Modern Ducai

Basic Guide to Grammar

# Verbs

## Infinitives

All infinitive verbs in Ducai are delimited with the –r morpheme. Infinitive verbs are also the only the only occurrence of word-final lateral consonants. Modern Ducai common has a surface form of /*-j*/, replacing the lateral consonant with a glide.

Although technically any letter can proceed the –r verb marker, the most common form is /*-ar*/ and it has been convention since the Cruseiro Reform (1947) to adopt any foreign verb with the /*-ar*/ marker (consider *program -> programar*, or *download -> downlodar*).

Infinitive verbs and gerunds are interchangeable, occasionally distinguished by the direct affix */jea-/*.

Examples:

**He can speak**

*Yli aiver je denda*

**Dogs enjoy eating**

*Uba komar de gosta*

## Prepositional Verbs

One characteristic unique of Ducai is its reserved class of prepositions specific to verbs. Although native speakers of Ducai find this reservation efficient and simple, non-native speakers may struggle to learn them, as there is no effective translation of a given word. Rather than memorize each reserved preposition, the learner is encouraged to engage the preposition within context. The following list is by no means complete, but provides a general overview of situational use.

Je – descriptive trait verbs not relating to personality characteristics

* *Fraijet it nal kontrar je denda* – Fred cannot find it
* *Yu de jai nal vora-kita je denda pash nun* – You may not leave the house before noon
* *Yli duhua je koa* – He’s quite poor

De – borrowed from Latin-based langauges. Only productive in context of loan words

* *Yli komar de gosta* – He enjoys eating
* *Yo nal ti de xelcorda* – I don’t remember you

Mej – comparable to Germanic *mit* and used to denote accompanying action. *Mej* is technically both a reserved prepositional verb and a regular preposition

* *Yu jos mej komar je denda?* – Would you like to eat with us?
* *Yli jos mej vaja pal Pujolant* – He used to accompany us to Poland

Apei – descriptive trait verbs relating to personality characteristics. Also used to express volition of a characteristic

* *Yli ekret uba japei koa!* – He’s a real scoundrel!
* *Jeamuzeu jiy gaf apei koa* – That museum is supposed to be great
* *Yuï (tutemp) dash temp apei koa*! – You are always late! (*tutemp* can be omitted without any change in meaning because *apei* signifies characteristic permanence)

## Conjugation

#### Historical Context

The greatest difference between *Ducai-aiver Yliöma* (Old Ducai) and Modern Ducai occurs in diction and morphological agreement, especially of verbs. Speakers and writers of Old Ducai pride themselves on complexity of forms as they claim it avoids all ambiguity that might otherwise arise in communication.

Ducai schools will generally teach students to read and occasionally write in Old Ducai, but fluent speakers are very hard to find. As of 1997, all known texts written in Old Ducai were translated to Modern Ducai. Most linguistics wishing to study and record spoken examples of *Ducai-aiver Yliöma* travel to colonies in Telemark or Oslo.

After the end of Spanish occupancy in 1622, the linguist Karlos Otçoa (Carlos Ochoa) began to condense all conjugated forms into their common categories. Although his rules have since been reformed and many known exceptions exist, his *Reglas Conjugaciónales de Ducai-aiver* (Ducai Conjugation Rules) are still productive and immensely popular in the process of language change and evolution.

#### Karlos Otçoa’s Rules

Sd

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Conditional | -ara | komara | aivera | japra |
| Subjunctive II | -ia | komia | aivia | japia |

The following rules were later adaptations based on colloquial conjugations that eventually made their way into everyday speech and writing. Note that the conditional tense was previously expressed by use of the imperfect past and subjunctive II was largely the result of newspapers and print advertising who wished to dodge libel/unjustified claims charges by expressing volition.

***Additional Rules***

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Infinitive | -ar | komar (eat) | aiver (speak) | japr (laugh) |
| Present | -a | koma | aive | jap |
| Past Imperfect | -aja | komaja | aiveja | japja |
| Preterite | -ijo | komijo | aivija | japija |
| Future | -pya | kompya | aivpya | japya |
| Present Perfect | -aja rha | komaja rha | aiveja rha | japja rha |
| Past Perfect | -aja rhej | komaja rhej | aiveja rhej | japja rhej |
| Subjunctive I | -i | komi | aivi | japi |