

Seventh Asia Pacific Linguistics Olympiad

April 20 – May 4, 2025

Problems

- Listen carefully to the invigilators and follow their instructions.
- The contest lasts five hours. The problem set consists of seven pages and contains five problems. You may solve the problems in any order.
- You are not allowed to use any electronic devices, written or printed material, or other external sources of information during the contest.
- If you have a question about any of the problems, put up your hand and ask an invigilator. The invigilator will consult with the jury before answering.
- Rules for writing out solutions:
 - Do not copy the statements of the problems.
 - Write down your solution to each problem on a separate sheet or sheets.
 - Use only the front side of the answer sheet.
 - On each sheet, write your name, the number of the problem, and the page sequence of that sheet within the problem, e.g.:

Name	...
Problem #	5
Page #	1 / 3

Name	...
Problem #	5
Page #	2 / 3

Name	...
Problem #	5
Page #	3 / 3

meaning first, second, and third sheet out of three for the fifth problem.

Otherwise, your work may be mislaid or misattributed.

- Unless stated differently, you should describe any patterns or rules you identified in the data. Otherwise, your solution will not be awarded full marks.

The contest problems must be kept confidential until they are published on the official APLO website <https://aplo.asia>. Do not disclose nor discuss the problems online until that date.

Problem 1 (20 points). Here are some words in Misantla Totonac and their English translations. The stressed syllable is indicated with an acute accent (´), e.g. **a** → **á**, **i** → **í**.

číwiš	stone	qɔ́ɬayá:t	weeded (as in weeded field)
kə:kčǐ:n	gentleman	səpáp	warm
kiɬɛy:ksyá:n	I kiss you	smaháʔ	weasel
kúčiɬ	knife	šnéχlah	he lost weight
li:wátat	food	stáχnɛ	green
ɬtɔqɔʔ	you stir (it)	štini:tá:	ugly
ɬukúk	hole, gap	štóqɔ	you sewed (it)
múkskut	fire	táku	woman
pá:kiš	beef	tapahánu:t	you passed by
pá:ɬkə	comal	waní	he tells (it) to (him)
pa:pɔhɔɛún	wide	wǐstá:	you sell (it)
pu:laqsɔ́χ	salt tamal	ʔiktačoqɔ	I stay
qe:ɬtún	moonshine	ʔiqatə:yə:wá	I believe (it)

Mark stress in the following Misantla Totonac words:

- | | | | |
|-------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| 1. čǐ:ňju | very | 7. maqɬti:ɬ | he took (it) from (him) |
| 2. čuču | he toasts (it) | 8. paqazəŋqə: | you lose (it) |
| 3. əaməχ | scar | 9. siksi | sweet (adjective) |
| 4. əiyə | you laughed | 10. skitini:t | salsahuat |
| 5. ɬkukɔhɔɬ | it all burned | 11. špa:pi:nan | he sprays |
| 6. ma:kiɛis | five | 12. šyə:hkuš | hair of an ear of corn |

△ Misantla Totonac belongs to the Totonacan family. It is spoken by several hundred people in central Mexico.

č ≈ *ch* in *which*, ǐ ≈ *j* in *judge*, ɛ = *ts* in *cats*, š ≈ *sh* in *ship*, ň = *ny* in *canyon*, y = *y* in *yet*, χ = *ch* in German *Bach* or *j* in Spanish *jalapeño*. ɬ is hissing sound produced without vocal cord vibration, similar to the English *s* (in *sing*) or *sh* (in *ship*), but with the tongue positioned as for *l*. **q** and **n** are pronounced like *k* and *ng* in *king*, respectively, but with the tongue further back in the mouth. ʔ is pronounced by a brief pause of breath, as in the middle of *uh-oh*.

ə = *a* in *about*. ɔ and ɛ are pronounced like *o* and *e*, respectively, but with wider open mouth. A tilde (~) below a vowel denotes creaky voice. The mark : after a vowel indicates that it is pronounced long.

Comal is a kind of frying pan. *Salt tamal* is a kind of dish. *Moonshine* is a kind of liquor. *Salsahuat* is a kind of mite.

— Tamila Krashtan

Problem 2 (20 points). Here are some phrases in the Liberian dialect of Looma and their English translations:

ga yila	our dog	nà baka	my lesson	daala	tomato
kilikamai	the cucumber	ta woli	their goat	ga laala	our tomato
nà bulu	my bread	dɔwɔi	the market	tɔwɔ	green bean
nà koya	my monkey	ta βele	their house	pelei	the road
ta woya	their monkey	doso	the hunter	ta yilikama	their cucumber
nà pele	my house	ta loso	their hunter	ga wulu	[our tree our bread

(a) Translate into English in all possible ways:

1. ta lowɔ
2. ga βaka
3. boli
4. nà gulu

* * *

Below are some sentences in the Liberian dialect of Looma and their English translations:

gà gutuzu	I shorten it.	gilai ya βalazu	The dog grows.
tɔ kàzu	It sees me.	ta βele βαβε	Their road is good.
ta tùlizu	They call me.	nà pupu ya lezu	My ant climbs.
te βalaβε	They are big.	gà bolii lulizu	I call the goat.
tɔ te lezu	It lifts them.	gà nà kɔvi lazu	I lay down my firewood.
ge wutuβε	We are short.	ta lazu	They lie down.
biiβε	It is heavy.	tavei ya paazu	The pipe kills it.
tɔ dazu	It lays it down.	koyai ya gutuzu	The monkey shortens it.

(b) Translate into English:

5. paβε
6. gà balazu
7. ga ga lave yazu
8. ta ta yila βaazu

(c) Translate into Looma:

9. I am big.
10. They lay me down.
11. We are heavy.
12. Our ant lies down.
13. I kill them.
14. It lifts their firewood.

△ Looma belongs to the Mande family. It is spoken by approx. 560,000 people in Liberia and Guinea.

w = w in English *week*. β and γ are similar to b and g, respectively, but pronounced with a continuous airflow. ɔ and ε are pronounced like o and e, respectively, but with wider open mouth. Doubled vowels are pronounced long.

Looma has two tones: the mark ^ above the vowel denotes the low tone, while the high tone is unmarked. Some tone markers have been omitted from this problem for simplicity.

— Vlad A. Neacșu (consultant: Maria Konoshenko)

Problem 3 (20 points). Here are some verb forms in Tangsa, written in the Tangsa script, with their pronunciations in the phonetic alphabet and English translations:

ᑕᑲᑲᑲ ᑲᑲᑲᑲ	jaun ³ ʃaun ²	<i>I will grill</i>	ᑲᑲᑲᑲ ᑲᑲ	(1)	<i>you_{sg} shot</i>
ᑲᑲᑲᑲ ᑲᑲᑲ	tət ʃi ²	<i>we will kill</i>	ᑲᑲᑲᑲ ᑲᑲᑲ	(2)	<i>we will buy</i>
ᑲᑲ ᑲᑲᑲᑲ	saʔ ʃun ²	<i>you_{pl} will eat</i>	ᑲᑲ ᑲᑲ	(3)	(4)
ᑲᑲᑲᑲ ᑲᑲ	tʰut ʃuu ¹	<i>you_{sg} rub (imp.)</i>	ᑲᑲᑲᑲ ᑲᑲ	təp twu ²	(5)
ᑲᑲᑲᑲ ᑲᑲ	naun ³ miʔ	<i>we didn't sit</i>		su ¹ mut	<i>you_{pl} didn't squeeze</i>
ᑲᑲᑲ ᑲᑲᑲ	dun ¹ tɣʔ	<i>they emerged</i>		dok tauk	<i>I dove</i>
ᑲᑲᑲ ᑲᑲᑲ	rul ¹ ti ²	<i>we will fall</i>		kauk tiʔ	<i>we bit</i>
ᑲᑲ ᑲᑲ	ba ¹ toʔ	<i>you_{sg} flew</i>		ʃaun ¹ twt	(6)
ᑲᑲᑲ ᑲᑲᑲ	sau ¹ tɣ ²	<i>they will cough</i>		dun ¹ kuu ¹	(7)
ᑲᑲ ᑲᑲᑲ	ju ¹ kwn ¹	<i>you_{pl} run (imp.)</i>	(8)	təum ¹ muʔ	<i>you_{sg} didn't cut</i>
ᑲᑲᑲᑲ ᑲᑲᑲᑲ		<i>I will stand</i>	(9)	ɡuuʔ tiʔ	<i>we stole</i>
ᑲᑲᑲ ᑲᑲ		<i>you_{sg} dive (imp.)</i>	(10)	dok twun ²	(11)
ᑲᑲ ᑲᑲᑲᑲ		<i>I didn't eat</i>	(12)		<i>you_{pl} will cut</i>
ᑲᑲᑲᑲ ᑲᑲᑲ		<i>they will sell</i>	(13)		<i>I squeezed</i>
ᑲᑲ ᑲᑲ		<i>you_{sg} steal (imp.)</i>	(14)	(15)	<i>you_{pl} bite (imp.)</i>

Fill in the blanks (1–15). No answers are required in the shaded areas.

△ Tangsa belongs to the Sal group of the Sino-Tibetan family. It is spoken by approx. 100,000 people in northern Myanmar and northeastern India.

The Tangsa script was created by Lakhum Mossang in 1990 based on the Mossang variety of the language. As of 2021, the script was used by around 100 people.

ŋ = ng in *hang*. ʃ, t, tʰ, and tɕ are consonants. ə, ɣ, and u are vowels. ʔ is pronounced by a brief pause of breath, as in the middle of *uh-oh*. Some Tangsa syllables carry tones, which are indicated by superscript numerals.

sg = singular; pl = plural; imp. = imperative (used in a command or request).

— Minkyu Kim, Zdravko Ivanov

Problem 4 (20 points). Here are some phrases in Mako and their English translations:

wāpī'dʒek^wa k^widʒalu'dʒe — <i>three notebooks</i>	dūhūtaha it^hihu — <i>two daughters</i>
bak^wa⁷bo luwa⁷bo — <i>one guama fruit</i>	bak^wale ibahale — <i>one eye</i>
dobulatahi nesti tsobu — <i>two Nestea drinks</i>	do[?]olatahi iwe[?]o — <i>two bones</i>
wāmeduk^wa luwō — <i>three male chiefs</i>	bak^wīpī itsīpī — <i>one bucket handle</i>
bak^wāpa dehāpa — <i>one plate</i>	didelatahi ōmude — <i>two corn kernels</i>
wāpu[?]dok^wa o[?]do — <i>three buckets</i>	do[?]dolatahi uku tsa[?]do — <i>two matchboxes</i>
bak^wa⁷bo iwari⁷bo — <i>one tail</i>	bak^wō otidō — <i>one male worker</i>
dowilatahi itsowi — <i>two canoes</i>	dop^halatahi itsop^ha — <i>two ropes</i>
bak^wane inene — <i>one tongue</i>	bak^wuhu luwuhu — <i>one female chief</i>
dūhūtaha iwo tsuhu — <i>two female sloths</i>	wāpobuk^wa gasolina tsobu
bak^wowi towi — <i>one tree</i>	— <i>three (tanks of) gasoline</i>

(a) Determine the correct correspondences:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 1. wāmeduk^wa iwo | A. <i>three lakes</i> |
| 2. wāmeduk^wa bolodo tsuhu | B. <i>three sinks</i> |
| 3. wāpidek^wa buberide | C. <i>three arch bridges</i> |
| 4. wāpu[?]bok^wa bale⁷bo | D. <i>three male sloths</i> |
| 5. wāpu[?]dok^wa pālāka[?]do | E. <i>three plantains</i> |
| 6. wāpīpīk^wa mīpī | F. <i>three seje fruits</i> |
| 7. wāpobuk^wa itsobu | G. <i>three female monkeys</i> |

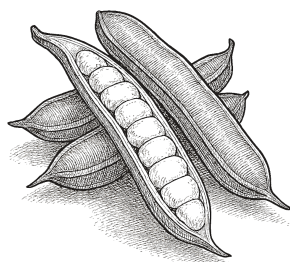
(b) Translate into Mako:

- | | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|
| 8. <i>one male monkey</i> | 10. <i>two eyes</i> | 12. <i>three ropes</i> |
| 9. <i>one bucket</i> | 11. <i>two tails</i> | 13. <i>one female worker</i> |

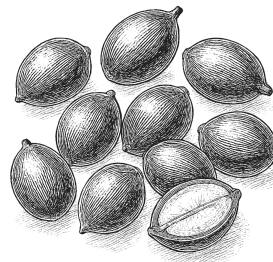
⚠ Mako belongs to the Sáliban family. It is spoken by approx. 2,500 people in the Venezuelan state of Amazonas.

ts, dʒ, ⁷b, [?]d, [?]dʒ, p^h, t^h, k^w, and **?** are consonants. **i** is a vowel. The mark ~ over a vowel indicates that it is nasalized.

Nestea is a brand of iced tea. A *plantain* is a kind of starchy banana.



guama fruits

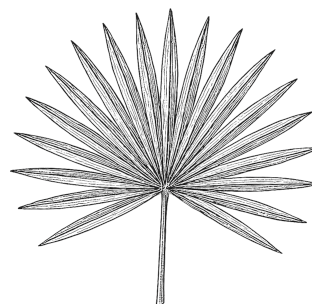


seje fruits

— Arul Kolla

Problem 5 (20 points). Here are some words in Khasi and their English translations in arbitrary order:

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. ka blaŋ | A. <i>to be black</i> |
| 2. ka matyoŋ | B. <i>big leaf</i> |
| 3. ka niehblaŋ | C. <i>breeding goat</i> |
| 4. ka sla | D. <i>father</i> |
| 5. ki dieŋ | E. <i>goatskin</i> |
| 6. u kpa | F. <i>iron (e.g. as a rod)</i> |
| 7. u ladienŋla:y | G. <i>palm tree leaf</i> 🖱️ |
| 8. u laŋkpa | H. <i>pupil (of the eye)</i> |
| 9. u nar | I. <i>she-goat</i> |
| 10. yoŋ | J. <i>trees</i> |

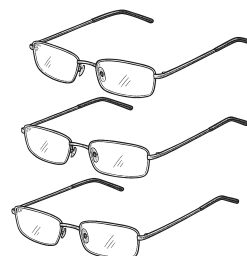


(a) Determine the correct correspondences.

* * *

Below are some additional words in Khasi and their English translations, again in arbitrary order:

- | | |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 11. ka yit | K. <i>to die</i> |
| 12. ki laba:mbriew | L. <i>to feed (someone/something)</i> |
| 13. ki yitkhmat | M. <i>glass (e.g. as a sheet)</i> |
| 14. pinba:m | N. <i>(blade of) grass</i> |
| 15. u khla | O. <i>spectacles (plural)</i> 🖱️ |
| 16. u laŋyap | P. <i>straw</i> |
| 17. u phlaŋ | Q. <i>male tiger</i> |
| 18. yap | R. <i>man-eating tigers</i> |



(b) Determine the correct correspondences.

(c) Translate into English:

- | | | | |
|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| 19. ba:m | 20. ka snieh | 21. ki khmat | 22. u laŋyoŋ |
|-----------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|

Note that **u laŋyoŋ** has two possible translations in English. Give them both.

(d) Translate into Khasi:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|
| 23. <i>glass (e.g. as a bottle)</i> | 25. <i>to kill</i> |
| 24. <i>iron (e.g. as a sheet)</i> | 26. <i>tigress</i> |

(e) Knowing that **ka lieŋ** means 'boat' in English, translate 'sailors' into Khasi.

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

(continued on next page)

△ Khasi belongs to the Khasic branch of the Austroasiatic family. It is spoken by approx. 1 million people in the Indian state of Meghalaya.

kh, **ŋ**, **ph**, and **y** are consonants. **i** is a vowel. The mark : after a vowel indicates that it is pronounced long.

A *breeding goat* is a special he-goat used for breeding. A *man-eating tiger* is a tiger that kills and eats people. A *straw* is a dried stalk of grass. — Jaeyeong Yang

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Editor-in-Chief:

- Vlad A. Neacșu

Editors:

- | | |
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English text:

- | | |
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Good luck!