

International Linguistics Challenge

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Problem A

1. /ʃinu/
2. /nara/
3. /plutʃon/
4. /funtʃ/
5. /tile/
6. /gelun/
7. /bulak/
8. /dʒeso/
9. /valik/
10. /lasao/

Problem B

11. fintʃ nara mika gelup tʃon plutʃon
12. mika lasao kosap ʃinu
13. gop nimo tile lora ivravik

Problem C

In order to explain features of Language X, we analyse the following sentences:

14. kanabi Selu ‘The women dance.’
15. kanabi telum feru ‘The women see the boy.’
16. lomu telum huni ‘The dog chases the boy.’
17. telumi lomu feru ‘The boys see the dog.’
18. kanab kuran baraa ‘The woman studies the stars.’
20. lomun pano feru ‘The dogs see the mountain.’
21. lomun o telumi pano feru ‘The dogs and the boys see the mountain.’

(a) The basic word order of Language X is subject, object, and finally verb (SOV).

By analysing sentences 14, 15 and 18, it is clear that the word “kanab(i)” means woman (women), according to their English translations. In addition, it is situated at the beginning of the sentences.

When it comes to objects, in sentences 15 and 16, the word “telum” is the only word in common to these two sentences, and it is after the subjects.

For verbs, in sentences 15, 17, 20 and 21, they have the word “feru” in common, and the verb “see” in common in their English translations, which means that the word “feru” is a verb and is situated at the end of the sentences.

(b) When a noun ends in a consonant, -i will be added at the end of the noun, and when the noun ends in a vowel, -n will be added at the end of the noun.

We can compare sentences 14, 15, 18 with 16, 20, 21. In these sentences, the word “kanab” turns into “kanabi”, and the word “lomu” turns into “lomun”. The difference noticeable between the two words is that one ends in a consonant and the other in a vowel.

Therefore, it is possible to say that plural nouns in Language X are formed according to the last phoneme of the word.

(c) panon kanabi o lomun baraa

Problem D

(a) In Language X, the verb agrees with the number of the object.

By analysing sentences 18 and 24, shown below, it is possible to say that when the object is singular (such as “kura”, star), the verb stem continues by itself, and that when the object is plural (“kuran”, stars), -a will be added to the verb stem.

18. *kanab kuran baraa* ‘the woman studies the stars.’

24. *kanab kura bara* ‘the woman study the star’.

In the case of not existing objects in the sentence, the verb stem continues by itself as well, as shown in sentences 14 and 22:

14. *kanabi felu* ‘the women dance.’

22. *kanab felu* ‘the woman dances.’

(b) kosap nara o tilen furua

Problem E

Part 1

The similarity between Dialect I and II is that the verb agrees with the number of the object in sentences with objects, as we analyse in sentences 15 (Dialect I) and 27 (Dialect II):

15. *kanabi telum feru* ‘The women see the boy.’

27. *kanabi telum feru* ‘The women see the boy.’

The difference is that the verb agrees with the number of the subjects in sentences without objects, as shown in sentences 14 and 26:

14. *kanabi felu* ‘The women dance.’

26. *kanabi ferua* ‘The women see.’

In sentence 14, from Dialect I, the verb “felu” does not change. As for sentence 26, from Dialect II, the verb “ferua” is agreeing with the number of the subject “kanabi”, which does not occur in Dialect I.

Part 2

As we observed in part (a), the verb agrees with the number of the subject in sentences without objects in Dialect II. Therefore, in Dialect II, "jelu" means 'he/she/it dances.'