

Slightly Linguisticsful Linguistics Problem Solving

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Americans: compete in the NACLO, www.naclo.cs.cmu.edu, in February!

1 Shugnan

Given are some phrases in Shugnan, an Indo-Iranian language, and English. Complete the table.

kuzaa hats	jar of water
chalak zimaadj	bucket of dirt
tambal byuyun	beard of a lazybones
biig dyuyunaa	pot of corn
kuzaa gjev	lid of a jar
beechoraa zimaadj	dirt of a beggar
	bucket of water
	corn of a beggar
	jar of a lazybones

2 “Swift News”

(ILO 2004) A translator at the Swift News agency, which regularly receives lots of material in English, tries to work as fast and efficiently as possible, and therefore first translates titles of articles and only then some of the articles. Because of this technique, however, some of the titles do not correspond to the contents of the translated articles and have to be reconsidered. This happened to three of the articles whose titles are given below.

1. Budget Cut Threatens Railway Modernization Project Funding.
2. Cold Winter Threatens Start of Shipping Season in Small Lakes.
3. Insanitariness in Brobdingnag Threatens Cholera Outbreak.
4. New Crisis in Blefuscu Threatens Collapse of Peace Talks.
5. Password Leak From Megasoft Threatens Mass Piracy.
6. Population Crisis in Lilliput Threatens Tax Reform.
7. Sudden Weather Change Threatens Arrival of Reinforcements to Besieged City.
8. Suspension of Talks Threatens Peace Process in Lilliput and Blefuscu.
9. Unexpected Event in Country of Houyhnhnms Threatens Early Elections.
10. Terrorists Activity Threatens Public Security.
11. Global Cooling Threatens Food Shortages.

Assignment: Indicate which titles did not correspond to the contents of the articles after translations. Give the appropriate translations. Explain your solution.

3 Turkish

Given are Turkish words and their English translations:

güreşçi	wrestler
ikbalsiz	unsuccessful
gözcü	sentry, eye doctor
isimsiz	nameless
ormancı	forester
sonsuz	endless
içkici	drunkard
takatsiz	lacking strength
barutu	gunpowder maker
sütsüz	without milk
balıkçı	fisherman
parasız	cashless
mumcu	candlemaker
dil	language
kalıp	form

1. Two of the above words are formed in a slightly different way from the others because their stems are loans from another language. Identify those two words.
2. Translate the following into Turkish. Remember that *i* and *ı* are distinct letters.
 - (a) milkman
 - (b) blind
 - (c) linguist
 - (d) mute
 - (e) mold maker
 - (f) shapeless

Note: *ç* is Hungarian *cs*, *c* is *dzs*, *ş* is *s*, and *ı* (written like an *i* but without a dot on top) is like *u*, pronounced with the lips spread (unrounded).

4 Old Indic

Given are Old Indic word stems which are thought to preserve the most ancient (Indo-European) position of the stress. They are divided into a root and a suffix by a hyphen. Accents indicate stressed syllables.

1. vṛk-a (wolf)
2. vadh-á (deadly weapon)
3. sād-á (ensaddled)
4. puṣ-ṭí (prosperity)
5. sik-tí (effusion)
6. pī-tí (drinking)
7. gá-ti- (walk)
8. vādhi-ri (castrated)

9. dhū-má (fumes)
10. dī-ti (leather bag)
11. ghī-ṇi (heat)
12. ghr-ṇá (heat)
13. k̄-á-ma (desire)
14. p̄-úr-va (first)
15. bhīm-i (mobile)
16. kṛṣ-í (tillage)
17. stó-ma (hymn)
18. dar-má (demolisher)
19. nag-ná (naked)
20. vák-va (rolling)

Explain why it is not possible from the data above to determine the placement of the stress on the stems bhāg-a (share), pad-a (step), pat-i (lord), or us-ri (morning light).

Indicate the stress of the following stems:

1. mṛdh-ra (foe)
2. phe-na (foam)
3. stu-ti (praise)
4. tan-ti (cord)
5. bhār-a (burden)
6. dū-ta (messenger)
7. svap-na (sleep)
8. bhū-mi (soil)
9. ghar-ma (heat)
10. abh-ra (cloud)
11. ghan-a (killing)
12. ghrṣ-vi (exuberant)

Note: *h* indicates that the preceding consonant is aspirated (pronounced with a puff of air), *ṛ* is *r* said as a vowel, as in “bird,” macra denote vowel length, and dots under other letters indicate that the tongue is turned back when pronouncing them.

5 Movima, ILO 2007

The following are words of Movima, an isolated language spoken by about 1500 people in Bolivia, in two forms: the base form and the negative form:

base form	translation	negative form
maropa	papaya	kas maroka'pa
joy	to go	kas joya:ya'
bi:law	fish	kas bika'law
deto:veń	butterfly	kas dela'to:veń
itilakwanci:ye	little boy	kas itika'lakwanci:ye
elan	your comb	kas elana:na'
lopa:vos	manioc plant	kas lopaka'vos
jiwa	to come	kas jiwaka:ka'
bakwanyín	my wrist	kas bakwana'yín
talummo	sweet banana	kas taluma'mo
to:mi	water	kas toka'mi
en	to stand	kas ena:na'
vuskwa	dust	kas vusa'kwa
wa:kato:da	meat	kas waka'kato:da
as	to sit	
enferme:ra	nurse	
jila:pa	to grate manioc	
de	to lie	
rulrul	jaguar	
tipoysu:da	dressed in <i>tipoy</i>	
	to roar	kas wurula:la'
	to see	kas dewaja'na
	to see traces of somebody	kas deka'wajna

1. Instead of standing for a sequence of two sounds, a certain combination of two letters always stands for a single specific consonant in Movima. Which combination is this?
2. Fill in the gaps.

Notes: [y] = j, [c] = cs, [ń] and ['] are specific consonants of Movima, and a colon after a vowel indicates length. A *tipoy* is a long sleeveless chemise worn by Indian women. (Author: Dmitry Gerasimov)