

## ABOUT ESPERANTO

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*Esperanto is a “planned” language constructed by Dr. L. Zamenhof (1859-1917) to make it easier for people of different cultures to communicate. It is intended for international/intercultural use, without seeking to take the place of native languages.*

*The grammar and word structure is planned to be as easy as possible, without exceptions, with only a few rules and with a letter for every sound. Most important is the fact that verbs are only conjugated for the tense aspect (past, present and future), not for the person, and the noun is only declined for accusative.*

*It is differed between different kinds of substantives by a morpheme, which carries the grammatical meaning (especially if the lexeme has to become an adjective, substantive or verb with a specific time aspect). There are also affixes that give an extra or stronger meaning to the words, such as repetitive or contrary aspect.*

### The rules and grammar:

#### *Word reading and compound words:*

- Every word is read as it is written. Every letter has a specific sound (as accents are often not on keyboards, these are written as an “x” or “h” after the accented letter).
- Compound words are formed by juxtaposition of words. The main word stands at the end and for the grammatical endings, the bounded words are viewed as independent (e.g.: “vaporsxipo”, “vaporo-steam”, “sxipo-ship”).

#### *Article:*

- Esperanto does not possess an indefinite article and only one definite article “LA” (e.g.: “la knabo-the boy”, “knabo-a boy”).

#### *Lexemes and morphemes:*

The main part of a word is its lexeme. It possesses the characteristic meaning of a word, without aspectual relation. It is an abstract particle which gets a definite meaning with help of the aspect given by the affixes, especially the suffix morphemes in case of Esperanto.

- **Nouns** are created when adding the morpheme “-O” to the lexeme. In case of *plural*, the ending “-J” is added to the noun morpheme (e.g. “hundo-dog”, “hundoj-dogs” or “knabo-boy”, “knaboj-boys”).

- A *not marked form* for subject is used for almost all the objects on which the verb acts (nominative).

- A *marked form* is used for *accusative*, adding the morpheme “-N” to the noun (e.g. “lernejo-school”, “lernejon-to school”).

- **Adjectives** are created by adding the morpheme “-A” to the lexeme. The *plural* is constructed as in the case of substantives, adding the plural morpheme “-J” to the adjective morpheme. Since the aspect of the substantive is in accordance with the aspect of the adjective, adjectives are marked for accusative, too, adding the *accusative* morpheme “-N” (e.g. “la bono-the goodness”, “la bonaj homoj-the good people”).

- The comparative form is made with the word “PLI” (English “more”) and with the conjunction “OL” (English “than”). Superlative is made with “PLEJ” (English “most”). E.g. “mi estas pli granda ol vi-I am greater than you”, “mi estas plej granda-I am the greatest”.

- The **pronouns** are “mi, vi, li, ŝi, ĝi, si, ni, ĉi, oni” (English “I, you, he, she, it, oneself, we, you, they, one”). They are *not marked for the substantive aspect* but get the *adjectival* morpheme “-A” for the *possessive form* (e.g. “ŝia kato-her cat”).

- Especially for poetry, there is used a “thou” pronoun “ĉi”, first proposed by Zamenhof. Also a non-gender-specific singular pronoun for the third person “ri” can be found (or “lisci” or “sxili” or sxli”). In the same way, a female third person for the plural was proposed to be introduced, such as “isxi”.

- The basic **numerals** are “unu, du, tri, kvar, ses, sep, ok, naŭ, dek, cent, mil” (English “one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, hundred, thousand”). Other numerals are formed through juxtaposition of the basic ones (e.g. “mila ducent tridek kvar-1234”).

- Ordinal numbers are formed through adding the adjectival ending “-A”.  
 - Multiples are formed with help of the suffix “-OBL-”.  
 - Fractions are formed with the suffix “-ON-”.  
 - Collectives are formed with “-OP-”.  
 - Divisionals are formed with “-PO”.

*Examples:* “Li estis la unua knabo tie-He was the first boy here”, “triobla-three times”, “la kvarono-the fourth part”, “sesopa grupo-group with six constituents”.

- **Verbs** are constructed by adding the aspectual verb morpheme to the lexeme.

-The morpheme (for the main verb) is:  
 - “-AS” for present tense,

- “-IS” for past tense,
- “-OS” for future tense,
- “-US” for conditional,
- “-U” for command mood,
- “-I” for infinitive.

- Participles with adjectival or adverbial meaning possess the morphemes
  - “-ANT” for present active,
  - “-INT” for past active,
  - “-ONT” for future active,
  - “-AT” for present passive,
  - “-IT” for past passive,
  - “-OT” for future passive.

- All verbs are only “conjugated” for the time aspect, not for the *noun*, which *does not act on the verb*.

*Example: “mi kuris-I ran”, “vi kuris-you ran”, “li kuris-he ran”, “sxi riparas-she repairs”, “ni riparas-we repair”, “li komprenos-he will understand”, “ili komprenos- they will understand”.*

- The auxiliary verb is “EST-I” (“to be”), with help of which, passive voice is constructed (although this is not a real passive voice, only an analytic approach to it, as is the case in English, German or Spanish. A real passive voice as it exists for example in Latin does not exist in Esperanto).

	Present	Past	Future
Verb Active	AS	IS	OS
Part. Active	ANT	INT	ONT
Part. Passive	AT	IT	OT

- The participle is used to give more specific aspect to the verb. The main tense aspect is given through the main verb (ending “-AS”, “-OS”, “-IS”, “-US”). The ending “-ANT” gives then a continuous aspect to the main tense. “-INT” gives a perfective aspect and “-ONT” gives the meaning of an action about to begin at the time given through the main verb.

*Example: “ni/vi komprenis-we/you understood”, “li/ili kuris-he/they ran”, “vi/mi saltas-you/we jump”, “gxi/ili saltas-it/they jumps”, “mi/ni estas saltanto-I/we am/are jumping”, “sxi/vi estis kuranto-she/you was/were running”, “ni/sxi estis kurinto-we/she were/was about to have finished running”, “mi/vi estos farinto-I/you am/are going to be done”, li estas finigxonto-he is about to finish”, “gxi estos finigxonto-it is going to be about to finish”.*

- **Adverbs** are formed adding the morpheme “-E” to the lexeme of the word. Adverbs are commonly posted before the verb (e.g. “vi bone faris gxin-you did it well”, “li rapide komprenas-he understands quickly”).

- Directions are shown through the use of the *marked form* of the substantive. This is the **accusative** with the morpheme “-N”. It shows destinations of a motion or the direct recipient of an action (after “AL” (“to”), nominative –the non-marked form- is used).

*Examples:* “*mi komprenas vin-I understand you*”, “*li amas sxin-he loves her*”, “*mi kuras al arbold-I run to the tree*”.

- All **prepositions** take the not marked form (nominative). If they can show a motion to a location, prepositions of location can take the morpheme “-N”, according to the accusative rule.

### ***Questions and question words:***

- Questions in Esperanto are made with the word “CXU” at the beginning. It is like an “Is it” and is followed by the questioned sentence (e.g. *cxu vi mangxis?-Did you eat*). Such a question can be responded by “JES” (“yes”) or “NE” (“no”). Nevertheless, if the question is a so-called “W” question in English (“why”, “who” ...), then, instead of “cxu” a “KI-” word is used. “Ki” represents the lexeme of a question and is followed by a suffix that gives the way the question has to be understood. There are
  - **o**: Thing ---- thus, KIO is “what”. The suffix “-o” is like the one of subjects.
  - **u**: Person ---- thus, KIU is “who”.
  - **a**: Characteristic ---- thus, KIA is a “how”. The suffix “-a” is like the one of adjectives.
  - **e**: Place ---- thus, KIE is “where”.
  - **el**: How (way) ---- thus, KIEL is “how”, “in which way”.
  - **am**: Time ---- thus, KIAM is “when”.
  - **al**: Reason ---- thus, KIAL is “why”.
  - **om**: Quantity ---- thus, KIOM is “how much”.
  - **es**: Possession ---- thus, KIES is a genitive “which”.

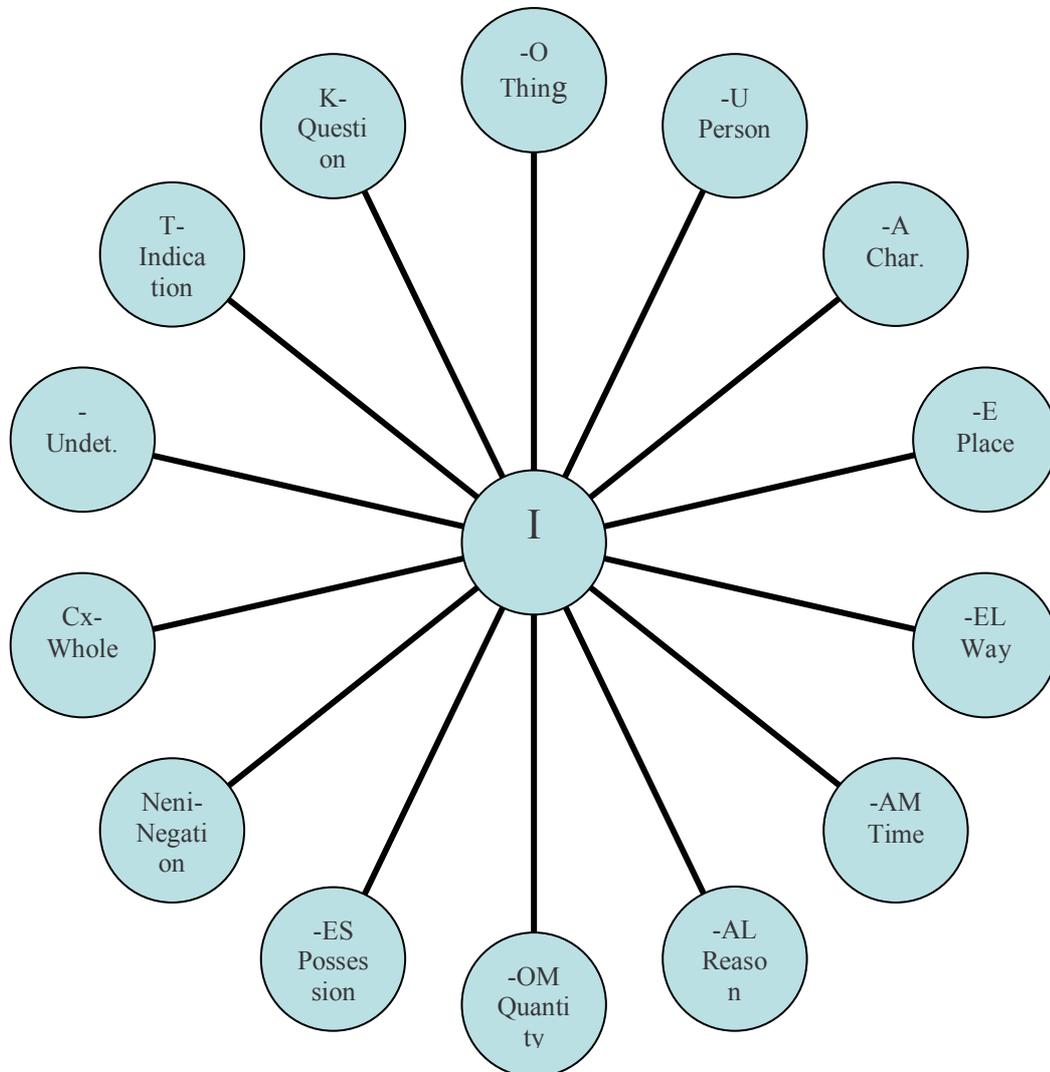
So, “tio” is “that”, while “io” is “something”, “nenio” “none”, “cxio” “all”...

The change of the lexeme changes the main “contextual” meaning, while the suffix the aspectual meaning.

The suffixes above are important, since the lexeme is changed for the answer. The answer can be for one thing (TI), a whole (CXI), none (NENI) or for some thing (undetermined) (I). These lexemes substitute the question lexeme KI, depending on the answer. The answer for “*kio estas via?-What is yours?*” might be “*Tio estas mia-This is mine (not another one)*” or “*Cxio estas mia-Everything is mine/All are mine*”. The same “*Nenio estas mia. Cxio estas lia- Nothing is mine/None are mine. Everything is his*”. The undetermined form “IO” is understood as “something”, without determining what exactly: “*Io estas mia. Mi ne konas kio-Something is mine. I don’t know what*”.

Examples with other affixes are analogue. “Kie ni estas?-Where are we?” is answered by “Ie-Somewhere”, as well as with “Tie-Here”. Moreover “entropio pliigas cxie-Entropy increases everywhere”.

A diagram is found below:



### Links:

Esperanto Access (<http://donh.best.vwh.net/esperanto.php>)

How to build a language: (<http://donh.best.vwh.net/Esperanto/EBook/chap03.html>)

Esperanto studies and interlinguistics (<http://esperantic.org/ced/studies.htm>)

Free Esperanto course (<http://pacujo.net/esperanto/course/>)

Kostenloser Esperantokurs (<http://www.esperanto.de/sprache/kurse/kek/>)