REFERENCE GRAMMAR FOR MOBIAN

mopain
[mobain]
build.3.PST.PERF
"we built"

A conlang by Nicbudd
For Segascourge

§1 Introduction

The language of the Sonic universe is not well known. There are many inscriptions in Dr. Eggman's capital city, however a full language hasn't been made or confirmed yet. This language attempts to translate these inscriptions, provide a consistent writing system for the language, and provide a possible language for the Sonic people.

§2 Phonology

The phonological inventory of Mobian is very small, consisting of 10 consonants and 6 vowels. All sounds in the following charts are written in the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA).

§2.1 Consonants

	Bilabial	Alveolar	Velar	Glottal
Nasal	m	n		
Plosive	p	t	k kʷ	ʔ
Fricative		s		
Approximant		l	w	

In this document, /kʷ/ will be romanized to <q> and <ʔ> to <'>. The rest of the consonants will be romanized to their representations in IPA.

§2.2 Vowels

	Front	Mid	Back
Close	i	ɨ	u
Close-Mid	e		o
Open		a	

In this document, /ɨ/ will be romanized to <y>. The rest of the vowels will be romanized to their representations in IPA.

§2.3 Phonotactics

The syllable structure is (C)(C)V(C). When there are two consonants in the onset of a syllable, the cluster must be /p, t, k, kʷ/ followed by /s/. The nucleus can contain any of the vowels or any of the diphthongs /eu, oi, au, ai, ao/. Any other combination of vowels together, even in neighboring syllables, is not allowed. The coda can only have
/m, n, kʷ, ʔ, s/.

Stress is always placed on the first syllable in a word.

§2.4 Allophony

The following allophonic rules apply to Mobian:

/kʷs/ ⭢ [kʷsʷ]
/kw/ ⭢ [kʷ]
/ps/ ⭢ [f]
/p, t, k, kʷ/ ⭢ [b, d, g, gʷ] / V_V
/ʔ/ ⭢ Ø / _C
/ʔ/ ⭢ Ø / C_

§3 Morphology

§3.1 Nouns

Mobian has a noun class system based on animacy. Nouns fall into one of four noun classes: Human (HUM), Animate (ANIM), Inanimate 1 (IN1), and Inanimate 2 (IN2). Human is used for humans and anthros. Animate is used mainly for animals and things with motion that are based around life or life-like things, a category which includes fire. Inanimate 1 is used for things that come from animals or have some limited motion, a category which includes wind and air. Inanimate 2 is used for motionless things, places, and ideas. It is by far the largest class.

Adjectives behave nearly identically to nouns in Mobian, except they don't take a case marker as the entire noun phrase is marked at once.

§3.1.1 Pronouns

Mobian has many pronouns. It has a Singular/Plural distinction, but also a Masculine/Feminine distinction in the singular. It distinguishes between 1st, 2nd, and 3rd persons, and also has a formality distinction on the 2nd and 3rd persons. Since the formal 3rd person singular is merged, Mobian has fourteen total pronouns which get declined to four cases for a total of fifty-six pronouns.

Nominative	Singular		Plural
	Masc.	Fem.	
1st	neu	i	le
2nd Informal	no	kais	psi
2nd Formal	ku	pem	qo
3rd Informal*	son	ny	si'in
3rd Formal*	ken		pesai

Accusative	Singular		Plural
	Masc.	Fem.	
1st	naus	is	les
2nd Informal	nos	kais	pis
2nd Formal	kus	pemas	qas
3rd Informal*	sos	nis	si'ais
3rd Formal*	kenas		pesa

Genitive	Singular		Plural
	Masc.	Fem.	
1st	nemi	imi	lemi
2nd Informal	noi	kaisi	psim
2nd Formal	kiu	pemi	qi
3rd Informal*	somi	ni	si'i
3rd Formal*	kemi		pesai

Dative	Singular		Plural
	Masc.	Fem.	
1st	newu	eu	le
2nd Informal	neu	kaseu	pseu
2nd Formal	ku	peme	qeu
3rd Informal*	soneu	neu	si'eu
3rd Formal*	keneu		peseu

*3rd Informal/Formal distinction is sometimes used as a Proximate/Obviate distinction. It is only used in such a way when there is no other possible distinction (singular/plural, formal/informal, etc.) between the two pronouns.

There are 12 non-human pronouns. They are also used on nouns to mark case and class. See *§3.1.2 Case Markers*.

	Nominative	Accusative	Genitive	Dative
Animate	u	iu	esi	eseu
Inanimate 1	mo	mi	mosi	matsi
Inanimate 2	qi	pi	su	kse

The subject pronoun is dropped when the verb makes it clear, making Mobian a pro-drop language.

Mobian has a set of correlatives, all of them are noun phrases or derived from noun phrases.

	Interrogative	Existential	Negatory	Universal
Adjective	teq	tsi	lu	naim
Person	wa teq	wa tsi	walu	wa naim
Thing	psi teq	psi tsi	psi lu	psi naim
Place	mineq	minsi		minaim
Time	eu teq	eu tsi	elu	eu naim
Way	ke teq	ke tsi		

§3.1.2 Case Markers

All nouns in transitive sentences, except for pronouns, are followed by a case particle. The particle agrees in class with its noun. The case particle does not appear when it is followed by a possessor or when the word is a part of an intransitive sentence. The non-human markers are identical to their respective pronouns. HUM nouns are not marked in the Nominative case.

Case Particle	Nominative	Accusative	Genitive	Dative
HUM	-	pi	si	tse
ANIM	u	iu	esi	eseu
IN1	mo	mi	mosi	matsi
IN2	qi	pi	su	kse

§3.1.3 Numbers

The numbers in Mobian use a duodecimal base twelve system. There are words for each of the digits, zero to eleven (ten is represented with "X" anach digit multiplied by 12. Numbers then group in units of two orders of magnitude (12^2, 12^4, etc.)

1	su	10	sune
2	'o	20	'one
3	nes	30	nesne
4	seko	40	sekoned eleven is represented with "E") and a word for e
5	qu	50	qune
6	soinna	60	soinne
7	ka	70	kane
8	nipsao	80	nipsaone
9	men	90	mene
X	ti	X0	tine
E	konwe	E0	kone
0	aspse	1,00	pi
1,00,00	tetsa	1,00,00,00	likawo

§3.2 Verbs

§3.2.1 Tense, Mood, and Aspect

Verbs conjugate for person, tense, and aspect. The person agrees with the person of the subject of the statement. There are two tenses: non-past and past, and 3 aspects: perfective, imperfective, and perfect. The perfect aspect is only used in the past tense, making 5 total prefixes categories. There are also 2 moods: indicative and subjunctive.

		Person	1st	2nd	3rd
Mood	**Tense**	**Aspect**			
Indicative	**Present**	**Terminative**	-ni	-i	-my
		Imperfective	-	-a	-e
	Past		-tsa	-tsa'i	-le
		Perfective	-qsa	-qsi	-ne
		Perfect	-ain	-is	-ys
Subjunctive	**Future***		-nus	-ys	-mus
	Present	**Imperfective**	-us		-is
	Past		-tsaus	-tsa'us	-leus
		Perfective	-qsus	-qsys	-neus
		Perfect	-ainus	-isus	-ysu

If the future is followed by the "now" adverb (lepsu) it becomes a subjunctive present terminative.

Reflexive verbs are formed by using the same pronoun twice, once in its nominative form and once in its accusative form.

§3.2.2 Additional Verbal Forms

There are a few additional markers the verbs can take:

m-	commissive modality
-ta	negation
i	interrogative particle
qe	passive particle
ela	causative particle

§3.3 Derivation

Mobian includes quite a few affixes that allow for word derivation.

Ending	Starting Word	Ending Word
-ksa'	Noun	Diminutive (Noun)
-pseum	Noun	Augmentative (Noun)
-ta	Adjective	Adverb
-u	Verb	Agent (Noun)
-em	Verb	Result (Noun)
-nu	Verb	Adjective
-ys	Past tense verb	Adjective
Ø	Adjective	Noun
-kaon	Noun	Noun-Like Adjective

Ø represents no ending or change

§4 Syntax

Mobian has a default word order of Subject-Verb-Object word order, but the word order is somewhat free due to the many different types of role marking that are used. Mobian is mostly head-initial, placing its adjectives after the nouns and its possessors after its possesses, however the postpositions are placed after the nouns. Demonstratives and relative clauses are also placed after the nouns.

Noun phrases are constructed in a particular order:

Possessee	Derivation Prefixes	STEM	Derivation Suffixes	Adjective	Case Marker	Postposition

Verb phrases are constructed in this particular order:

Modality	STEM	Derivation Suffixes	TMA	Negation	Interrogative Particle

§5 Writing System

Before Dr. Eggman invaded, the writing system was very simple, but functionally very limited. It was an abjad with only 5 graphemes representing 5 sounds, and when doubled up, they represented 5 additional sounds. Below is what each letter represented in the Mobian Old Script.

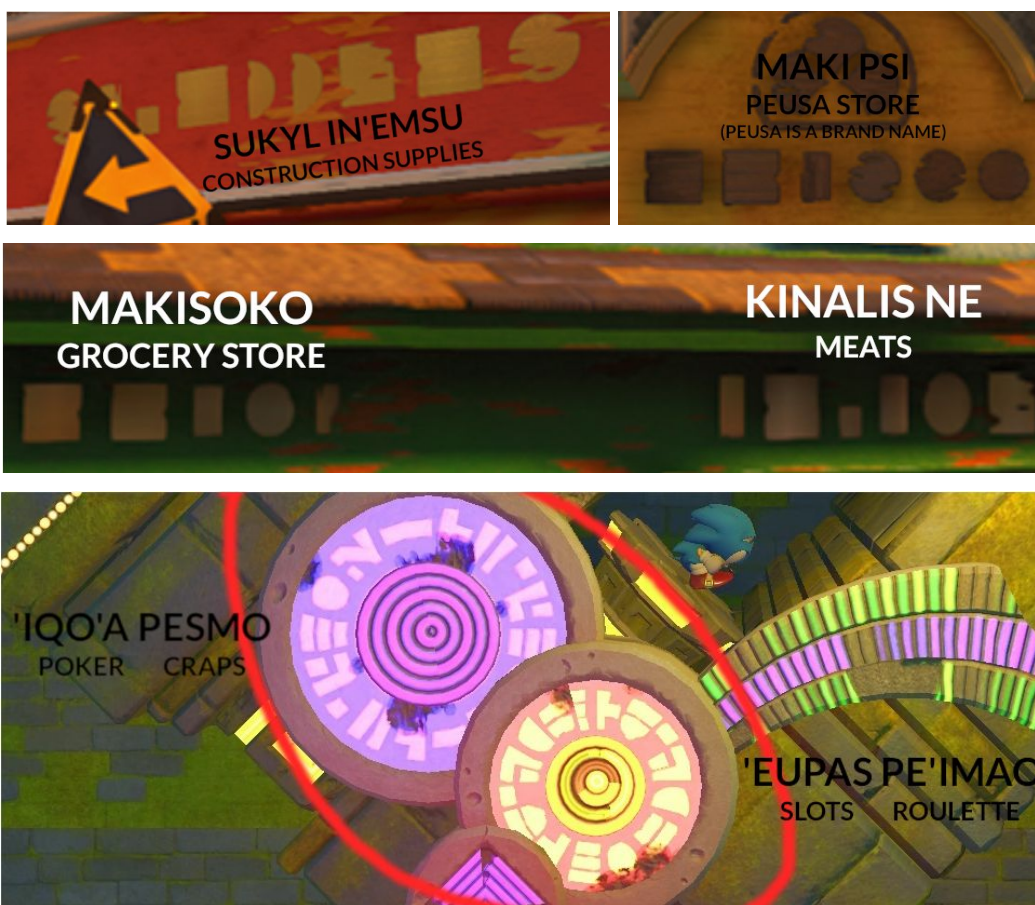| m	n	p	t	k	q	'	s	l	w
■■	■	●●	◗	❙	❙❙	◗◗	●	▪	▪▪

The old script was broken as vowels are fundamentally important to write down. It could be used on signs where the word being used is well understood, but not for much else. Many people tried inventing new writing systems to try to fix this issue, but there were several systems, and none of them were the standard. The people needed a single universal writing system that was concise, simple, and could effectively communicate any sentence. After Dr. Eggman's regime took hold, he combined many of the existing systems into one and called it the Mobian New Script.

	Ø	m	n	p	t	k	q	'	s	l	w
Ø		■■	■	●●	◗	❙	❙❙	◗◗	●	▪	▪▪
a	▼	⊟	⊖	⩵	⌐	⦀	⊥	�	○	◑	⚃
e	▪	⬓	⬒	≡	⅃	⋎	⊦	⊡	⊙	⊖	⧩
i	▲	⋁	⊥	⌐	⊔	⊡	⊏	⊢	▽	⊘	⋊
o	▪	Ⅳ	⊸	⌐	⊔	◼	⊔	⊐	△	⊥	⋯
u	◖	⪴	⬆	⌐	⊔	⊡	⊐	⊣	✛	◐	⋈
y	•	⪴	⬅	∟	⌐	◼	⊓	◪	✕	⊤	⋰

It can be optionally used as a syllabary and as an alphabet, and is often used as both. Syllables are typically written as simply as they can be written while still being clear. Syllables with the vowel <i> are often written as just the coda, for example: <si> can be written as just <s> when it is clear that it also represents an <i> vowel. Spaces are written as single horizontal lines, we would call them dashes.

Syllables beginning with <n, t, k, q, or l> are more often written out alphabetically as their letters are simpler.

Here are some examples from the game:

SUKYL IN'EMSU
CONSTRUCTION SUPPLIES

MAKI PSI
PEUSA STORE
(PEUSA IS A BRAND NAME)

MAKISOKO
GROCERY STORE

KINALIS NE
MEATS

'IQO'A PESMO
POKER   CRAPS

'EUPAS PE'IMAO
SLOTS   ROULETTE

PATI PE
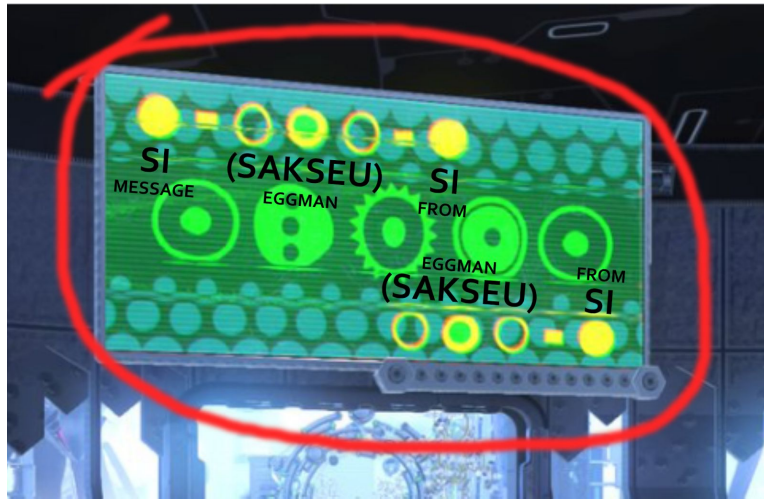CELEBRATE TODAY

PEWAS
DON'T STOP

Eggman also invented a logographic writing system for official messages and orders from his regime. It is written with circular symbols with each symbol representing one word.

§6 Translations

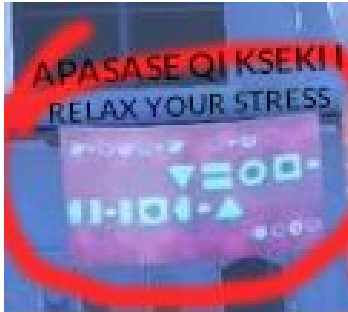Here are some sample sentences, some of which have translations in game.

si sakseu si
[si sakseu si]
message eggman GEN.HUM
"message from eggman"

opeu qe me'imy
[obeu kʷø meʔimɨ]
"stealers (cheaters) are/will be imprisoned"
steal-NMZ PASS-DEO-imprison-3.NPST.IPFV

apasase qi kseki i
[abasase kʷy ksegi i]
"Relax your stress?"
stress 2PL.FORM.GEN relax-2.NPST.IPFV Q

posuq: ta nispai u nitys
[posukʷ ta nispai u nidɨs]
warning hide-2.NPST.IPFV invasion NOM.ANIM occur-3.PERF
"Warning: hide, invasion occurring"

tata (nos/kais/pis) nintsau kse
[tada (nos/kais/pis) nintsau kse]
stab-2.NPST.IPFV-NEG 2(SG/PL).(MASC/FEM) because it.DAT.IN2
Lit. Don't stab yourself because of it.
"Don't worry about it."

kalomse psakowa pitaktsa matsi qsi
[kalomse fagowa pidatsa matsi kʷsʷy]
reside.1.NPST.IPFV city center DAT.IN1 at
"I live in center city (capital)"

§6.1 Phrases

pa
"hello"

saoqqo ksa
[saokʷːo ksa]
morning good
"Good morning"

laleum ke'os
[laleum keʔos]
literally: "magic emeralds"
"Chaos Emeralds"