Twelfth International Olympiad in Linguistics
Beijing (China), 21–25 July 2014
Individual Contest Problems

Do not copy the statements of the problems. Write down your solution to each problem on a separate sheet or sheets. On each sheet indicate the number of the problem, the number of your seat and your surname. Otherwise your work may be mislaid or misattributed.

Your answers must be well-supported by argument. Even a perfectly correct answer will be given a low score unless accompanied by an explanation.

**Problem #1 (20 points).** Here are some verb forms of Benabena and their English translations:

- **nohobe** I am striking him
- **kahalune** we will strike you\(_s\)g
- **nokoho’ibe** we both are striking you\(_s\)g
- **nolenufu’inagihe** because we both are piercing you\(_p\)l
- **nolifi’ibe** you both are piercing us
- **nofunagihe** because I am piercing him
- **nofine** you\(_s\)g are piercing him
- **nifila’ibe** you both will pierce me
- **nonahatagihe** because you\(_s\)g are striking me
- **lenahalube** I will strike you\(_p\)l
- **nahalanagihe** because you\(_p\)l will strike me
- **lahala’ibe** you both will strike us
- **nofutagihe** because we are piercing him
- **lenifulu’ibe** we both will pierce you\(_p\)l
- **noho’imagihe** because we both are striking him

(a) Translate into English:

- **nonifibe, haku’ibe, lifulatagihe, nokufune, nolahanagihe.**

(b) Translate into Benabena:

- you both are striking him;
- we will pierce you\(_s\)g;
- because we are striking you\(_p\)l;
- because you\(_p\)l will pierce him.

△ The Benabena language belongs to the Trans-New Guinea family. It is spoken by approx. 45,000 people in Papua New Guinea.

—Ivan Derzhanski
Problem #2 (20 points). Here are the singular, dual and plural forms of some Kiowa nouns and their English translations. Not all forms are given, although all exist.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>singular</th>
<th>dual</th>
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<td>pʰjaboaoad</td>
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<td>matʰc</td>
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<td>tʰapʰpaa</td>
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Fill in the cells with the question marks.

The Kiowa language belongs to the Kiowa–Tanoan family. It is an endangered language, only spoken by a few hundred people in Oklahoma, USA.

The Kiowa words are given in a simplified transcription. k’, t’, p’, kʰ, pʰ, tʰ are consonants; o is a vowel.

—Aleksejs Pēgašs
Problem #3 (20 points). Once upon a time in the Tangut Empire ("the Great State of the White and the Lofty") there lived two brothers and two sisters. They each had a son and a daughter.

Below you see statements in the Tangut language concerning the relations between these people. The name Lhie²nyn² belongs to a man.

1. Ldu²še³ Nie²tse¹ 'yn¹ kâj¹ ngu².
2. Lhie²nyn² Ngw¹mbny² 'yn¹ lio² ngu².
3. Se¹na¹ Wa²nie¹ 'yn¹ ndon¹ ngu².
4. Ldu²še³ Šan¹nia¹ 'yn¹ ngu².
5. Šan¹nia¹ Syn¹me¹ 'yn¹ ñwej¹ ngu².
6. Ldu²še³ Syn¹me¹ 'yn¹ ñwej¹ ngu².
7. Ldu²še³ Wa²nie¹ 'yn¹ ñwej¹ ngu².
8. Ke¹žey² Ldu²še³ 'yn¹ ñwej¹ ngu².
9. Ldu²še³ Ke¹žey² 'yn¹ ñwej¹ ngu².
10. Lhie²nyn² Syn¹me¹ 'yn¹ wia¹ ngu².
11. Lhie²nyn² Sie¹tsie¹ 'yn¹ io¹ ngu².
12. Ke¹žey² Wa²nie¹ 'yn¹ lio² ngu².
13. Ke¹žey² Sie¹tsie¹ 'yn¹ ñwej¹ ngu².
14. Lhie²nyn² Ke¹žey² 'yn¹ ñwej¹ ngu².
15. Syn¹me¹ Nie²tse¹ 'yn¹ ñwej¹ ngu².
16. Ngon²ngwe¹ Mbe²phon¹ 'yn¹ kâj¹ ngu².
17. Syn¹me¹ Se¹na¹ 'yn¹ kâj¹ ngu².
18. Ldu²še³ Sie¹tsie¹ 'yn¹ ndon¹ ngu².
19. Lhie²nyn² Wa²nie¹ 'yn¹ wia¹ ngu².
20. Ldu²še³ Se¹na¹ 'yn¹ ñwej¹ ngu².
21. Wa²nie¹ Se¹na¹ 'yn¹ mu¹ ngu².
22. Šan¹nia¹ Wa²nie¹ 'yn¹ ñwej¹ ngu².
23. Ngon²ngwe¹ Ldu²še¹ 'yn¹ la² ngu².
24. Lhie²nyn² Mbe²phon¹ 'yn¹ mu¹ ngu².
25. Mbe²phon¹ Ldu²še¹ 'yn¹ ma¹ ngu².
26. Lhie²nyn² Nie²tse¹ 'yn¹ io¹ ngu².
27. Lhie²nyn² Ngon²ngwe¹ 'yn¹ mu¹ ngu².
28. Šan¹nia¹ Sie¹tsie¹ 'yn¹ lio² ngu².
29. Lhie²nyn² Ldu²še¹ 'yn¹ io¹ ngu².
30. Lhie²nyn² Se¹na¹ 'yn¹ ñwej¹ ngu².
31. Šan¹nia¹ Nie²tse¹ 'yn¹ mu¹ ngu².
32. Lhie²nyn² Šan¹nia¹ 'yn¹ io¹ ngu².
33. Ngon²ngwe¹ Ke¹žey² 'yn¹ ny¹ ngu².
34. Syn¹me¹ Šan¹nia¹ 'yn¹ ñwej¹ ngu².
35. Mbe²phon¹ Sie¹tsie¹ 'yn¹ ma¹ ngu².
36. Nie²tse¹ Sie¹tsie¹ 'yn¹ ___ ngu².

(a) Reconstruct the family tree.
(b) Fill in the blank in the last sentence (there is only one way to do this).

△ Tangut is an extinct language of the Tibeto-Burman family that was spoken in the Tangut Empire (1038–1227, present-day central China). There is no agreement among scholars on what it sounded like, therefore the transcription is based on one of the reconstructions. The superscript numbers indicate its two tones (¹ = flat, ² = rising); in particular, the words for ‘father’ and ‘mother’ are in the first tone. ū, ŭ, e, o, y, a are vowels; s, z, ’ are consonants.

—Ivan Derzhanski
Problem #4 (20 points). Here are some short dialogues in Engenni and their English translations:

1. edëì âno nyâsesë ozyì lëlemù â? edëì ânò wei ga ëkì nyâsesë ozyì lëlemù.
   Will this man frighten the deceived thief?
   This man said that he the man would not frighten the deceived thief.

2. qvûr ámbû kître omemûrë ânò â? qvûr ámbû wei ga ëkì kître omemûrë ânò.
   Did the woman resemble this girl?
   The woman said that she the woman did resemble this girl.

3. ëmò lëlemù ânò wûse qvûr ámbû â? ëmôdhyômû wei ga ò wûse qvûr ámbû.
   Did this deceived child not kill the woman?
   The youth said that he the deceived child did not kill the woman.

4. edëì dhia gbûnônô ëmò â? qvûr ámbû kôfîlômù wei ga o gbûnônô ëmò.
   Will the evil man heal the child?
   The coughing woman said that he the evil man would heal the child.

5. omemûrë dhia kître opîlôpô ânò â? qvûr ámbû wei ga ò kître opîlôpô ânò.
   Did the evil girl not resemble this pig?
   The woman said that she the evil girl did not resemble this pig.

6. ozyì gbûnônô okâà ñâmû ënò â? ozyì wei ga ëkì gbûnônô okâà ñâmû ënò.
   Did the thief heal this beaten old man?
   The thief said that he the thief did not heal this beaten old man.

7. ozyì âno kître edëì kôfîlômù â? ëmò ënò wei ga ò kître edëì kôfîlômù.
   Will this thief resemble the coughing man?
   This child said that he the child would not resemble the coughing man.

(a) Translate into English:

8. edëì ânò nyâsesë ozyì â? amemûrë wei ga ò nyâsesë ozyì.

9. amemûrë lëlemù wûsesè ëmôdhyômû ënò â?
   amemûrë lëlemû wei ga ëkì wûsesè ëmôdhyômû ënò.

Here is also an answer in Engenni without a question for it:

10. ozyì ânò wei ga ëmò gbûnônô edëì.

Translate it into English. If it can be translated in more than one way, provide all translations and explain your reasoning.

(b) Translate into Engenni:

11. Will the old man resemble this coughing youth?
   The child said that he the old man would not resemble this coughing youth.

12. Did this beaten woman not frighten the man?
   This beaten woman said that she the beaten woman did not frighten the man.

(c) If you were to compile an Engenni dictionary, what would be the base forms of the words ‘thief’ and ‘girl’ be? Explain your answer.
The Engenmi language belongs to the Benue–Congo family. It is spoken by approx. 20,000 people in Nigeria.

The mark \(\cdot\) underneath a word’s first vowel indicates that all of the word’s vowels are pronounced with a slightly lowered tongue. The marks \(\cdot\), \(\cdot\) and \(\cdot\) indicate high, low, and falling tone, respectively; if none is present, the syllable has middle tone.

—Artūrs Semenņuks

**Problem #5 (20 points).** Here are some words and word combinations in Northwest Gbaya and their English translations in arbitrary order:

?áá, ?áá náng nú kò, ?áá sèè, búná yîk, búná zù yîk, dâng gòk, dì fô, dì sèè, kò yîk, kò zòk, náng wí, nú fô, nú lèbé, sèè wí, yîk, yîk wí, zù

at the surface; eye socket; eyebrow; eyelash; eyes/face;
field edge; foot; happiness; liver; good field; nostril;
above, on; poisonous snake; tip of the tongue;
to be dying; to envy; to put

(a) Determine the correct correspondences.

(b) Translate into English: búná zù, kò, lèbé gòk, lèbé wí

(c) Translate into Northwest Gbaya: at the centre; head; displeasure; nose.

The Northwest Gbaya language belongs to the Ubangian family. It is spoken by approx. 200,000 people in the Central African Republic.

The Northwest Gbaya words are given in a simplified transcription. \(\text{?}\) is a consonant.

—Boris Iomdin


**English text:** Ivan Derzhanski, Boris Iomdin, Aleksejs Pegoševs, Artūrs Semenņuks.

Good luck!