

**Problem 9. Zou (25 marks)**

Zou, also known as Zo, is a Sino-Tibetan language spoken primarily by around 88,000 Zomi people around the India-Myanmar border.

Below are some sentences in Zou, written in a Latin transcription, with their corresponding English translations. Note that **k<sup>h</sup>**, **t<sup>h</sup>** and **ŋ** are consonants, and **ə** is a vowel.



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|--|--|
| 1. əmah tuy nuamtəhin ədon                               | <i>He drinks water happily.</i>                      |
| 2. ken siŋpi kədəyməŋsih                                 | <i>I don't like tea at all.</i>                      |
| 3. vok golte əhuŋsihdiŋ uh                               | <i>The big pigs will not come.</i>                   |
| 4. ken kədamsih  | <i>I am ill.</i>                                     |
| 5. nəŋ sah nəne  | <i>You eat meat.</i>                                 |
| 6. boŋte əhuŋleh uh ken skulah kəciəhdiŋ                 | <i>If the cows come, I will go to school.</i>        |
| 7. nəŋ siŋpi nədonleh ken kəhuŋsihdiŋ                    | <i>If you drink tea, I will not come.</i>            |
| 8. nawpəŋ kin əkəp                                       | <i>The quick child is crying.</i>                    |
| 9. cini kintəhin nein                                    | <i>Eat the sugar quickly!</i>                        |
| 10. kəw k <sup>h</sup> otak <sup>h</sup> otaah kəciəh uh | <i>We go to all the villages.</i>                    |
| 11. nawpəŋ kilomte inahte əpəydiŋmo uh                   | <i>Will the nice children return to the houses?</i>  |
| 12. nəŋ ən kintəhin nənediəy                             | <i>You should eat rice quickly.</i>                  |
| 13. kəw ənən kilom kədəy uh                              | <i>We want all the nice rice.</i>                    |
| 14. əmanu siŋpi ədonməŋsihdiəy                           | <i>She should not drink tea at all.</i>              |
| 15. gəlkapte cini dohknaah ət <sup>h</sup> emo uh        | <i>Do the soldiers throw the sugar on the table?</i> |
| 16. nəŋ in gol nədəyhsihdiəy                             | <i>You should not want the big house.</i>            |

**Q 9.1** Based on the above information, is “you” in the English translations a singular or plural pronoun?

**Q 9.2** Translate the following Zou sentences into English:

17. nəŋ skul nədəyməŋsih
18. boŋboŋ gol kintəhin əhuŋdiŋmo uh
19. gəlkap nuamte siŋpi ədəy uh
20. ken cinicini kənesihdiəy
21. dohknaadohknaah ciəhin

**Q 9.3** Translate the following English sentences into Zou:

22. *We should like the happy villages.*
23. *If she is healthy, will you drink the water?*
24. *Throw nicely in the house!*
25. *Should the soldiers not eat all the meat quickly?*
26. *If all the children are crying, I will not come to the villages at all.*

## Problem 9. Zou Answers

For Q 9.1, tick the correct answer.



singular



plural

|            |  |   |
|------------|--|---|
| <b>9.2</b> | 17. <i>You do not like school at all.</i>      | 20. <i>I should not eat all the sugar.</i>                          |
|            | 18. <i>Will all the big cows come quickly?</i> | 21. <i>Go to all the tables! Accept also: Go on all the tables!</i> |
|            | 19. <i>The happy soldiers want tea.</i>        |   |

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| <b>9.3</b> | 22. <b>kəw k<sup>h</sup>ota nuamte kədəy+diəy uh [6]</b>                          |
|            | 23. <b>əmanu ədam+leh nəŋ tuy nədon+diŋmo [7]</b>                                 |
|            | 24. <b>inah kilomtəhin t<sup>h</sup>ein [3]</b>                                   |
|            | 25. <b>gəlkapte sahsah kintəhin əne+sihdiəy+mo uh [7]</b>                         |
|            | 26. <b>nawpəŋnawpəŋ əkəp+leh uh ken k<sup>h</sup>otaah+te kəhuŋ+məŋsihdiŋ [9]</b> |

**Q 9.1** Max 4. 4 pts if correct. Accept any clear marking, e.g. x.

**Q 9.2** Max 15. Per sentence: 3 pts if fully correct; 2 pts with one mistake; 1 pt with two mistakes. Mistakes include: incorrect subject; subject & object swapped; missing word; incorrect tense; etc. Do not penalise incorrect English with the same meaning (e.g. *You not at all like school*), but insist on grammatical features such as plurals (e.g. *all the tables*, rather than *all the table*). Ignore articles *a(n)* and *the* (e.g. *Happy soldiers want the tea.* scores 3 pts).

**Q 9.3** Max 32. 1 pt per word or word-part separated with a +, in the correct location (e.g., **BCA** for **ABC** scores 2 pts). Ignore spaces between words. If exactly one extra word or word-part is given, deduct 1 pt. If multiple extra words or word-parts are given, deduct 2 pts total (note: not 2 pts per extra word or word-part). Here “extra” does not refer to anything that could just be a mistranslation, but words that have no correspondence in the correct translation. For example, using the wrong noun form or verb suffix (even one which does not exist) should not be penalised if a noun or suffix is expected. However, inclusion of an extra noun form, **uh**, etc. should be penalised. Award a minimum of 0 pts per sentence.

## Problem 9. Zou Explanations

- Word order: Subject Object Location Verb, Noun Adjective, Adverb Verb
- Nominal morphology: **=te** = plural, **-ah** = location (*on, in, to*). Note that **=te** is a clitic and goes after adjectives if present. Reduplicating the word (e.g. **ənən**) means *all the X* (e.g. *all the rice*).
- Verbal morphology: subject—STEM—negation—modality—interrogative
  - subject: **kə-** = 1<sup>st</sup> person; **nə-** = 2<sup>nd</sup> person; **ə-** = 3<sup>rd</sup> person (no number distinction)
  - STEM: **-don-** = ‘drink’, **-huŋ-** = ‘come’, **-dam-** = ‘be healthy’, **-ne-** = ‘eat’, **-ciah-** = ‘go’, **-kəp-** = ‘cry’, **-pəy-** = ‘return’, **-dəyh-** = ‘want’, **-pai-** = ‘throw’, **-dəy-** = ‘like’
  - negation: **-sih-** = ‘not’, **-mojsih-** ‘not at all’
  - modality: **-diŋ-** = future, **-leh-** = ‘if’, **-diəy-** = ‘should’, **-in** = imperative
  - interrogative: **-mo**
- Plural subjects marked with final particle **uh**.

### References and further reading:

- Lukram Himmat Singh. PhD Thesis. *A Descriptive Grammar of Zou* (2013). (<http://hdl.handle.net/10603/255217>)