



Second Hong Kong Linguistics Olympiad (2020)

Individual Contest Problems

Solutions

14 June 2020

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Second Hong Kong Linguistics Olympiad
14 June 2020
Individual Contest Solutions

Problem 1 (25 points). Ainu

(a)

19. *You (sg) have showed them.*
20. *We were seeing ourselves.*
21. *He was donating you (sg). / They were donating you (sg). / You (sg) were donating him.*
22. *He has listened to them a lot. / They have listened to them a lot.*

(b)

23. **eci nupa wa oka**
24. **e yaynuruy wa an**
25. **ci koretekre wa an**
26. **ipepa as wa isam**
27. **inkarruypa wa oka**
28. **an nukartekpa wa isam**

Explanations:

1. Time / Aspect

- a. present perfect (has/have V3) – **wa isam**
- b. past continuous (was/were + Ving):
 - i. **wa an** – if the verb is considered *singular**.
 - ii. **wa oka** – if the verb is considered *plural**.

*In Ainu the plurality of the verb is given by the subject for intransitive verbs and by the object for the transitive verbs.

2. Person markers

Person	Subject (Intransitive)	Subject (Transitive)	Object
1 sg.	-an	an-	en-
2 sg.	e-	e-	e-
3 sg.	0	0	0
1 pl.	-as	ci-	un-
2 pl.	eci-	eci-	eci-
3 pl.	0	0	0

The dash before or after the particle indicates the position with respect to the verb (before or after). In the case of transitive verbs, if both the subject and the object particles are before verb, they merge together with the subject being first and the object after.

3. **Plurality marker** (as defined above): The suffix **-pa** attached to the verb.

4. **Verb-modifying affixes:**

- a. **yay-** : reflexive marker (note that in Ainu, *listening to oneself = thinking*)
- b. **-ruy** : verb intensifier (can be translated by *a lot*, but it also bears a semantic role modifying the verb (*eat-devour, see-stare* etc.)
- c. **-tek** : verb diminisher (the opposite of **-ruy** – *eat-taste, see-glance* etc.)
- d. **-(r)e** : causative marker (*eat* → *make someone eat = feed*, *see* → *make someone see = show*, *listen = make someone listen* → *tell*). If the verb root ends in **-r**, the suffix becomes **-e**.

5. **Verb roots:** Each verb has two different roots depending on transitivity:

Translation	Intransitive root	Transitive root
to eat	ipe	e
to see	inkar	nukar
to listen	inu	nu
to have	kor	-
to give	-	kore**

Even though for solving this problem **kore (give) can be taken as a separate root, it is actually the causative of **kor** (have → to make someone have = give).

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

(a)

- a. ḥabl → ḥevel
- b. baṭn → beten

Note that the choice of vowels won't be taken into consideration.

(b)

Hebrew:

ר	צ / צ	ע	נ / נ	כ / כ	י	ט	ח	ד	ב	ב	א
r	ts	ʿ (ayin)	n	k	y	t	ḥ	d	v	b	' (alef)

Arabic:

ط / ط / ط	ر / ر	د / د	ح / ح / ح	ب / ب / ب	أ
ṭ	r	d	ḥ	b	' (alif)

و / و	ن / ن / ن	ل / ل / ل	ك / ك / ك	ض
w	n	l	k	ḍ

(c) 1 - a, 2 - f, 3 - h, 4 - e, 5 - j, 6 - b, 7 - i, 8 - c, 9 - g, 10 - d.

(d) 'elef

Explanations:

In order to answer the questions, one must identify the words in the lists and pair them up with their cognates. One also has to come up with observations about the writing system and noticing patterns and phonological changes are crucial as well. To be able to start decoding, one must notice the first clue, that is “the first match (1. a.) is given for you” and the next paragraph containing the examples: **kalb** → **kelev** “dog”; **malik** → **melekh** “king”; **ʿarḍ** → **ʿerets** “land, earth”; **shams** → **shemesh** “sun”; **walad** → **yeled** “child”. Out of words given, only one starts and ends identically in Hebrew. Thus, we have our first identified word-pair in transliteration: **shams** → **shemesh**, meaning “sun”, matched with their original form شمس and שמש.

The next step is to find out which word belongs to which transliteration. We can assume that from the recurring pattern introduced above that the CeCeC belongs to Hebrew, while CaCC, CaCiC and CaCaC are the Arabic versions. It should now become evident that this writing system (for both languages) only notes consonants, since both words have only three characters. From “sun” we identified the letter ‘m’ in both scripts, and so we should look for something with an ‘m’. There is only one other ‘m’, and we can match it with the pair **malik** → **melekh** “king” from the examples given.

At this point it should be clear that both scripts write from right to left. From here, we can identify the letter ‘l’ and the final form of ‘kh’. Since there are 4 words with ‘l’, we need to use ‘kh’ as well. We might panic now because there is no other final ‘kh’ to find, but after a brief glimpse to the chart under task (b) we can identify the Hebrew ‘k’ which leads us to find the word with the roots k-l-v, and kelev “dog”. Here we can pinpoint the corresponding ‘b’ (Arabic) and ‘v’ (Hebrew).

Consulting the charts in tasks (b) and (c), and the eight examples given, we can decode every character step-by-step and find our matching pairs.

Problem 3 (25 points). Kazakh occupations

(a)

14. *His elder sister is not a worker.*
15. *My grandma is not a cook.*
16. *Your (pl) son is a herdsman.*

(b)

17. **balasi esepshi emes**
18. **qudashasi student**
19. **Baltabektyng sinlisi muğalim**
20. **inilerim injener**
21. **siz malshi emessiz**
22. **ağalarim satushi**
23. **apkeng oqushi**

Explanations:

1. **Possessive affixes:**

- a. 1 sg: **-m** (after a vowel) / **-im** (after a consonant)
- b. 2 pl: **-ng** (after a vowel) / **-ing** (after a consonant)
- c. 3 sg and 3 pl: **-si** (after a vowel) / **-i** (after a consonant)

*Pronouns are often omitted in spoken Kazakh when the nouns have specific possessive affixes.

2. **Pronouns:** *we* = **biz**, *you (pl)* = **siz**

3. **Predicate nouns:** *we* = **-piz**, *you (pl)* = **-siz**, *he/she/they* = **0**

*If there's a negation, the suffix is added to the negation word (**emes**).

4. **Harmonies:** Affixes will change depending on the main vowels or ending consonants of the stem words.

- a. Vowel harmony: **Plural: -lar** (after front vowels - **a**), **-ler** (after central and back vowels - **e** or **i**)
- b. Consonant harmony: **Possession affix: -dyng** (after voiced consonants - **g**), **-tyng** (after voiceless consonants - **t**)

Problem 4 (25 points). Thai

(a)

- | | | | | | | | | |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| 1 - c | 2 - d | 3 - j | 4 - e | 5 - g | 6 - f | 7 - h | 8 - k | 9 - m |
| 10 - o | 11 - b | 12 - n | 13 - q | 14 - p | 15 - r | 16 - l | 17 - a | 18 - i |

(b)

- | | | | |
|------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| 19. <i>free</i> | 22. <i>passport</i> | 25. <i>basketball</i> | 27. <i>rugby</i> |
| 20. <i>taxi</i> | 23. <i>badminton</i> | 26. <i>Indonesia</i> | 28. <i>cocoa</i> |
| 21. <i>party</i> | 24. <i>cake</i> | | |