



Second Hong Kong Linguistics Olympiad (2020)

Individual Contest Problems

14 June 2020

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

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Rules for writing out the solutions

Do not copy the statements of the problems. Write down your solution to each problem on the answer booklet. Unless stated differently, you should describe any patterns or rules that you identified in the data, otherwise your solution will not be awarded full marks.

Problem 1 (25 points). Ainu

Given below are some sentences in the Shizunai dialect of Ainu¹ and their translations into English.

1. korpa as wa isam	<i>We have had.</i>
2. inkartek an wa an	<i>I was glancing.</i>
3. e inkar wa an	<i>You (sg) were seeing.</i>
4. inu wa isam	<i>He has listened.</i>
5. iperepa wa oka	<i>They were feeding.</i>
6. e ipe wa an	<i>You (sg) were eating.</i>
7. eci inuruypa wa oka	<i>You (pl) were listening a lot.</i>
8. cie korettek wa isam	<i>We have lent you (sg).</i>
9. cieci nukarruypa wa isam	<i>We have stared at you (pl).</i>
10. eun nurepa wa oka	<i>You (sg) were telling us.</i>
11. un etekpa wa oka	<i>He was tasting us.</i>
12. ecien nutek wa an	<i>You (pl) were listening to me a little.</i>
13. an yaynu wa isam	<i>I have thought.</i>
14. an eruypa wa oka	<i>I was devouring them.</i>
15. inuruypa as wa isam	<i>We have listened a lot.</i>
16. en e wa an	<i>They were eating me.</i>
17. e yaykore wa isam.	<i>You (sg) have given yourself (sg).</i>
18. cieci nurepa wa oka.	<i>We were telling you (pl).</i>

(a) Translate into English. If you think that there are multiple possible translations, write them all:

19. e nukarepa wa isam	21. e koreruy wa an
20. ci yaynukarpa wa oka	22. nuruypa wa isam

(b) Translate into Ainu:

23. <i>He was listening to you (pl).</i>	26. <i>We have eaten.</i>
24. <i>You (sg) were thinking a lot.</i>	27. <i>They were staring.</i>
25. <i>We were borrowing him.</i>	28. <i>I have glanced at them.</i>

—James Britton, Vlad A. Neacșu

¹ Ainu is an indigenous language of Japan that is unrelated to Japanese. It is now almost extinct, but was previously spoken by the Ainu people around the northern island of Hokkaido up until the last century.

Problem 2 (25 points). Semitic semi-Seminar on Cognates

Arabic and Hebrew² today are two different, mutually unintelligible languages, but apart from grammatical similarities they do share a number of lexical correspondences as well. Besides loanwords (mostly from Arabic to Hebrew) from different historical periods, scholars identified over a thousand *cognates*: words with a common etymological origin from Proto-Semitic, the partially reconstructed common ancestor language spoken around 6000 years ago.

The two lists below show pairs of cognates, but the pairs are mixed: Arabic on the left, Hebrew on the right. The first match (1- a) is given for you.

شمس	1.	←————→	a.	שמש
غضب	2.		b.	כלב
ولد	3.		c.	מלך
أرض	4.		d.	עבד
בطن	5.		e.	ארץ
كلب	6.		f.	עצב
حبل	7.		g.	קרן
ملك	8.		h.	ילד
قرن	9.		i.	חבל
عبد	10.		j.	בטן

Thanks to regular and consistent sound changes, we have some easily identifiable patterns. Take for example the following words from the list above (transcribed into the Latin script):

Arabic	Hebrew	Translation	Arabic	Hebrew	Translation
kalb	kelev	dog	shams	shemesh	sun
malik	melekh	king	qarn	qeren	horn
'arḍ	'erets	land, earth	ghaḍab	'etsev	anger, sadness
'abd	'eved	slave	walad	yeled	child

² Arabic and Hebrew are two languages that are spoken around the Middle East and North Africa. Both languages have long histories, going back to ancient times. They belong to the Semitic branch of the Semito-Hamitic language family, which is the old name for what we nowadays call the Afroasiatic language family. Some of the oldest recorded and attested languages belong to this family, for example Egyptian and Sumerian – now dead languages. In this puzzle we are going to look at Modern Standard Arabic and Modern Hebrew, and some parallels between them.

(a) What is the transliteration of the two word-pairs in the lists that we did not give in the examples above?

- a. _____ → _____
b. _____ → _____

(b) The chart below shows a few letters in both scripts, with their transliteration. Note that some letters may have different forms depending on the context they appear in. Fill in the gaps (1) - (15):

Hebrew:

א	צ / צ	ע	נ / נ	כ / כ	י	ט	ה	פ	ב	ב	א
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	k	(5)	t	h	(6)	(7)	b	' (alef)

Arabic:


ط / ط / ط	ر / ر	د / د	ح / ح / ح	ب / ب / ب	أ
ṭ	(8)	(9)	ḥ	(10)	' (alif)

و / و	ن / ن / ن	ل / ل / ل	ك / ك / ك	ض
(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)

(c) Pair the matching cognates on the first page together.

(d) If *thousand* in Arabic is ألف and the final letter 'f' in Hebrew is פ, what is the transliteration of אלף – also meaning *thousand* in Hebrew?

(!) No additional explanation besides the answers is required, nor will be marked.

 The apostrophe (') in both languages represents a glottal stop /ʔ/. In Arabic it is written by a *hamza*, that often “sits” on top of an *alif*, in Hebrew it is represented by an *alef*, and often omitted in pronunciation. Here, you should just consider it a consonant, and treat it like you would treat any other consonant!

The semi-circle in the top index (◌̕) represents a voiced pharyngeal fricative /ʕ/, which is an odd sound made by contracting the muscles in the throat. It gives Arabic its unique flavor we can easily hear. In Modern Hebrew it is silent and almost only appears in writing. Just think of it as an ordinary consonant!

Problem 3 (25 points). Kazakh occupations

Several Kazakh³ people are talking about their occupations. Look at the following sentences.

	Kazakh	English
1.	Oleg jumisshi.	<i>Oleg is a worker.</i>
2.	sinlilering dāriger.	<i>Your (pl.) younger sisters are doctors.</i>
3.	balalarim oqushi.	<i>My children are pupils.</i>
4.	äjeng esepshi.	<i>Your (pl.) grandma is an accountant.</i>
5.	biz muğalim emespiz.	<i>We are not teachers.</i>
6.	siz jumisshisiz.	<i>You (pl.) are a worker.</i>
7.	Marattyng balasi aspaz.	<i>Marat's son is a cook.</i>
8.	ağam oqushi emes.	<i>My elder brother is not a pupil.</i>
9.	biz studentpiz.	<i>We are students.</i>
10.	äkesi injener.	<i>His father is an engineer.</i>
11.	ağasi student.	<i>His elder brother is a student.</i>
12.	oqushiler satushi emes.	<i>The pupils are not salespersons.</i>
13.	Olegdyng apkeleri dāriger.	<i>Oleg's elder sisters are doctors.</i>

There are given the following extra words in Kazakh and their translations into English:


malshi	<i>herdsman</i>
qudasha	<i>sister-in-law</i>
ini	<i>younger brother</i>

(a) Translate into English:

14. **apkesi jumisshi emes**
15. **äjem aspaz emes**
16. **balang malshi**

(b) Translate into Kazakh:

17. *His son is not an accountant.*
18. *His sister-in-law is a student.*
19. *Baltabek's younger sister is a teacher.*
20. *My younger brothers are engineers.*
21. *You (pl.) are not a herdsman.*
22. *My elder brothers are salespersons.*
23. *Your (pl.) elder sister is a pupil.*

 **a - ä; i - ĭ** and **g - ğ** are different letters in Kazakh. Oleg, Marat and Baltabek are Kazakh people's names.

—Anran Nason Cao

³ Kazakh is a Turkic language spoken by around 21 million Kazakh people in East and Central Asia. It is the official language of Kazakhstan. Most speakers of the language are Kazakh people living in Kazakhstan, Russia, Xinjiang of the Northwest China and Western Mongolia.

Problem 4 (25 points). Thai

Here are some words in Thai⁴ that were loaned from English written in the Thai script, as well as the English words they were loaned from, both in arbitrary order:

- | | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. การ์ด | a. <i>Afghanistan</i> | 10. สตาร์บัคส์ | j. <i>Mickey Mouse</i> |
| 2. อัลบั้ม | b. <i>album</i> | 11. อัลบั้ม | k. <i>Netherlands</i> |
| 3. มิกกี้เมาส์ | c. <i>card</i> | 12. สเปน | l. <i>New Zealand</i> |
| 4. อีลิปต์ | d. <i>club</i> | 13. วิสกี้ | m. <i>rum</i> |
| 5. อิตาลี | e. <i>Egypt</i> | 14. ทวี | n. <i>Spain</i> |
| 6. กอล์ฟ | f. <i>golf</i> | 15. ไวน์ | o. <i>Starbucks</i> |
| 7. แจ็ก | g. <i>Italy</i> | 16. นิวซีแลนด์ | p. <i>TV</i> |
| 8. เนเธอร์แลนด์ | h. <i>Jack</i> | 17. อัฟกานิสถาน | q. <i>whiskey</i> |
| 9. รัม | i. <i>Leonardo Dicaprio</i> | 18. ลีโอนาร์โด ดิแคพรีโอ | r. <i>wine</i> |

(a) Match the correct correspondences.

(b) Translate the following into English:

- | | | | |
|-------------|---------------|-----------------|------------|
| 19. ฟรี | 22. พาสปอร์ต | 25. บาสเก็ตบอล | 27. รักบี้ |
| 20. แท็กซี่ | 23. แบดมินตัน | 26. อินโดนีเซีย | 28. โกโก้ |
| 21. ปาร์ตี้ | 24. เค้ก | | |

(!) No additional explanation besides the answers is required, nor will be marked.

—Pengye Yang, Tung-Le Pan

Editors: Xuefeng Gao[†], Chu-Ren Huang (editor-in-chief), Xin Luo, Vlad A. Neacșu, Tung-Le Pan, Yin Zhong.

Good Luck!

This year's HKLO problem set is dedicated to the memory of Xuefeng Gao

⁴ Thai (historically: Siamese) is the official language of Thailand and the first language of the Central Thai people. It is a member of the Tai group of the Kra–Dai language family, and one of over 60 languages of Thailand.