the reflexive voice is not a separate voice but is derived from the agentive form of the verb and the addition of the prefix **u(d)**-.

- (16) **Na šarta uvižkem.**  
 LOC mirror-PAT REF-see-AV-PF-1s  
 ‘I saw myself in the mirror.’

The use of the reflexive voice is more extensive in Iridian than in English, and is somehow similar to how the reflexive construction is used in Romance languages.

- (17) **Uštižek.**  
 REF-take:a:bath-AV-PF  
 ‘(I) took a bath.’

- (18) **Umúšalí.**  
 REF-comb-AV-PROG  
 ‘(I) am combing my hair.’

Below is a non-exhaustive list of verbs that are normally used in the reflexive voice:

**dušá** ‘to take a shower’  
**mušá** ‘to comb’  
**šaštá** ‘to sit down’

Some verbs may change meaning when used in the reflexive voice.

The reflexive voice is also used to imply that an action happened accidentally or involuntary or that the agent of the action is unknown or unimportant.

The reflexive voice may also be used emphatically, especially in spoken Iridian, to express that the action has been performed for the benefit of the actor/agent of the verb.

- (19) **Kávéa ušranžcem.**

coffee-PAT REF-drink-AV-CTPLV-1s

‘I’ll drink coffee.’ (literally, I’ll drink myself coffee)

- (20) **Pulša uvošček.**

soup-PAT REF-cook-AV-PF

‘(I) cooked (me) some soup.’

### 3.4.7 Usage

The differences

## 3.5 Grammatical Aspect

**Table 3.3:** Aspect markers in the indicative mood.

| ASPECT        | AFFIX |
|---------------|-------|
| Perfective    | -ek   |
| Retrospective | -aní  |
| Imperfective  | -ál   |
| Progressive   | -alí  |
| Contemplative | -aç   |
| Prospective   | -il   |
| Cessative     | -eic  |

### 3.5.1 Perfective aspect

The perfective aspect (glossed PF) indicates an action that has been completed in some specific instance.

- (21) **Bych na gnaža Marek vdinek.**

yesterday LOC school-PAT Marek see-PV-PF

‘(I) saw Marek at school yesterday.’

- (22) **Vaško piaštnek.**

pastry eat-PV-PF

‘(I) ate (the) cake.’

The vowel in the suffix is unstable and the ending would normally collapse to **-k** when followed by another vowel. Consider the above two sentences followed by the second person singular clitic pronoun **-aš/eš**.



- (23) **Bych na gnazsa Marek vindekeš.**  
 yesterday LOC school-PAT Marek <PV>see-PV-PF-2s  
 'You saw Marek at school yesterday.'

- (24) **Váško piniaškaš.**  
 pastry <PV>eat-PF-2s  
 'You ate (the) cake.'

When negated, the perfective indicates something that ought to be done but had not been done. To state that something simply did not happen, the negative of the retrospective is used instead.

- (25) **Zátélévonirnašek.**  
 NEG-telephone-AV-PF  
 '(I) failed to call.'

- (26) **Zátélévonirnašani.**  
 NEG-telephone-AV-RET  
 '(I) didn't call.'

### 3.5.2 Retrospective aspect

The retrospective aspect (glossed RET) is used for a past action that has a continuing relevance in the presence. Consider, for example, the following sentences: (a) *I went to Amsterdam last week*; and (b) *I have been to France in my childhood*. Iridian would translate the verb in (a) using the perfective and the verb in (b) using the retrospective.

- (27) **Hroná tímu na Budapešta možlašaním.**  
 three year-INST LOC Budapest-PAT live-AV-RET-1s  
 'I have been living in Budapest for three years.'

- (28) **Páku šavolnaníc.**  
 before-INST hurt-PV-PF-3s.ANIM  
 'She has been hurt before.'

The retrospective is also often used to imply non-volition or the accidental/circumstantial nature of an action. Similarly the retrospective is used with verbs of emotion or state (e.g., **cezuštalá**, 'to become happy' from **zuštal** 'happy'). The perfective, on the other hand, is almost exclusively used with the causative in these cases.

- (29) a. **Vdešek še neicezuštalašaním.**  
 see-2s-PF with INCEP-be.happy-AV-RET-1s  
 'I became happy when I saw you.'

b. **Do pacezuštalnikeš.**

1s.WK CAUS-be.happy-PV-PF-2s

‘You made me happy.’

(30) **Váz noprizaní.**

vase break-REF-RET

‘The vase broke (accidentally).’

## 3.5.3 Continuous and progressive aspects

Iridian uses the continuous and progressive aspects to denote actions that have not been completed yet and/or are in the process of happening/occurring. The continuous aspect (glossed *CONT*) is used to mark a state of being while the progressive aspect (glossed *PROG*) is used to mark a dynamic activity.

(31) **Náu urištnál.**

clothes REF-wear-PV-CONT

‘(I’m) wearing clothes.’

(32) **Náu urištnalí.**

clothes REF-wear-PV-PROG

‘(I’m) putting on clothes.’

The continuous aspect is also used to denote a habitual action.

(33) **Sholu de gnaža stožál.**

daily-INST ILL school-PAT go-AV-CONT

‘(We) go to school everyday.’

(34) **Dá na Praha možlál.**

1s.STR LOC Prague-PAT live-CONT

‘I live in Prague.’

To emphasize the habitual nature of an action, a nominalized construction is often used.

(35) **Nažem račenálou.**

friend-1s smoke-CONT-NZ

‘My friend is a smoker.’

## 3.5.4 Prospective aspect

The prospective aspect (glossed *PROSP*) is primarily used in secondary clauses to indicate actions that are about to be started in relation to another action.

It can also be used in the main clause to indicate an action in the immediate future.

### 3.5.5 Cessative aspect

## 3.6 Secondary Verbal Prefixes

In addition to the prefixes used for verbal derivation, Iridian has three prefixes that are analyzed as separate moods.

### 3.6.1 The reciprocative *so-*

## 3.7 Grammatical Mood

### 3.7.1 Indicative

### 3.7.2 Imperative

Iridian has an imperative mood formed by attaching the suffix **-e** in the singular and **-et** in the plural to the verb stem.

**piašte** ‘eat’

**piaštet** ‘eat (PL)’

The imperative is largely considered rude and impolite in modern speech, with the hortative being used even for commands. Nonetheless, the imperative can be often found in literary texts.

### (36) **Nátiezne.**

NEG-kill-IMP

‘Thou shall not kill’

The imperative can be combined with the reciprocative prefix **so-** to form the adhortative, similar in meaning to the English ‘Let’s...’. Nevertheless, the hortative construction with verbs in **so-** is still preferred.

### 3.7.3 Subjunctive

The subjunctive mood (glossed **sbj**) is used for actions or events that are not or are not known to be true or factual. The subjunctive is formed using the suffix **-il**.

In addition, the copula has two subjunctive forms, the non-negative **niec** and the negative **vaše**.

Note that the Iridian subjunctive makes neither temporal nor aspectual distinction.

The following are some specific uses of the subjunctive mood in Iridian:

**Table 3.4:** Conjugation of the verb **piaštá** in the subjunctive.

|              | IMPERFECTIVE | PERFECTIVE  |
|--------------|--------------|-------------|
| Agentive     | piaščíla     | piaščíl     |
| Patientive   | piaštníla    | piaštníl    |
| Benefactive  | piaštebíla   | piaštebíl   |
| Locative     | piaštouníla  | piaštouníl  |
| Instrumental | dopiaštebíla | dopiaštebíl |
| Reflexive    | upiaščíla    | upiaščíl    |

*jussive/desiderative*

The subjunctive is used in indirect constructions of verbs for issuing orders, commanding, exhorting, etc.

- (37) **Martin na America žnožil to čeznašalic.**

Martin LOC America-PAT study-AV-SBJ RZ want-AV-CONT-3S.ANIM

‘He wants Martin to study in America.’

- (38) **Beatles-že »Yesterday« Marka zášnil to Tunek dále.**

Beatles-GEN “Yesterday” Marek-AGT sing-SBJ RZ Tunek say-PF

‘Tunek told Marek to sing.’

*dubitative*

The subjunctive is used with verbs expressing doubt, uncertainty or disbelief.

- (39) **še**

Beatles-GEN

‘Tunek told Marek to sing.’

*with verbs expressing emotion*

- (40) **Marek zášnil to Tunek dále.**

Marek sing-SBJ.IPF RZ Tunek say-PF

‘Tunek told Marek to sing.’

*with the conditional mood*

The subjunctive is used in the main clause if the verb in the dependent clause is in the conditional *irrealis* mood.

- (41) **Dá prezident jenem,**

a

a

*expressing judgment*

- (42) **Zavnočilaš            to tévét**  
respond-AV-SBJ.IPF-2s RZ important  
'It is important that you respond.'

*irrealis*

3.7.4 Conditional

The conditional mood is used for conditional or hypothetical clauses. The table below shows the conjugation paradigm for the conditional mood for both regular verbs and the copula. The Iridian conditional mood is not a true conditional mood grammatically, since it is marked on the verb in the dependent clause (protasis), instead of the main clause.

Table 3.5: Conjugation paradigm, conditional mood.

|                               | REGULAR VERBS | COPULA |
|-------------------------------|---------------|--------|
| <i>Realis</i>                 | -ouhná        | viec   |
| Neg. <i>Realis</i>            | -ouhnál       | ven    |
| Non-Past <i>Irrealis</i>      | -ouc          | jenouc |
| Neg. Non-Past <i>Irrealis</i> | -oucik        | pięc   |
| Past <i>Irrealis</i>          | -áne          | jenem  |
| Neg. Past <i>Irrealis</i>     | -oucná        | jet    |

*conditional realis*

- The conditional *realis* mood (glossed COND.RL) is used in two ways:
1. In sentences that express a factual implication rather than a hypothetical situation or a potential future event, e.g., 'If you heat water to 100 C, it will boil.'
  2. In 'predictive' constructions, i.e., those that concern probable future events.

*conditional irrealis*

The conditional *irrealis* mood (glossed COND.IRR) is used with hypothetical, typically counterfactual, events. Iridian distinguishes between past and non-past *irrealis* moods.

3.7.5 Hortative

The hortative mood is used for requests. Although Iridian has an imperative form (the unmarked form of the verb), the hortative is normally used in its place. The hortative marker should always appear at the end of the word.

- (43) **Jěša mineška.**

door-PAT close-2S-HORT

'Close the door.' *literally*, 'May you close the door.'

To soften a command, the expression *am luhninka* (may someone be thanked for...) is normally used.

- (44) **Jěša minkeš ceš am luhninka.**

door-PAT close-PF-2S RZ.ABL because thank-PV-HORT

'Please close the door.' *literally*, 'May (you) be thanked because you closed the door.'

The hortative is used with the reciprocative prefix **so-** to form the adhortative (similar to the English construction with 'Let's + VERB'). This construction cannot be used with **am luhninka**.

- (45) **sop**

door-PAT

'Please close the door.' *literally*, 'May (you) be thanked because you closed the door.'

### 3.7.6 Optative

The optative mood (glossed OPT) is used for expressing wishes. The optative mood requires two aspect marking, although the primary ending is marked if it is in the imperfective mood.

#### 3.7.7 Quotative

The quotative mood (glossed QUOT) is used to express secondhand information, or when the speaker wishes to make explicit that s/he did not witness the event himself/herself.

Clitic pronouns cannot be used with the quotative mood.

Table 3.6 shows the conjugation paradigm for regular verbs and the copula.

- (46) **Já na duma neškec to maty dálmek.**

you-STR LOC house-PAT COP.QUOT.IPF RZ mother say-1S.PF

'(My) mother told me you are at home.'

- (47) **Já na duma necim to maty dálmek.**

you-STR LOC house-PAT COP.QUOT.SBJ.NPST RZ mother say-1S.PF

'(My) mother told me you might be at home.'

- (48) **Mnúcs tiezninát.**

husband kill-PV-QUOT.PF

'(She) killed (her) husband (or so I heard).'

Table 3.6: Conjugation paradigm, quotative mood

|                      | <b>piaštá, ‘to eat’</b> | <b>COPULA</b> |
|----------------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| Perfective           | piaštát                 | vacet         |
| Neg. perfective      | nápiaštát               | necê          |
| Retrospective        | piaštác                 | —             |
| Neg. Retrospective   | nápiaštác               | —             |
| Imperfective         | piaštút                 | neškec        |
| Neg. imperfective    | nápiaštút               | pošnec        |
| Progressive          | piaštíec neškec         | —             |
| Neg. progressive     | piaštíec pošnec         | —             |
| Future               | piaštôš                 | vacko         |
| Neg. Future          | nápiaštôš               | necko         |
| Subjunctive Non-Past | piaštók                 | necim         |
| Neg. Sub. Non-Pas    | nápiaštók               | pocim         |
| Subjunctive Past     | piaštocke               | vacim         |
| Neg. Sub. Past       | nápiaštocke             | nêcim         |

Direct speech, however, does not use the subjunctive.

- (49) —**Tak dá, dálek Tomáš.**

here 1s.STR say-PF Tomáš

‘‘I’m here,’’ Tomáš said.’

The following verbs are considered verba dicendi in Iridian and would trigger the quotative: **dálá** ‘to say’, **vadá** ‘to think’, **kvuštá** ‘to hear’, **vydá** ‘to see’, **égešá** ‘to ask’, **ohletá** ‘to remember’, **hová** ‘to recount, tell a story’. The verb **vadá** is exclusively used with the subjunctive quotative.

- (50) **Z što óké necim to Lukáš vadê.**

already this OK COP.QUOT.SBJ.NPST RZ Lukáš think-IPF

‘Lukáš thinks it should be OK by now.’

- (51) **Marek bych jsenát to kvuštkem.**

Marek yesterday arrive-QUOT.PF RZ hear-PF-1s

‘I heard Marek has arrived.’

- (52) **Pošnelý tajomstác to kvušte.**

father-2PL die-QUOT.RET RZ hear-PF

‘(We) heard that your father died.’

- (53) **Dá tak bych vacim to náohletê.**

1s.STR here yesterday COP.QUOT.SBJ.PST RZ NEG-remember-IPF

‘(I) don’t remember if I was here yesterday.’

Secondary verba dicendi are formed with an adverbial construction using the imperfective converb in **-iec**.

- (54) **Já mnou necim to Martin priviec vadê.**  
 you correct COP.QUOT.SBJ.NPST RZ Martin agree-CV think-IPF  
 ‘Martin agrees that you are right.’

The quotative is also used emphatically to repeat a quote (often made by the speaker himself or herself), or to express the speaker’s frustration or affirmation. When used this way, the verbum dicendi is omitted, and the expletive **nó** is often added.

- (55) **Mnou necim to nó!**  
 correct COP.QUOT.SBJ.NPST RZ EXPL  
 ‘(I’ve been telling you) it is right.’

- (56) **Dá roctymút to!**  
 1s dance-ABL-QUOT.IPF RZ  
 ‘(But) I can dance.’

The tense/aspect of the quotative mood follows that of the quoted clause, independent of the tense/aspect of the verbum dicendi.

### 3.7.8 Abilitative and Permissive

The abilitative (glossed **ABL**) and permissive (glossed **PERM**) are related verbal moods used in expressing the speaker’s (or the subject of the sentence’s) ability to do something. The abilitative is used to indicate capability while the permissive is used to indicate whether or not an action is allowed or permitted.

- (57) **Sa anglecnu nározshovymas.**  
 INST English.language-INST NEG-speak-ABL-3S.ANIM  
 ‘He cannot speak English.’

- (58) **De rádaka z názahranaveš.**  
 ILL building-1PL.EXCL-PAT already NEG-enter-PERM-2s  
 ‘You’re no longer allowed to enter our building.’

The permissive mood is often used for negative commands.

- (59) **Tak náradzavuj.**  
 here NEG-smoke-PERM-4GEN  
 ‘No smoking.’ *literally*, ‘One cannot smoke here.’



## 3.7.9 Non-Volitive

The non-voliti

(30, rep.) ago

## 3.8 Non-Finite Verb Forms

## 3.8.1 Gerund

The gerund (glossed GER) refers to the non-finite verb form used as a noun. The gerundive prefix **po-** is always used with the nominalizing suffix **-ou**, both of which are added to the uninflected verb root.

- (60) a. **Ščenek.**  
           forget-PF  
           ‘He forgot (it).’  
       b. **Ščenekou Jan.**  
           forget-PF-NZ Jan  
           ‘Jan (is) the one who forgot (it).’  
       c. **Poščenou nauhlý.**  
           GER-forget-NZ difficult  
           ‘Forgetting is difficult.’

When nominalizing complex clauses, both the agent and the theme are marked in the genitive, with the agent always appearing first.

- (61) a. **Pášta Jana voštnek.**  
           pasta Jan-AGT cook-PV-PF  
           ‘Jan cooked (some) pasta.’  
       b. **Janí páští povoštou**  
           Jan-GEN pasta-GEN GER-cook-NZ  
           ‘Jan’s cooking of the pasta’

The suffix **-ál**, used to mark the continuous aspect, may be infixed to the gerund to indicate that the action is repetitive.

- (62) a. **Jan nidek.**  
           Jan stand.up-PF  
           ‘Jan stood up.’  
       b. **Janí ponidálou buvec.**  
           Jan-GEN GER-stand.up-CONT-NZ annoying  
           ‘Jan’s standing up again and again is annoying.’

### 3.8.2 Converbs

Converbs (glossed *cv*) is a non-finite verb form often used for adverbial constructions. There are two converb forms in Iridian: the imperfective **-iec** (glossed *cv.IPF*) and the perfective **-iêce** (glossed *cv.PF*).

- (63) **Tereza kravniec nóveu cselek.**

Tereza cry-CV.IPF room-ABL leave-PF

‘Tereza left the room crying.’

- (64) **Nóveu cseliêce Tereza ukravnek.**

room-ABL leave-CV.PF Tereza INCHO-CRY-PF

‘Having left the room, Tereza started to cry.’

The perfective *-iêce* is often used in clause linking.

- (65) **Oštiêce krazkem.**

read-CV.PF understand-PF-1s

‘I read and understood.’

Clauses expressing reason is usually expressed by a converbial construction.

- (66) **Za eksama názhaziêce, Martin órek.**

for exam-PAT NEG-study-CV.PF Martin fail-PF

‘Martin failed the exam because he didn’t study.’

### 3.8.3 Nominalization

#### 3.8.4 Supine

The supine is a non-finite verb form formed used to indicate necessity or purpose. There are four forms as shown below:

Table 3.7: Endings used for the supine

|             | SUPINE OF PURPOSE | SUPINE OF NECESSITY |
|-------------|-------------------|---------------------|
| Nominal     | <i>-ity</i>       | <i>-áš</i>          |
| Non-nominal | <i>-ice</i>       | <i>-ášce</i>        |

- (67) **»Ána Karenina« za gnazsa oštášce ko htoš.**

Anna Karenina for school-PAT read-SUP ATT book

‘I have to read *Anna Karenina* for school.’

(68) **Htoš vstuninkem to oštice.**

book buy-mkpV-pf-1s RZ read-sup

'I bought the book to read.'

The infinitive form of the supine of purpose *-icá* is used with adjectival adverbs:

(69) **Just zacepšcemem to nosiênicá.**

news CAUS-be.sad-1s RZ hear-sup.inf

'I am sad to hear the news.'

### 3.9 Copular Constructions

#### 3.9.1 Null copula

Copular sentences are a minor sentence type where the predicate is not a verb. For the purposes of this grammar, we narrow down our definition of copular constructions to the following:

- (70) a. *Equative*: Marek is the doctor (we are talking about).  
 b. *Inclusive*: Marek is a doctor.  
 c. *Attributive*: Marek is tall.  
 d. *Locative*: Marek is in the hospital.

Iridian does not make a distinction between equative, inclusive and attributive clauses. Locative clauses on the other hand, may be expressed using a copular or an existential construction, as will be discussed in this section.

Iridian is a superficially a zero-copula language and the most common way to form copular sentences is mere juxtaposition.

(71) **Marek doktor.**

Marek doctor

'Marek (is a/the) doctor.'

The above example could either be taken to mean (1) Marek is a doctor (inclusive), or (2) Marek is the doctor (equative). Generally, though, Iridian uses word order to distinguish between equative and inclusive clauses.

- (72) a. *Inclusive*: {item in class}<sub>N</sub> ∅ {class}<sub>P</sub>  
 b. *Equative*: {class}<sub>N</sub> ∅ {item class}<sub>P</sub>

To avoid ambiguity, Example 71 can be reformulated to either of the following sentences:

- (73) a. **Marek doktor.**  
           Marek    doctor  
           ‘Marek is a doctor.’
- b. **Doktor Marek.**  
           doctor    Marek  
           ‘Marek is the doctor.’

The inversion of word order is not strongly grammaticalized with NP-NP sentences, i.e., both sentences in Example 73 can still be used interchangeably without a change in meaning and preference is given on the one over the other when there is an ambiguity. This is not the case with attributive clauses, i.e., sentences with adjective or adjective phrase predicates. Consider for example the sentence below:

- (74) **Marek rázym.**  
       Marek    tall  
       ‘Marek is tall.’

Inverting the word order of the sentence above would change the adjective to a substantive since modifiers cannot occupy the topic position.

- (75) **Rázym Marek.**  
       tall        Marek  
       ‘The tall one is Marek.’

Iridian also distinguishes between attributive clauses expressing permanent conditions and clauses expressing temporary conditions, with the latter being expressed using existential constructions in certain adjectives.

- (76) **\*Marek morec.**  
       Marek    hungry  
       ‘Marek is hungry’
- (77) **Marka ješ morec.**  
       Marek-PAT EXST hunger  
       ‘Marek is hungry’

A full list of adjectives/modifiers that use the existential construction can be found in the section 3.10.

The copula, however, cannot be omitted in grammatical moods other than the indicative.

### 3.9.2 Negative copula

Iridian has the negative copula **česná**.

- (78)
- Marek doktor česná.**

Marek doctor COP.NEG

‘Marek is not (a/the) doctor.’

The inversion of word order may also be used when one wants to avoid ambiguity:

- (79)
- Doktor Marek česná.**

doctor Marek COP.NEG

‘Marek is not the doctor.’

### 3.10 Existential Constructions

An existential sentence is a specialized construction used to express the existence or presence of someone or something. The particle **ješ** and its inverse **niho** are used to form existential sentences.

- (80)
- To ješ zarno.**

here EXST people

‘There are people here.’

- (81)
- To niho zarno.**

here EXST.NEG people

‘There is no one here.’

Statements expressing location use a copular construction, although an existential construction is used in the negative.

- (82)
- Dá na duma.**

1s.STR LOC house-PAT

‘I’m at home.’

- (83)
- Na duma niho dá.**

LOC house-PAT EXST.NEG 1s.STR

‘I’m not at home.’

The particles **ješ** and **niho** must always precede the noun whose presence or existence is being expressed.

- (84)
- Na ránema ona ješ htoš.**

LOC desk-1s-PAT one EXST book

‘There is one book on my desk.’

- (85)
- Mý ješ mulaž.**

two EXST door

‘There are two doors.’

## 3.10.1 Conjugation paradigm

## 3.10.2 Possession

Existential constructions are also used to indicate possession, with the possessor marked in the patientive case.

(86) **Marka ješ oblašc.**

Marek-PAT EXST pet

‘Marek has a pet.’

(87) **Tomáša niho mlaz.**

Tomáš-PAT EXST brother

‘Tomáš does not have a brother.’

## 3.10.3 Impersonal constructions

(88) **Martina ješ trešnikou na tropa.**

Martin-PAT EXST write-PV-PF-NZ LOC wall-PAT

‘Martin wrote something on the wall.’

(89) **Voštnikouva sa ješ piaščkou?**

COOK-PV-PF-NZ-PAT already EXST eat-AV-PF-NZ

‘Did somebody eat what (I) cooked?’

## 3.11 Formation of Verbs

## 3.11.1 External Derivation

Loanwords ending in **-ace** from the Latin change the final *e* to *á*:

|              |   |              |                    |
|--------------|---|--------------|--------------------|
| administrace | → | administracá | ‘to administrate’  |
| akuzace      | → | akuzacá      | ‘to accuse’        |
| diferenzace  | → | diferenzacá  | ‘to differentiate’ |
| separace     | → | separacá     | ‘to separate’      |

Some Latin loanwords are borrowed first from German. Loanwords ending in **-ieren** become **-irná**.

|              |   |             |               |
|--------------|---|-------------|---------------|
| akzeptieren  | → | akceptirná  | ‘to accept’   |
| konservieren | → | koncervirná | ‘to conserve’ |
| produzieren  | → | producirná  | ‘to produce’  |
| vandalieren  | → | vandalirná  | ‘to deface’   |

3.11.2 Internal Derivation

Table 3.8: Verbal Derivational Affixes

| AFFIX   | EXAMPLES   |
|---|--|
| <b>nie-</b> + ADJ<br>'to cause something to become ADJ'           | <b>loš</b> 'new' → <b>nielošá</b> 'to renew'<br><b>preseh</b> 'young' → <b>niepreshá</b> 'to rejuvenate'<br><b>avic</b> 'long' → <b>nieavicá</b> 'to lengthen'<br><b>gem</b> 'soft' → <b>niegemá</b> 'to soften'<br><b>vyne</b> 'dry' → <b>nievyneá</b> 'to dry' |
| <b>ce-</b> <sup>3</sup> + ADJ<br>'to cause oneself to become ADJ' | <b>kdavidy</b> 'clean' → <b>cekdavicá</b> 'to take a bath'<br><b>rum</b> 'old' → <b>cerumá</b> 'to grow old'<br><b>šeznom</b> 'big' → <b>cešeznomá</b> 'to grow up'<br><b>vyne</b> 'dry' → <b>cevyneá</b> 'to dry oneself'                                       |
| <b>hó-</b> + NOUN<br>'to use N in a particular way'               | <b>tvem</b> 'tongue' → <b>hótvemá</b> 'to lick'<br><b>kov</b> 'hammer' → <b>hóková</b> 'to hammer'<br><b>šeznom</b> 'big' → <b>cešeznomá</b> 'to grow up'<br><b>vyne</b> 'dry' → <b>cevyneá</b> 'to dry oneself'   |
| <b>deš-</b> + NOUN<br>'to act in the manner of N'                 | <b>tvem</b> 'tongue' → <b>hótvemá</b> 'to lick'<br><b>rum</b> 'old' → <b>cerumá</b> 'to grow old'<br><b>šeznom</b> 'big' → <b>cešeznomá</b> 'to grow up'<br><b>vyne</b> 'dry' → <b>cevyneá</b> 'to dry oneself'  |
| <b>má-iv</b> + NOUN<br>'to so something usually done in NOUN'     | <b>mrc</b> 'market' → <b>mámrcivá</b> 'to shop'<br><b>gnazsa</b> 'school' → <b>mágnazsivá</b> 'to study in'<br><b>šeznom</b> 'big' → <b>cešeznomá</b> 'to grow up'<br><b>vyne</b> 'dry' → <b>cevyneá</b> 'to dry oneself'  |
| <b>sen-/sem-</b> + VERB<br>'to VERB incorrectly'                  | <b>oštá</b> 'to read' → <b>senoštá</b> 'to misread'<br><b>rum</b> 'old' → <b>cerumá</b> 'to grow old'<br><b>šeznom</b> 'big' → <b>cešeznomá</b> 'to grow up'<br><b>vyne</b> 'dry' → <b>cevyneá</b> 'to dry oneself'  |

<sup>3</sup>Verbs in **ce-** cannot be in the reflexive focus.



## NOUNS

Nominal morphology in Iridian is relatively simpler compared to the corresponding process.

### 4.1 Grammatical Categories

### 4.2 Number

Nouns in Iridian are not formally marked for number. Thus the word **byl**, for example, can mean either ‘child’ or ‘children’ depending on the context. The same form is used when the noun is preceded by a numeral.

- (1) **hroná byl**  
       three child  
       ‘three children’

Nevertheless, Iridian can express semantic plurality by using quantifiers, numerals, pluralizing particles or even through context alone. One such particle is **nie**. The use of **nie**, however, is largely optional and where plurality can be implied from context, this particle is seen as redundant and is therefore dropped.

- (2) **Nie byl zapóček.**  
       <sub>PL</sub> child laugh-AV-PF  
       ‘The children jumped.’

**Nie** cannot be used with mass and uncountable nouns, as well as with abstract nouns.

- (3) **\*Na duma nie ješ piaštou.**  
       <sub>LOC</sub> house <sub>PL</sub> <sub>EXST</sub> food  
       ‘There is food in the house.’

- (4) **\*example.**  
       food,  
       ‘There is food in the house.’

The particle **nie** always precedes the noun it modifies, except in existential clauses where it comes before the existential particle **ješ**<sup>1</sup>. **Nie** can obviously not be used with the negative particle **niho**.

- (5) a. **nie bžę**  
           PL   bee  
           ‘bees’
- b. **Nie ješ bžę.**  
           PL   EXST bee  
           ‘There are bees.’
- c. **\*Nie niho bžę.**  
           PL   EXST.NEG bee  
           ‘There are no bees.’

**Nie** cannot be used as well with a limited number of nouns, mostly referring to paired body parts and related objects, which in the base form is understood to refer to the pair itself and thus cannot be pluralized. If the speaker wishes to explicitly refer to one piece of the pair, the noun *noma* (an obsolete form of the word for one-half, now surviving only in this construction) and the genitive form of the body part.

- (6) **Eg zaronnek.**  
       eyes close-PV-PF  
       ‘(He) closed (his) eyes.’
- (7) **Pohár dievit.**  
       eyeglasses dirty  
       ‘(His) eyeglasses are dirty.’
- (8) **Ohví noma utieščál.**  
       shoe-GEN half   REF-lose-AV-CONT  
       ‘The other pair of (his) shoe is missing.’
- (9) **Ohví noma utieščál.**  
       shoe-GEN half   REF-lose-AV-CONT  
       ‘The other pair of his shoe is missing.’

---

<sup>1</sup>The sequence is pronounced as if written *níješ* [ɲiːjɛʃ]

### 4.3 Definiteness

Iridian does not have definite or indefinite articles

### 4.4 Uninflected form

### 4.5 Agentive case

#### 4.5.1 Agentive of comparison

(10) **Dá Marka tám stroja.**

1s.STR Marek-AGT COMP tall

‘Marek is taller than me’

### 4.6 Patientive case

The patientive case (glossed PAT) is formed by appending the suffix **-a** to the root of the noun, subject to the following sound changes, notably affecting vowel-final roots for the most part:

- Roots ending in *e* and *o* replace the final vowel with **-a**: **pivo – piva** ‘beer’, **malno – malna** ‘language’, **šuze – šuza** ‘judge’
- Roots ending in *ó* and *ou* replace the final vowel with **-óva**: **piaštou – piaštóva** ‘food’, **javó – javóva** ‘lizard’, **metró – metróva** ‘subway’
- Roots ending in *a* lengthen the final vowel to **-á**: **cigra – cigrá** ‘tiger’, **husa – husá** ‘street’
- Roots ending in *á* replace the final vowel with **ánie**: **komá – kománie** ‘boat’, **vietrá – vietránie** ‘pants’
- Roots ending in *é*, *ei* and *i* replace the root with **-éna**: **kávė – kávėna** ‘coffee’, **matei – maténa** ‘motorbike’
- Roots ending in *í* append **na**:
- Roots ending in *u* or *ú* append **-ša**:

#### 4.6.1 Direct object

The patientive case is used to mark the direct object of a verb that is in the agentive voice. Note that this usage implies that the direct object is indefinite unless the noun is further qualified (except through a demonstrative).

(11) a. **Váška piaščem.**

cake-PAT eat-AV-PF-1s

‘I ate cake.’

b. **Jedá vaška piaščem.**

that cake-PAT eat-AV-PF-1s

‘I ate from that cake.’

c. **Vaško** **pieštníkem**.

cake eat-PV-PF-1s

'I ate the cake.'

d. **Jedá** **vaško** **pieštníkem**.

that cake eat-PV-PF-1s

'I ate that cake.'

e. **Hroná** **vaške** **vatá** **pieščem**.

three cake-GEN slice-PAT eat-PV-PF-1s

'I ate three slices of cake.'

The patientive is also used to mark the direct object when the verb is in the benefactive voice.

(12) **Ša** **vitamina** **pieštebik**.

3s.ANIM vitamin-PAT eat-BEN-PF

'(She) made him take (his) vitamins.'

## 4.6.2 Locative

The patientive is used with the particle **na** to form a compound locative case, which is itself used to indicate a general location.

(13) **Tomáš** **na** **byra**.

Tomáš LOC office-PAT

'Tomáš is at the office.'

## 4.6.3 Patientive of purpose

The patientive is used with the particle **za** to indicate

## 4.6.4 Lative

The lative is a compound case indicating movement into or to the direction of something. It is formed using the particle **de** and a noun or noun phrase in the patientive case.

## 4.6.5 Adessive

The adessive is formed when the particle **u** is used with the patientive. This compound case indicates that the noun being modified by the noun in the adessive is near or in the vicinity of the noun in the adessive. The adessive case behaves syntactically in the same manner as the locative case with **na** in all cases.

(14) **Tomáš u byra.**

Tomáš ADE office-PAT

'Tomáš is somewhere near the office.'

The adessive case is also used to approximate time.

(15) **Ovaž u 19 óra.**

dinner ADE 19 hour-PAT

'Dinner is around seven.'

## 4.7 Genitive case

The genitive (glossed GEN) is formed by appending the suffix -í to the root of a noun.

Due the palatalizing nature of the suffix, the following sound changes must be noted:

- Roots ending in k, h, and t change the final consonant to c and append the glide -ie instead: **Marek – Marcie** 'Marek', **avt – avcie** 'car', **duh – ducie** 'head'
- Roots ending in d and g change the final consonant to ž and append the suffix -e instead: **vod – vože** 'sister', **seg – seže** 'flower'
- Roots ending in the sibilants s, z, š, ž and the sibilant affricates c and č append e as well:
- Roots ending with a palatalized consonant lose the final y (there only for orthographic reasons in any case) before appending the -í: **kraštolý – kraštoli**
- Roots ending in a or o replace the vowel with e, while those ending in á and ó replace the root with í
- Roots ending in au, ou, or u replace the vowel with -óví: **dnou – dnóví** 'front'
- Roots ending in áu, or ú replace the vowel with -óvie
- Roots ending in e, i or ý replace the vowel with -eví
- Roots ending in é, ei, í or ý replace the vowel with -éví

## 4.7.1 Possession

The simplest use of the genitive case is to indicate ownership or possession.

(16) **Marcie dum**

Marek-GEN house

'Marek's house'

(17) **vože ohnou**

sister-GEN pen

'(my) sister's pen'

## 4.7.2 Genitive of material

- (18) **kuní prosc**  
 silverGEN spoon  
 ‘silver spoon’

## 4.7.3 Genitive of the whole

The genitive can also be used to indicate

- (19) **na kraštolí dnóva**  
 LOC train:station-GEN front  
 ‘in front of the train station’

Note that the patientive and not the genitive case is used when quantifying a part of the whole.

- (20) a. **\*žnohoušce hroná**  
 student-GEN three  
 ‘three of the students’  
 b. **na žnohoušca hroná**  
 LOC student-GEN three  
 ‘three of the students’

Nevertheless when quantifying a noun per se, and not in relation to a whole, the uninflected form of the quantifier is used (mostly using indefinite quantifiers such as ‘many’, ‘a lot’, etc.). If however, the quantification involves a countable unit or division of the noun, the genitive is used, but such unit or division must be further quantified by a numeral or an indefinite quantifier.

- (21) a. **Na kroumašta po zma ješ pivo.**  
 LOC refrigerator-PAT still few EXST beer  
 ‘There’s still some beer left in the refrigerator.’  
 b. **Ona pive štava unarížčem.**  
 one beer-GEN mug-PAT REF-order-AV-PV-1s  
 ‘I ordered a mug of beer.’

## 4.7.4 Genitive of movement

The genitive is also used to indicate movement away from somewhere.

- (22) a. **Dumí palžek.**  
 house-GEN leave-AV-PF  
 ‘I left the house.’

- b. Dum palzinek.  
house leave-PV-PF  
'I left the house.'

4.8 Instrumental case

The instrumental case (glossed INST)

4.8.1 With some prepositions

The following prepositions take the instrumental case: *še* 'with'

- (23) Za bolta še Janu stóžac.  
for party-PAT with Jan-INST go-AV-CTPV  
'(I am) coming to the party with Jan.'

4.8.2 With expressions of time and duration

4.9 Numerals

Iridian has a vigesimal number system. Table 4.1 shows Iridian numerals from 1 to 20. Numbers from 1 to 10 are given their own name while numbers from 11 to 19 are formed by appending the numbers from one to nine to the clitic *-niem* with the preposition *še* (with). The clitic *-niem* is derived from the word for number 10, *nau*, which itself comes from the Old Iridian *\*nagu*, 'half.'

Table 4.1: Iridian numerals from 1 to 20.

| NUMBER | IRIDIAN | NUMBER | IRIDIAN     |
|--------|---------|--------|-------------|
| 1      | ona     | 11     | onšeniem    |
| 2      | mui     | 12     | muišeniem   |
| 3      | hroná   | 13     | hronašeniem |
| 4      | dró     | 14     | dróšeniem   |
| 5      | jed     | 15     | jeceniem    |
| 6      | vú      | 16     | vúšeniem    |
| 7      | ščę     | 17     | ščęceniem   |
| 8      | pieš    | 18     | pieceniem   |
| 9      | cam     | 19     | camzeniem   |
| 10     | nau     | 20     | tydná       |

For numbers 11 to 19, the words are formed by appending the numbers from one to nine to the suffix *-niem* with the preposition *še* (with).

Numbers from 21 to 99 are first expressed as multiples of 20. Thenceforth, the number system has largely become decimal, due primarily to the inflynce of surrounding Indo-European languages. Old Iridian, however, had a vigesimal system up to the number 8000.

Table 4.3 shows multiples of 10 from 30 to 100. The numbers are formed by the numeral followed by **tydná**. For bases that are not multiples of 20, the word **nau** ‘ten’ is added first, followed by the conjunction **še** ‘with’.

Table 4.2: Iridian numerals from 30 to 100.

| NUMBER | IRIDIAN       | NUMBER | IRIDIAN         |
|--------|---------------|--------|-----------------|
| 30     | naušetydná    | 70     | naušehronutydná |
| 40     | muitydná      | 80     | drohutydná      |
| 50     | naušemuitydná | 90     | naušedrohutydná |
| 60     | hronutydná    | 100    | miesy           |

Iridian counting starts from the smallest component of the number to the largest. Each component can be simply appended with the conjunction **še**. Only the numerals in Tables 4.1 and 4.3, and the first ten numbers after 100, 500, 1000, etc. appear as single words. Below are some illustrations:

- (24) a. **jecemiesy**  
          ‘five with hundred’  
          105
- b. **cam še drohutydná**  
          ‘nine with four twenties’  
          89

4.9.1 Ordinal numbers

4.9.2 Fractions and decimals

4.9.3 Use of numerals

4.10 Derivational Morphology

4.10.1 -mašt

4.10.2 -ou

The nominalizing suffix **-ou** is a non-productive affix used to form nouns from certain verbs.



Table 4.3: Iridian numerals from 200 to one billion.

| NUMBER            | IRIDIAN                      |
|-------------------|------------------------------|
| 200               | moig                         |
| 300, 400, etc.    | hronumiesy, drohumiesy. etc. |
| 1000              | nitak                        |
| 2000, 3000, etc.  | muiniec, hronuniec, etc.     |
| 10.000            | ohle                         |
| 20.000, etc.      | tydnuniec, etc.              |
| 100.000           | dunie                        |
| 200.000 etc       | meguiniec, hronuniec, etc.   |
| 1.000.000         | myliâ                        |
| 1.000.000.000     | myliâr                       |
| 1.000.000.000.000 | byliâ                        |

Table 4.4: Nominal derivation using -mašt

| ROOT    |          |   | DERIVED NOUN |                |
|---------|----------|---|--------------|----------------|
| kávė    | ‘coffee’ | → | kávėmašt     | ‘café’         |
| krou    | ‘cold’   | → | kroumašt     | ‘refrigerator’ |
| piaštou | ‘food’   | → | piaštoumašt  | ‘restaurant’   |

Table 4.5: Nominal derivation using -ou

| VERB ROOT |             |   | DERIVED NOUN |             |
|-----------|-------------|---|--------------|-------------|
| milovaná  | ‘to learn’  | → | milovanou    | ‘lesson’    |
| palzá     | ‘to leave’  | → | palzou       | ‘departure’ |
| piaštá    | ‘to eat’    | → | piaštou      | ‘food’      |
| scená     | ‘to arrive’ | → | scenou       | ‘arrival’   |
| nieká     | ‘to open’   | → | niekou       | ‘entrance’  |

4.10.3 -oušc

The suffix **-oušc** (pronounced as if written **-óšt** /o:ʃt/, or in some dialects as **-oušt** [ouʃt]) is used to form a noun indicating someone or something associated to a certain thing or performing a certain action.

Table 4.6: Nominal derivation using -oušc

| VERB ROOT |                 |   | DERIVED NOUN |             |
|-----------|-----------------|---|--------------|-------------|
| jorká     | ‘to travel’     | → | jorkoušc     | ‘traveller’ |
| možlá     | ‘to live’       | → | možloušc     | ‘resident’  |
| umielá    | ‘to get drunk’  | → | umíloušc     | ‘drunkard’  |
| virká     | ‘to write’      | → | virkoušc     | ‘writer’    |
| zdievá    | ‘to fool (sm.)’ | → | zdívousc     | ‘swindler’  |

# PRONOUNS

Pronouns are words that refer to or substitute a noun or a noun phrase

## 5.1 Personal pronouns

| PERSON   | STRONG | WEAK | CLITIC |
|----------|--------|------|--------|
| 1s       | dá     | do   | -em    |
| 2s       | já     | je   | -esz   |
| 3s.ANIM  | szá    | sze  | -ej    |
| 3s.INAN  | ta     | cej  | -as    |
| 4GEN     | jedá   | dien | -uj    |
| 1PL.INC  | chec   | chce | -uh    |
| 1PL.EXC  | kiec   | kiec | -ak    |
| 2PL      | lou    | la   | -elý   |
| 3PL.ANIM | dce    | dcá  | -ac    |
| 3PL.INAN | dcej   | oce  | -et    |

### 5.1.1 Strong form

The strong form of a personal pronoun (glossed STR) is used when the pronoun is used as the topic of the sentence. The strong form is indeclinable.

5.1.2 Weak form

5.1.3 Clitic form

5.1.4 Pronoun dropping

5.2 Possessive pronouns

5.3 Demonstratives

5.4 Indefinite pronouns and quantifiers

5.5 Interrogative pronouns

6



# MODIFIERS



## MINOR WORD CLASSES

### 7.1 Conjunctions

### 7.2 Prepositions

#### 7.2.1 na

#### 7.2.2 še

#### 7.2.3 vo

**Vo** can be translated as ‘because of’ or ‘due to.’ This preposition takes the agentive case.

- (1) **Vo transitám lienu zászenczčem.**  
 because traffic-AGT on:time-INST NEG-arrive-AV-PF-1s  
 ‘I didn’t arrive on time because of the traffic.’

#### 7.2.4 za





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## SYNTAX OF SIMPLE CLAUSES

### 8.1 Introduction

In this chapter we discuss

### 8.2 The Noun Phrase





# SYNTAX

## 9.1 Discourse markers

### 9.1.1 ta

1.



10



# SEMANTICS AND PRAGMATICS



# Appendices





A  

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THE DIALECTS OF IRIDIAN



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