

Introduction To Modern Prussian Grammar

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WARNING

Just want to make this clear;

I'm not a linguist, I don't have any qualification for talking about this topic;

I am just a random anon, that discovered this language, and want to talk about it;

Any errors that I make here can, and should be addressed;

Also I will assume the people who are reading this, have a basic knowledge of linguistic, so, I will not explain some terms that I am using here.

After this warning, now I think we can start talking about it. So I first want to address what this language is, I want to address even if it's plausible to call it a language. This language is a revival of the old Prussian language, for what I can gather, is carried out by DrPhil Letas Palmaitis, Dr Pr. Arellis and Mikkels Klussis, with its basis on the research of modern prussologists, like Vytautas Mažiulis and Vladimir Toporov. As far as my research went, this movement for the revival of the language, is for people that consider themselves to be prussians, and want to connect with their original language, also I want to note that there is proof that there is at least one native speaker[1].

The language has its principles of reconstruction, it is a very interesting topic to read, but I don't think I have the capability to explain it in a simple language, so if you intrigued by the topic, you can go to the language reconstruction site[2], and see it by yourself.

Phonology

Vowels

	Front	Central	Back
Close	i i̲		u u̲
Close-mid	e e̲		o o̲
Open-mid	ɛ		ɔ
Open		a a̲	

Observations:

1. Nasalized endings still exist, /ã/ and /ũ/

Consonants

	Labial	Dental	Aveolar	Palatal	Velar
Nasal	m	n			
Stop	p b	t d			
Affricate		tʃ	dʒ*		k g
Fricative	f* v	s z	ʃ ʒ*		
Approximant				j	w
Trill			r(r)		

Observations:

1. d̄ only used in long words
2. f only used in long words
3. ʒ only used in long words

Notes:

1. Most consonants have their respective palatalized forms
2. /d/, /t/ and /z/ have labialized forms

This inventory is actually pretty interesting, different in some ways to its sister languages, Lithuanian and Latvian. For what I can gather, it completely lost its velar fricative, and as far as my research goes, it doesn't show to have /dz/, this being pretty weird, mostly because all slavic languages and Baltic languages still have /dz/. One thing I want to address is about the vowels, one speaker's channel[3], that is from where I got most of the phonology described here, he sometimes in the diphthongs aī and aū pronounces them as /æ:/ and /ɔ:/, but it's not consistent.

Grammar

Nouns

All the grammar information has come from a dictionary of the language[4]. Nouns are very simple, they are either masculine, feminine or neuter(though neuter and masculine have the same declensions, in most cases), they decline in number and grammatical case. They decline in number only on singular and plural, and in cases they decline in nominative, genitive, accusative, dative. There isn't any very interesting aspect about them to explain, so I will talk about their declensions.

Masculine/Neuter

	Singular	Plural
Nominative	∅	-ai
Genitive	-as	-an
Dative	-u	-amas
Accusative	-an	-ans

Feminine

	1°		2°		3°	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
Nominative	-a	-as	-ja	-jai	-i	-is
Genitive	-as	-an	-jas	-jan	-is	-in
Dative	-ai	-mans	-jai	-jamans	-ei	-mans
Accusative	-an	-ans	-jan	-jans	-in	-ins

The three types of declension of the feminine that I showed, are the three most common, the same for the masculine/neuter one, they are only the most common, but generally, most nouns will follow one of the declensions showed above. But it isn't uncommon to nouns to change after they're declined, it's basically random how the it will change, so you'll just have to memorize how that word will be in which case.

Adjectives

Adjectives precede the nouns they describe, they agree with their name in gender, number and grammatical case. Adjectives are very easy because their declensions are almost the same as the nouns ones, so there is not much memorization here, I will touch the superlative and comparative forms later, for now let's see the declensions.

Masculine/Neuter

	Singular	Plural
Nominative	∅ or -an*	-ai
Genitive	-as	-an
Dative	-asmu	-amas
Accusative	-an	-ans

Feminine

	1°		2°		3°	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
Nominative	-a or -ā	-as	-ja	-jai	-i	-is
Genitive	-as	-an	-jas	-jan	-is	-in
Dative	-ai	-mans	-jai	-jamans	-ei	-mans
Accusative	-an	-ans	-jan	-jans	-in	-ins

The only thing to note is that the neuter nominative singular receives -an. Now talking about the superlative and comparative forms of adjectives, both of them are kinda irregular in a sense, but basically, the comparative form of an adjective is formed by adding the suffix -isis, and the superlative form, you just take the comparative form and add the prefix uka -. How you form the phrase is a little strange, for the comparative form is: Stawīds+Adjective(Comparative form) +Kāigi+Adjective, stawīds agrees with the adjective in the comparative form in gender, number and case. The superlative form is: Adjective(Superlative form)+Pēr+Adjective. The superlative and comparative forms agree in gender, number and case.

Verbs

Verbs are the most complex of the grammar, they have 5 moods: Indicative, Optative, Imperative, Participle and Subjunctive. And also 4 tenses in the indicative mood: Present, Past, Perfect and Future. Which one of them with their particular conjugation. Some things that I want to make clear, before showing the conjugation tables:

- All verbs in the infinitive forms, end with one of the two endings, twei or tun, twei verbs are generally more common.
- The verbs, bütwei(to be) and wirstwei(to become), are used in some tenses as auxiliaries.

Indicative Present Tense Twei Verbs

	1°		2°		3°	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
1°	-ma	-mai	-i	-imai	-a	-imai
2°	-sei	-tei	-i	-itei	-a	-itei
3°	-t	-t	-i	-i	-a	-a

Indicative Present Tense Tun Verbs

	1°		2°		3°	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
1°	-a	-imai	-ja	-jimai	-i	-imai
2°	-a	-itei	-ja	-jitei	-i	-itei
3°	-a	-a	-ja	-ja	-i	-i

Note:

1. This is by far from perfect table of conjugation, verbs are very variable and irregular, it isn't uncommon to see tun conjugations on twei verbs, the purpose of the table is to show the most common.

Indicative Past Tense

As far as I can see, past tense is very, very irregular, trying to map or make a pattern out of it seems just a waste of time, you would be better off just memorizing. I want to note, if anyone is interested, it would be very nice if more people could analyze and see if a pattern appears.

Indicative Perfect Tense

This one you have two forms, one that needs to use the auxiliary verb *būtwei* with the perfect conjugation of the verb, and the other that you use a slightly different form of the perfect conjugation. Both of them are very regular and simple. Also I want to note that the third person neuter singular, has its own conjugation.

	1°		2°	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
1°	Asma -uns	Asmai -usis	-usi	-usjas
2°	Assei -uns	Astei -usis	-usi	-usjas
3.M.F°	Ast -uns	Ast -usis	-usi	-usjas
3.N°	Ast -us	∅	-us	∅

Indicative Future Tense

The verb conjugation is the same as the perfect form, what changes is the auxiliary used, this time, we're using *wīrstwei*.

	1°		2°	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
1°	Wīrst -uns	Wīrstmai -usis	-usi	-usjas
2°	Wīrst -uns	Wīrstei -usis	-usi	-usjas
3.M.F°	Wīrst -uns	Wīrst -usis	-usi	-usjas
3.N°	Wīrst -us	∅	-us	∅

Participle Mood

The participle mood has 3 forms: Present, Past and Passive. For what I can see they work in a similar way as Greek participles, I can't really say this for sure, because I didn't see these forms being much used, so if anyone wants to analyze this better, you're welcome. Also they decline in gender, case and number. These forms are somewhat irregular, I am going to talk about one pattern that showed in at least some verbs, but don't take them as an absolute rule of thumb.

Participle Mood Present

	Masculine		Feminine		Neuter	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
Nominative	-ants	-antjai	-antī	-antjas	-anti	-antjai
Genitive	-antis	-antin	-antjas	-antjan	-antis	-antin
Dative	-antismu	-antimmans	-antjai	-antjāmans	-antismu	-antimmans
Accusative	-antin	-antins	-antjan	-antjans	-antin	-antins

Participle Mood Past

	Masculine		Feminine		Neuter	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
Nominative	-uns	-usis	-usi	-usjas	-us	-us
Genitive	-usjas	-usin	-usjas	-usjan	-usjas	-usin
Dative	-usjasmu	-usimans	-usjai	-usjamans	-usjasmu	-usimans
Accusative	-usin	-usins	-usjan	-usjans	-us	-us

Participle Mood Passive

	Masculine		Feminine		Neuter	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
Nominative	-ts	-tāi	-tā	-tas	-tan	-tāi
Genitive	-tas	-tan	-tas	-tan	-tas	-tan
Dative	-tasmu	-tammans	-tai	-tāmans	-tasmu	-tammans
Accusative	-tan	-tans	-tan	-tans	-tan	-tans

Optative Mood

This mood indicates a wish or hope. Pretty simple and regular, most times you simply need to add the suffix -sei, that is it.

Imperative Mood

This one indicates a command or request, this one you will only conjugate for the second person singular and plural, very regular, and very simple.

	Singular	Plural
2°	-ais	-aiti

Subjunctive Mood

I will not comment much on this mood, again, I didn't find enough resources to take a precise take on this mood, so, if anyone is interested to study this, you're welcome. Now here is a table with the most common conjugation.

	Singular	Plural
1°	-lai	-limai
2°	-lai	-litei
3°	-lai	-lai

Conclusion

This is a very interesting reconstruction of the old Prussian language, I highly encourage anyone to go there, observe the language, and criticize this writing. This is by far from a good writing on this language, I did this because I have nothing better to do, and I am really interested in this language. If you want a place where you can study the language, you can go to the site Bilā[5], they have a lot of other good resources, you can visit the Facebook page Glabis Niktorius[6], and you can visit the YouTube channel of one of the speakers, that I've already mentioned in the phonology part, Prūsiska Tāliwidāsna.

I am in no way associated with these sources, I am sharing them because I appreciate their work, I am not earning anything writing this.

Sources:

- [1] <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JTfg0DvHXKA>
- [2] <http://poshka.bizland.com/prussian/reconstructions.htm>
- [3] https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqgLH_SLh3apNZjSruEXZMg
- [4] <https://wirdeins.twanksta.org/>
- [5] <https://bila.twanksta.org/>
- [6] <https://www.facebook.com/romowe>