



Novial

Novial is a constructed international auxiliary language (IAL) for universal communication between speakers of different native languages. It was created by Otto Jespersen, a Danish linguist. He who had been involved in the Ido movement, and later in the development of Interlingua.

Its vocabulary is based on the Germanic and Romance languages. Its grammar is influenced by English.

History

Jespersen introduced Novial in his book *An International Language* in 1928. He updated it in his dictionary *Novial Lexike* in 1930. He proposed several modifications in the 1930s. However, the language became dormant with Jespersen's death in 1943. In the 1990s, with the revival of interest in constructed languages brought on by the Internet, some people rediscovered Novial.

Grammar

Novial has a simple and regular grammar. The main word order is SVO. There is no grammatical gender (but the sex or gender of referents can be marked). Verbs don't change according to person or number, and don't have exceptions.

Articles

The definite article is *li* which doesn't change. It is used as in English.

There is no indefinite article, although *un* (one) can be used.

Nouns

Nouns mainly end in **e**, **a**, **o**, **u** or **um** in singular. The plural noun is formed by adding **–s** to the singular (**–es** after a consonant).

There is also a form for indefinite number, expressed by removing the ending of the noun in singular (*leone* – lion, *leon es krue*l – a/the lion is cruel, or lions are cruel).^[1]

Novial	
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Created by	Otto Jespersen (1928)
Setting and usage	<u>International auxiliary language</u>
Purpose	<u>constructed language based on Indo-European languages</u>
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	<u>nov</u>

If a noun refers to a living being, then the form ending in **-e** is neutral in regards to sex, the one ending in **-a** female, and the one ending in **-o** male. If the noun is based on an adjective, nouns referring to living beings can be made with the previously mentioned rule, and furthermore nouns referring to concrete objects with **-u**, and abstractions with **-um**. The third person pronouns follows the same rule, together with the definite article.

The genitive is formed with the ending **-n** (**-en** after a consonant) with the plural being **-sen** (**-esen** after a consonant) or with the preposition **de**.

Other cases are formed with prepositions.

Adjectives

All adjectives end in **-i**, but this may be dropped if it is easy enough to pronounce and no confusion will be caused. Adjectives precede the noun. Adjectives do not agree with the noun but may be given noun endings if there is no noun present to receive them.

Comparative adjectives are formed by placing various particles (*plu*, *tam*, and *min*) in front of the adjective receiving the comparison. Likewise, the superlative particles (*maxim* and *minim*) precede the adjective. The adjective does not receive an inflection to its ending.

Personal pronouns, subject and object

Singular		Plural	
I	me	we	nus
you	vu	you	vus
common, she, he	le, la, lo	they	les, las, los
it	lu, lum		lus

Verbs

Verb forms never change with person or number. Most verb tenses, moods and voices are expressed with auxiliary verbs preceding the root form of the main verb. The auxiliaries follow the same word order as the English equivalent. The following phrases give examples of the verb forms:

Grammar	English	Novial
Infinitive	to protect	protekte
Present	I protect	me protekte
Present Perfect	I have protected	me ha protekte
Simple Past	I protected	me did protekte or me protekted
Past Perfect	I had protected	me had protekte
Future	I shall protect or I will protect	me sal protekte or me ve protekte
Future Perfect	I shall have protected or I will have protected	me sal ha protekte or me ve ha protekte
Future In The Past	I was going to protect	me saled protekte
Conditional	I would protect	me vud protekte
Conditional Perfect	I would have protected	me vud ha protekte
First Imperative	Let me protect!	Let me protekte!
Second Imperative	protect!	protekte!

- Present active participle: *protektent* – "protecting"
- Past passive participle: *protektet* – "protected"

Novial clearly distinguishes the passive of becoming and the passive of being. In English the forms are often the same, using the auxiliary verb *to be* followed by the past participle. However, the passive of becoming is also often expressed with the verb *to get* which is used in the examples below.

The passive voice of becoming is formed with the auxiliary **bli** followed by the root verb form. It can then be conjugated into the previously mentioned forms, for example:

Grammar	English	Novial
Infinitive	to get protected	bli protekte
Present	I get protected	me bli protekte
Present Perfect	I have got protected	me ha bli protekte
Simple Past	I got protected	me blid protekte
Past Perfect	I had got protected	me had bli protekte
Future	I shall get protected or I will get protected	me sal bli protekte or me ve bli protekte
Conditional	I would get protected	me vud bli protekte

The passive voice of being is formed with the auxiliary **es** followed by the past passive participle (stem + -t). For example:

Grammar	English	Novial
Infinitive	to be protected	es protektet
Present	I am protected	me es protektet
Present Perfect	I have been protected	me ha es protektet
Simple Past	I was protected	me did es protektet or me esed protektet
Past Perfect	I had been protected	me had es protektet
Future	I shall be protected or I will be protected	me sal es protektet or me ve es protektet
Conditional	I would be protected	me vud es protektet

Adverbs

An adjective is converted to a corresponding adverb by adding **-m** after the **-i** ending of the adjective.

Comparative and superlative adverbs are formed in the same manner as comparative and superlative adjectives: by placing a specific particle before the adverb receiving the comparison.

Novialides

Novialide is a term used for languages derivatives of Novial and any constructed language project based on or inspired by Novial.

Some Novialides are:

- Novial by the Novial Revisione Komite (a.k.k. "Grupe Novial", "Novial98")
- Novial by James Chandler
- Novial Pro by Marcos Franco
- Eurial by B. Phillip Jonsson
- Novial by Jay Bowks
- Proyo
- Reformad Novial by Vicente Costalago

References

1. Jespersen, O: *An International Language* (https://digital.onb.ac.at/RepViewer/viewer.faces?doc=D_TL_8342993&order=1&view=SINGLE) (p. 89)

Other websites

- A summary of 1928 Novial (<https://web.archive.org/web/20091027023518/http://www.geocities.com/CapitolHill/3141/novial.html>)
- A summary of the 1930 version (<https://web.archive.org/web/20030201065247/http://www.cs.brown.edu/~dpb/novial/n30grammar.html>)

- Novial '98 (<http://www.blahedo.org/novial/novial98.html>)
 - Novial Lexike: International Dictionary (<https://sites.google.com/site/noviallexike/novial-lexike-1930>) Archived (<https://web.archive.org/web/20230228131202/https://sites.google.com/site/noviallexike/novial-lexike-1930>) 2023-02-28 at the [Wayback Machine](#) by Otto Jespersen, 1930
 - Discussiones inter E. de Wahl e O. Jespersen (https://digital.onb.ac.at/RepViewer/viewer.faces?doc=DTL_8134736&order=1&view=SINGLE)
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