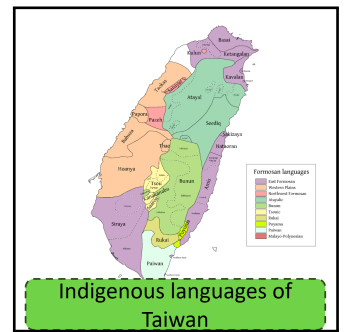


Problem 3. Saisiyat (10 marks)

Saisiyat is an indigenous language spoken by the Saisiyat people in the mountainous regions of North-West Taiwan. It is spoken by just under 6,000 people. It is considered endangered as few young people use it, but in recent years with help from the Taiwanese government, there is an effort to save Saisiyat as an indigenous language.

Below are some Saisiyat sentences with possible English translations. Note that in some instances, some context about the situation affects the grammar of the Saisiyat sentence, but not the English translation. This context is given to you in [square brackets]. The two symbols ‘ and ’ represent a particular pronunciation of the vowel after or before it.



Tatini’ tomalek ka ‘aewpir.	<i>The old man cooks some sweet potato.</i>
Sia komaat ka kinaat no korkoring.	<i>He writes the child a letter.</i>
Yaba’ somatel ka kakaat no korkoring.	<i>The father sends the child a pen.</i>
Sia mobay ka kakaat ka korkoring.	<i>He gives the child a pen.</i> [It is his own child]
Yaba’ saeoe ka talor ka korkoring.	<i>The father offers the child some aubergine.</i> [It is the father’s own child]
Sia mobay ka ‘aehoe’ ka korkoring.	<i>She gives the child a dog.</i> [She physically handed them the dog]
Tatini’ mobay ka ‘aewpir no ‘aehoe’.	<i>The old man gives the dog some sweet potato.</i> [The old man doesn’t like the dog]
Sia mobay ka kakaat hisia.	<i>She gives him a pen.</i> [She is his sister]
‘Oya’ pasibaeah ka kakaat ‘inisia.	<i>The mother lends him a pen.</i> [He is far away]

Q 3.1 Translate the following sentences into Saisiyat, taking the context into account if it is given.

- The child writes mother a letter.*
- The father gives him some aubergine.*
[The father is angry with him]
- She gives him some sweet potato.*
[She is not angry with him]
- The child offers the old man some sweet potato.*
[The old man is away in hospital, and the child sends some sweet potato into hospital for him]

[This problem continues on the next page.]

Here are some more Saisiyat words:

rayhil	=	<i>money</i>	amilika	=	<i>foreigner</i>
kaibaaen	=	<i>clothes</i>	ayam	=	<i>pork</i>
'aehael	=	<i>sibling, brother or sister</i>			

Q 3.2 Translate the following into English. If the Saisiyat sentence conveys extra context, suggest one option of what it might be.

5. **Yaba' mobay ka rayhil 'inisia.**
6. **'Oya' pasibaeaeh ka kaibaaen no korkoring.**
7. **'Oya' pasibaeaeh ka kaibaaen ka korkoring.**

Q 3.3 Translate the following into Saisiyat, taking the context into account:

8. *The old man gives the father the money.*
[The old man does not really want to give the father any money]
9. *The mother offers the money to the child.*
[The mother is happy to give her child money]
10. *The child offers sweet potato to the sibling.*
[It is the child's own sibling]
11. *He offers pork to the foreigner.*
[He does not know the foreigner]

Problem 3. Saisiyat Answers

3.1	1. Korkoring komaat + ka kinaat + no ‘oya’.
	2. Yaba’ mobay + ka talor + ‘inisia.
	3. Sia mobay + ka ‘aewpir + hisia.
	4. Korkoring saeoe + ka ‘aewpir + no tatini’.
3.2	5. <i>The father gives money to him.</i> [e.g. He is far away, the father doesn’t like him]
	6. <i>The mother lends the child (the/some) clothes.</i> [e.g. not her child, she is angry with the child, the child is far away]
	7. <i>The mother lends the child (the/some) clothes.</i> [e.g. it is her child, the child is close by]
3.3	8. Tatini’ mobay + ka rayhil + no yaba’.
	9. ‘Oya’ saeoe + ka rayhil + ka korkoring.
	10. Korkoring saeoe + ka ‘aewpir + ka ‘aehael.
	11. Sia saeoe + ka ayam + no amilika.

Maximum 33 pts.

Q 3.1 Max 12. 1 pt per component separated by a +, in the correct order. Do not distinguish between ‘ and ’. Allow minor misspellings, e.g. **komat** for **komaat**. Do not require capital letters.

Q 3.2 Max 9. 3 pt if correct translation and a valid context. Award 1 pt if either just the translation is correct, or the context is valid.

A context is valid for 5 and 6 if it conveys a sense of distance, either physical or emotional. It is valid for 7 if it conveys a sense of closeness, either physical or emotional.

Q 3.3 Max 12. 1 pt per component separated by a + in the correct order. Do not distinguish between ‘ and ’. Allow minor misspellings, e.g. **tatini** for **tatini’**. Do not require capital letters.

Problem 3. Saisiyat Commentary

- Word order: Agent - Verb - (**ka**) Direct Object - (**ka/no**) Indirect Object
- **ka sia** > **hisia**, **no sia** > **'inisia**
- **no** is used to indicate either physical or emotional distance between the agent and the indirect object; **ka** is used otherwise.

In Saisiyat, case is marked with prefixes. In this case, the accusative case is marked with **ka** before the noun, as in **ka korkoring** and the dative case with **no**, as in **no korkoring**.

When a verb is ditransitive, such as the English verb *give*, it takes two nouns or noun phrases as objects: we tend to refer to these as direct object and indirect object.

For example:

Ali gives the child a book – here *the child* is the receiver (indirect object) and *a book* is the thing being given (direct object). In many languages, such as Saisiyat, these different roles can be indicated with different cases: the accusative case for direct objects (marked with **ka** in Saisiyat) and the dative case for indirect objects (marked with **no** in Saisiyat).

Unlike English, which has only a few ditransitive verbs, Saisiyat has more verbs that can be used in a ditransitive construction with two nouns / noun phrases, such as *offer* (**saeoe**).

There is also a twist in Saisiyat when it comes to using dative case for indirect objects, as you can also use the accusative case for indirect objects in situations where the indirect object is close either physically or emotionally. As in the example sentence: **Sia mobay ka kakaat ka korkoring** (*He gives the child a pen*), where **ka** is used for both **kakaat** (*pen*) and **korkoring** (*child*). Here, the child is close by, so **ka** is used.

But where there is a distance (either physical or emotional), the **no** (dative) prefix is used:

- **Sia komaat ka kinaat no korkoring.** – *He writes the child a letter* – pragmatically, you write letters to people who are not in the same place, so the dative **no** is used.
- **Yaba' mobay ka talor no korkoring.** – *Father gives the child an eggplant*, as in sentence 3, where father is angry with the child suggesting an emotional distance between him and the child, so that the dative **no** is used.
- Similarly, you would use the **ka** accusative prefix with sibling, but the **no** prefix with *foreigner* as in sentences 11 and 12, because normally there is a sense of closeness between siblings (they are family), which is missing from the situation with a foreigner.

The problem has kept the Saisiyat grammar deliberately simple as the use of case forms is also affected by the focus of the verb, which has been ignored here.

References

- Hsieh, F. & Huang, S. (2006). *The Pragmatics of Case Marking in Saisiyat*. *Oceanic Linguistics*, 45(1), 91-109.
- Tsai, P. S. (2003). *The Structure of Spatial Expressions in Saisiyat*. *Language, Information and Computation: Proceedings of the 17th Pacific Asia Conference*, 1-3 October, 2003, Sentosa, Singapore (pp. 339-350). Waseda University.