

Explanations: Lesson 19.

Here are some examples of how to work out the meanings of Esperanto words.

Zamenhof emphasised in his early writings that he had created a language based on “words” that always retain a particular meaning. His use of “words” was very general and included what we now see as **primary words** (words that are in a complete and fixed form) and words made from word parts. We categorise these parts as: a) word endings, b) roots, c) prefixes and d) suffixes. However, a particular Zamenhof “word” may not be limited to just one of these word-part categories. Take “**in**” for example which means female. Although its most familiar use is as a suffix, it can also function as a root. As a root you just add “o” and you have a noun, ino (female or a female). Add an “a” to get ina, an adjective referring to a female person or thing. So in Esperanto ina hundo and hundino both mean a female dog. You have a choice.

Esperanto dictionaries list primary words and word parts but often do not include the word you are looking for. Often you have to create your word from its parts or work out the meaning of word by examining its parts.

The fundamental criterion for an Esperanto word is that it has meaning and makes sense to someone hearing it or reading it.

So how do you work out the meaning of an Esperanto word from its parts?

You treat this task as a word game!

Read the parts from right to left. For example, take the Esperanto word **hejtaĵo**: the **o** signifies a noun (name of something), **aĵ**, that it is a material thing, **hejt**, a root concerned with heating. Therefore, **hejtaĵo** is **a heating material = a fuel**.

So:

AGO: io, kion oni faras. *io (something), kion (which thing, kio, -n signals kion is a direct object), oni (one/ they), faras (does). Something, which one does. Ago is from agi = to act. Therefore, ago (noun) = act/ an act or action/ an action.*

BENZINO: hejtajxo por irigi auxtomobilon. *Hejtaĵo: o noun (name of a thing), (aĵ = material thing, hejt = heat, together mean fuel, por (for/ in order to) irigi (to cause to go) aŭtomobilon: (an automobile, -n signifies that it is the object of the verb irigi. Irigi is made up i, infinitive verb, ig = cause to, and ir meaning go). Benzino is a motor spirit, called gasoline in America and petrol in Australia.*

CERTA: malhezitema. *Malhezitema: a, an adjective, em = propensity to, hezit, concerned with hesitating, mal = opposite. Certain/ sure.*

DANA: rilata al la lando Danujo *Rilata = related, from rilati = to be connected. Lando = country and Danujo = Denmark. Danish.*

DATO: tago, en rilato al la tempo. *Tago (day/a day) in a relation to the time (tempo). Date/ a date.*

EFEKTIVA: reala. *Reala = efektiva. Real, actual, existing.*

- FERIO: libertempo *Liber = free, tempo = time. **Holiday/ a holiday.***
- FIDI: plenkredi pri iu aux io. *Plenkredi has three parts: i, infinitive verb, kred = believe, plen = full. Pri = concerning, iu = someone, aŭ = or, io = something. To fully believe in/ about someone or something. **To trust/ to rely on.***
- FROSTI: esti tre malvarma. *Esti = to be, tre = very, varma = warm, malvarma = cold. **To be very cold.***
- FROTI: preme movi ion sur io alia. *Premi = to press, preme = pressingly. Movi = to move, ion = something (-n, accusative, direct object of move), sur = on, alia = another, io = thing/something. **To rub.***
- GLASO: ujo, el kiu oni drinkas. *Ujo = a container, el = out of, kiu = which, oni one, drinkas = drinks (an alcoholic drink). **Glass/ a glass.***
- GLITI: facile movigi sur graso supraĵo. *Facila = easy, facile = easily, movigi = to cause to move (ig = make or cause to), sur = on, graso = grease/ fat, supraĵo = surface (above material). **To slip.***
- HEJTI: varmigi cxambron aux logxejon. *Varmigi = to cause to be warm, cxambron = a room, aŭ = or, logxejon = place for living, lodging. **To heat.***
- JAKO: vestaĵo por la supra parto de la korpo. *Vesto = a vest or clothing, aĵ actual material thing. Thus, vestaĵo = a piece of clothing. Por = for, la supra = the upper, parto = part, de = of, la korpo = the body. **A jacket.***
- KAPTI: ekteni. *Ek = starting or sudden action, teni = to hold. **To catch/ capture.***
- KONSIDERI: zorge atenti ion. *Zorgi = to care for, zorge, the adverb, caringly. Atenti = to give attention to, ion = something. **To carefully give attention to something.***
- KOSTO: pago necesa por ricevi ion. *Pagi = to pay, pago = a payment, necesa = necessary, por = for (in order to), ricevi = to receive, ion = something. **Cost/ a cost.***
- LITO: aĵo, sur kiu oni dormas. *Aĵo = a material thing, sur = on, kiu = which (sur kui = on which), oni = one, dormas = sleeps. The thing on which one sleeps. **Bed/ a bed.***
- MARMORO: bela blanka ŝtono. *Bela = beautiful, blanka = white, ŝtono = stone/ a stone. A beautiful white stone. **Marble.***
- MATERIALO: krudaĵo necesa por plenumi ion. *Krudaĵo = a crude material thing, necesa = necessary, por = for (in order to), plenumi = to complete (pleni = fill and um makes it "to fulfil"), ion = something.*

*A crude material needed to complete something. **Material/ a material.***

MEDITI: pripensadi.

*Pripensadi is a word of four parts: pri + pens + ad + i. Reading from right to left i = an infinitive (to) verb, ad = continuing action, pens, from pensi to think, and pri = about or concerning. To think for a period of time about something. **Meditate.***

METROPOLO: granda urbego.

*Granda = big, urbo = a city. Adding eg to urbo makes it a big city. So, a big, big city. **Metropolis/ a metropolis.***

MODERNA: nuntempa.

*Nuntempa = a, an adjective, temp = time, nun = now. Now time. **Modern.***

MODESTA: malfiera.

*Malfiera: a, an adjective, fier = proud, mal = opposite. The opposite of proud. **Modest.***

NU: vorto uzata por atentigi pri tio, kio sekvos.

*Vorto = a word, uzata = used, por = for (in order to), atentigi, from atenti = to pay attention and ig to cause or make. So atentigi means to cause to pay attention to. Pri = about, tio = that thing, sekvos is from sekvi = to follow and is in the future tense. A word used to draw attention to what will follow. **Well! Now!***

ORDINARA: kutima.

*Kutima is from kutimi = to be accustomed to. Kutimo = a custom/ habit and even a culture. So ordinara means **customary** or **ordinary.***

PAUXZO: mallonga hezito.

*Mallonga: a = adjective, long = long, mal = opposite, therefore, mallonga = short. Heziti = to hesitate, hezito = hesitation/ a hesitation. So paŭzo is a short hesitation. **Pause.***

PROVIZI: havigi necesajojn.

*Havigi: i, infinitive verb, ig = to cause, havi = to have. Necesajojn is made up of five word parts: n = direct object of a verb (havigi), j = plural, o = noun, aĵ = material thing, neces = necessary. So "havigi necesajojn" means to cause to have the necessary material things. Provizi is to cause to have the necessary provisions. **To equip.***

PUTO: subterejo, el kiu oni levprenas kutime akvon

Subterejo has four parts: o, it's a noun, ej = a place/ location, ter = the earth, sub = under. A subterranean place. El = out of, kiu = which, oni = one (referring to a person). Levprenas has three parts: as = a present-tense verb, pren = take (preni = to

take), lev is from levi = to lift. So, to take by lifting. Kutime = usually, akvon. N signifies what is taken and the akvo part tells us it is water. **Well/ a well.**

RAKONTI: diri historion.

Diri = to say or to tell. Historion: n, a direct object; o, a noun, histori = history/ story. To tell a history or a story (rakonto).

RANO: vivantajeto, kiu logxas sambone teron kaj akvon.

*Vivantajeto has four parts: o, a noun, et = little, aĵ = a material thing, ant = the present participle meaning to be doing now, viv = living from vivi = to live. So a small living creature. Kiu = which, loĝas = lives (stays). Sambone: e, an adverb, bone = well, sam = same, teron = on the earth, kaj = and, akvon = in the water. A small creature that lives equally well on land and water. **Frog/ a frog.***

RIPOZI: resti nenion faranta, eble dormanta.

*Resti = to stay, nenion = nothing, faranta is an adjective, meaning, currently doing, eble = possibly, dormanta an adjective from dormi = to sleep, with the active present participle "ant" meaning sleeping. To stay doing nothing and possibly sleeping. **To repose.***

RULI: cxirkauxmove antauxenigi ion.

*Antauxenigi has four parts: i, an infinitive verb, ig = to cause, en = in, antaux = front of, ion = something. Ĉirkauxmove has three parts: e, adverb, mov is from movi = to move, ĉirkaux = about/ around. So to cause something to go in front with an around motion. **To roll.***

SOBRA: malebria.

*Malebria has three parts: a, an adjective, ebria = intoxicated, mal = opposite. The opposite of intoxicated. **Sober.***

SPECIALA: intencata por unu celo.

*Intencata has three parts: a, an adjective, at, passive present participle meaning "having done to it", intenc is from intenci = to intend, por = for, unu = one, celo = aim/ objective. **Special.***

SUPOZI: kredi ion vera.

*Kredi = to believe, ion = something, vera is from veri = to be true, meaning true. Supozi is therefore the infinitive verb **to suppose.***

SXULTRO: plej supra trunkoparto.

Plej = the most, supra = upper, trunkoparto has three parts, o, a noun, part = part, trunk = trunk.

The uppermost part of the trunk. Šultro = **Shoulder.**

SXVEBI: resti senmove pendanta, kvazaux fluge. *Resti = to remain, senmove has three parts, e, adverb, move = move, sen = without, pendant, three parts, a, adjective, ant, present active participle, means currently doing, pendi = to hang, to suspend (hanging), kvazaŭ = as if, fluge from flugi = to fly, flying. To remain hanging without moving as if flying. **To hover.***

TERURO: timego. *Timego has three parts: o, noun, eg = big, great, tim is from timi = to be afraid. **Terror.***

URGXI: plirapidigi. *Plirapidigi has four parts: i, infinitive verb, ig = to cause, rapid = fast, pli = more. To cause to go faster. Urĝi = **to urge.***

VOJAGXI: iri aux veturi por atingi lokon ne proksiman. *Iri = to go, aŭ = or, veturi = travel in a vehicle, por = for (in order to), atingi = to attain, to reach, lokon = a location, ne = not, proksiman = close. To go or travel in order to reach a more distant location. **Voyage.***

Brian Belcher,
6-8-2018