

# sanila

a personal conlang by viba  
second edition - september 2021

## intro

sanila is my personal constructed language. it is designed to be a language i can use for self amusement, incorporating a phonology, grammar, and lexicon that i am comfortable with and can enjoy. it was originally created in january 2018.

the grammar is rather isolating and simple and, along with the general semantics of words, is influenced by Jack Eisenmann's conlangs. the vocabulary is mainly a priori (not derived from any existing languages), and the phonology and orthography are both relatively straightforward.

this document describes what i call the second edition of sanila. the first edition retained much of the same base grammar since the language's creation. as a result, i had noticed a few things about it that i would have done differently now. thus, this second edition of sanila is my attempt to do these things differently.

## phonology

sanila uses 27 phonemes, which includes 22 consonants and 5 vowels.

	labial	dental	alveolar	post-alv.	dorsal
nasal	m	n			
plosive	p b	t d ts		tʃ	k g
fricative	f v	θ	s z	ʃ ʒ	h
liquid	w	l r			j

	front	back
close	i	u
mid	e	o
open	a	

## phonotactics

all sanila words are formed according to the following rules:

- syllables are of the structure CV (a consonant followed by a vowel)
- for the first syllable of a word, the initial consonant is optional

## stress

stress in sanila falls on the second-to-last syllable:

*konogu, asali, sipu, utu*

## orthography

all phonemes are written as they are in the IPA, except the following:

/θ ʃ ʒ ts tʃ r/ <þ š ž c č r>

there is also an alternative orthography which may be used if special characters are unavailable or not desired to be used for any reason:

<þ š ž č> : <th sh zh ch>

traditionally, the preferred alphabetical order of sanila is:

a b c č d e f g h i j k l m n o p r s š t u v z ž þ

## grammar

the parts of speech in sanila include: noun, verb, modifier, preposition, particle, conjunction, and interjection.

modifiers are words that describe another word. they may describe any content word (noun, verb, modifier, preposition, or interjection). modifiers may be seen as adjectives, adverbs, determiners, and intransitive verbs in english.

## sentence structure

the most basic sentence might consist of a single verb phrase, with no subject, object, or any other additional information:

*roču.*

[write]

"there is writing (happening)"

it is also acceptable to have a modifier phrase or an interjection as a standalone sentence:

*semo!*  
[good]  
"good!"

*ho!*  
[oh]  
"oh!"

the subject of a verb may be indicated by placing a noun phrase before the verb:

*la osu.*  
[i speak]  
i speak.

the object may be indicated by placing a noun after the verb:

*la ura liripu.*  
[i use computer]  
i use a computer.

if a subject is left unspecified while an object is included, the resulting sentence functions much like a passive construction:

*ura liripu.*  
[use computer]  
a computer is used.

'ba' (to be) is a special kind of verb, which can additionally accept a modifier phrase or prepositional phrase in place of a direct object:

*ani ba semo.*  
[food is good]  
food is good.

*la ba ni dosa.*  
[i am in building]  
i am in a building.

although perhaps this could simply be analyzed as a modifier or prepositional phrase being applied to a verb as usual.

**verbal adjuncts**

'lo' and 'no' are words which are used for many purposes. they both have the same function, which is to indicate a verbal adjunct which may provide context, topic, or perspective to a sentence as a whole. additionally, a clause may be placed in a verbal adjunct phrase, in which case the subject of this clause is inferred to be the state/action of the main sentence as a whole. they are distinguished by their positioning: with 'lo', the structure is "[sentence] lo [adjunct]", whereas with 'no', it is "[adjunct] no [sentence]".

*su letu saneze li lo semo!*

[they enjoy game the 'lo' good]

they are enjoying the game, which is good!

*tiši no su ba ulege haso.*

as for the sun, it is very bright.

## questions

a question with a yes/no response is indicated by placing the particle 'do' at the beginning of a sentence:

*do ru letu fetale oliba?*

['do' you like read book]

do you like to read books?

## commands

an imperative sentence or command is formed by placing the particle 'te' at the beginning of a sentence:

*te dašo nisalo di!*

['te' listen-to music this]

listen to this music!

note that in an imperative sentence, an unspecified subject is usually implied to be 'ru' (you).

## phrase structure

### modifiers

a modifier follows what it modifies:

*masiwa venu*

[city big]

a big city

each modifier describes whatever is *directly* before it.

*masiwa venu heti*

[city big should]

a "shouldly big" city

(a city which should be big)

(the sentence above uses the modifier 'heti', which is a slightly unusual example of a modifier, since most english speakers wont be familiar with the concept of 'should' being a "modifier". however, perhaps it is worth demonstrating such a property.)

if multiple modifiers need to modify the word *separately*, the particle 'ri' may separate them. 'ri' is never a requirement, but it exists if you want to clear up potential ambiguity.

*masiwa venu ri hetu*

[city big 'ri' should]

a "should" big city

(a big city which should exist)

'di' and 'ke' ('this' and 'that') are special modifiers that do not need a noun preceding them:

*di ba imasa.*

[this is sentence]

this is a sentence.

*la letu ke!*

[i like that]

i like that!

## noun grouping

when two nouns are adjacent to each other, the resulting construction indicates that the first noun pertains to the second noun in some way:

*edetu liripu*

[program computer]

computer program

## verb grouping

multiple verbs in a sequence may be placed together, in which each verb has the same subject:

*la tuke deni.*

[i want help]

i want to help.

in english, this is often translated using infinitives or auxillary verbs.

## relative clauses

a relative clause is a clause that acts as a modifier, within which the word 'me' refers to whatever the relative clause is modifying. they are initiated with the particle 'ku'.

*la uza mičuna jaḃe ku ru datu me.*

[i see shirt green 'ku' you wear 'me']

i saw the green shirt that you were wearing.

*la aješi kiki ku ru datu mičuna jaḃe ke lo loda me.*

[i remember day 'ku' you wear shirt green that 'lo' during 'me']

i remember the day (during which) you wore that green shirt.

'ku' is not strictly necessary when immediately preceding 'me':

*oda me jema sani di ba seba!*

[person 'me' create language this is here]

the person who created this language is here!

## prepositions

a prepositional phrase consists of a preposition followed by a noun phrase:

*ni masiwa*

[in city]

in a city

they may be placed after noun phrases, or within a 'lo' or 'no' phrase:

*emeri ni masiwa*

[house in city]

a house in a city

*la roču rosuvi tufi lo ni nomota.*

[i write document long 'lo' at school]

i write long documents at school.

*ni nomota no la roču rosuvi tufi.*

[at school 'no' i write document long]

at school, i write long documents.

'lo' is not strictly necessary if a prepositional phrase follows a verb with no direct object:

*la roču ni nomota.*

[i write in school]

i write in school.

## nounification

the particle 'so' may be placed before a word or clause to make it function as a noun.

*la aveše so semo lo ni dakuli di.*

[i find 'so' good 'lo' in community this]

i am finding good in this community.

*la degu so ru ba peda.*

[i know 'so' you are happy]

i know that you are happy.

there is also a completely optional particle 'ze' which may indicate the end of a sequence of words being nounified:

*so la nivi kovu ze semo ba pane.*

['so' i eat bread 'ze' good is likely]

The good process of me eating bread is likely.

## conjunctions

conjunctions are words which connect phrases or sentences together.

currently, there are no strict rules on how they are used. this may change in the future.

*la toša usedi o devile, udi la degu va čame su.*

[i hear lake or river but i know not location it]

i hear a lake or a river, but i dont know its location.

## numbers

numbers behave as modifiers.

0-9 in sanila are expressed with the following words:

he 0

da 1

tu 2

pi 3

ro 4

pi 5

lu 6

ki 7

ta 8

si 9

*di ba inoli tu*

[this is bird 2]

these are two birds.

larger numbers are expressed by concatenating these syllables for digits (from most to least significant), prefixed with 'ju-':

*bina jukitusi lapi.*

[bee 729 come]

729 bees are coming.

for ordinal numbers, the process is the same but with the prefix 'ofe-':

*bina ofedatu nivi kovu la.*

[bee 12th eat bread me]

the 12th bee is eating my bread.



# dictionary

the html dictionary for sanila can be found here:

<https://viba.neocities.org/sanila/dictionary.html>