

Problem 5. Mongo (25 marks)

Mongo, also called Nkundo, is a Bantu language spoken by several hundred thousand Mongo people in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Below are some verb forms in Mongo and their English translations. Note that an acute accent over a vowel (as in **á**) marks a high tone; the lack of it denotes a low tone.



ntá́fingá	<i>I didn't insult.</i>
báólímisaka	<i>They forgave.</i>
lotájengenga	<i>You (pl) didn't fly today.</i>
áolalakaka	<i>He taught them today.</i>
óótobenganaka	<i>You (sg) ousted us.</i>
tóokogángelaka	<i>We scolded you (sg) today.</i>
totáábengáná	<i>We didn't oust them.</i>
atálotúta	<i>He didn't treat you (pl) today.</i>
lotáólímísá	<i>You (pl) didn't forgive him.</i>

Q 5.1 Translate the following into English. Note that one of the verb forms has two possible translations, give both.

- (a) **atákolaká**
- (b) **óototútaka**
- (c) **tóólofíngaka**
- (d) **ntájengéngá**

Q 5.2 Translate the following into Mongo.

- (a) *You (pl) flew.*
- (b) *I didn't scold you (pl).*
- (c) *You (sg) forgave him today.*
- (d) *They didn't insult us today.*

Q 5.3 Explain your solution.

Problem 5. Mongo Answers and Explanation (1/2)

Total: 52 points

Problem 5. Mongo

5.1	a <i>He didn't teach you (sg).</i>	5.2	a lóójengengaka
	b <i>You (sg) treated us today.</i>		b ntálogángélá
	c <i>We insulted him. / We insulted you (pl).</i>		c óololímisaka
	d <i>I didn't fly.</i>		d batátofínga

Q 5.1 Max 10. 2pts each, 1pt with one mistake. Ignore incorrect second sentence; award 2pts for fully correct second sentence.

Q 5.2 Max 16. Follow the following algorithm:

- Segment the word as best as possible into slots -3 to 1 as in the solution. Allow for slots to be empty, morphemes to be invented or misspelled, etc.
- Call this segmented word with tone markings ignored the *bare form*.
- Determine the *written polarity* as following, allowing for misspellings:
 - If **-ta-** is written and not **-ka**, call it *negative*. Vice versa, call it *affirmative*.
 - If both are written, or both slots -2 and 1 are empty, etc., call it *mixed*.
 - If *affirmative* or *negative* can otherwise be confidently assigned, do; else call it *mixed*.
- 1pt if slots -3 to -1 are correct in the bare form.
- 1pt if slots 0 and 1 are correct in the bare form.
- 1pt if the tone rules have been correctly applied in slots -2 and 1, given the written polarity.
 - Note that this is independent of the bare form being correct.
 - If it would be impossible to consistently apply tone rules to the bare form (e.g. morphemes are missing, written polarity is mixed), do not award the point.
- 1pt if the tone rules have been correctly applied in slots -3, -1 and 0, given the written polarity.
 - Note that this is independent of the bare form being correct.
 - If it would be impossible to consistently apply tone rules to the bare form (e.g. there is no subject, the stem is invented and not an obvious misspelling of a given stem, written polarity is mixed), do not award the point.
 - Allow for missing objects where they should be present.
 - Note that the tone rules for the stem are that the first tone is lexically determined, the second (if present) copies the following tone.

Q 5.3 Max 26. 12pts for morphology; 14pts for tone rules.

Problem 5. Mongo Explanation (2/2)

Explanation

A Mongo verb complex has the following general structure:

-3 SUBJECT	-2 POLARITY	-1 OBJECT	0 ROOT	1 POLARITY
1sg = n- 2sg = o- 3sg = a- 1pl = to- 2pl = lo- 3pl = ba-	Negative: -tá- Affirmative: -o- before C -ol- before V	2sg = -ko- 3sg = -o- 1pl = -to- 2pl = -lo- 3pl = -a-	<i>insult</i> = fíng <i>forgive</i> = límis <i>fly</i> = jengeng <i>teach</i> = lak <i>oust</i> = bengan <i>scold</i> = gángel <i>treat</i> = tút	Affirmative: -aka Negative: -a You could analyse the root as containing an -a as well.

Note: alternative analyses with **-l-** are possible.

Tone is as in the table above, with low tones raising in the following situations:

- The subject has high tone in affirmative verb forms.
- **-o(l)-** has high tone if the action did not happen today.
- **-a** has high tone if the action did not happen today.
- The second vowel of a two-syllable root takes the tone of the following vowel.