

Al-Shams Linguistics Olympiad

Remote (proctored), 25th April 2026

Answer Submission Guidelines and Competition Rules

For all questions, provide only the answer required by the problem in a concise manner. Any unnecessary explanations or solution processes will not be graded.

Answers must be entered in the specified format. Responses that do not follow the required format may be marked incorrect.

Any unanswered question will receive zero points. This competition is scored based on the number of correct answers; there is no penalty for incorrect answers.

The exam will be conducted via Google Forms, and participants should enter their answers on the page corresponding to each question.

The exam may only be taken and submitted within the designated time. Submissions after the deadline will not be accepted, and no modifications can be made after submission.

Once submitted, responses cannot be changed. Please ensure that all answers are carefully checked before submission.

Due to the nature of an online exam, the organizers are not responsible for any disadvantages caused by internet connectivity issues or device malfunctions.

Please note that refreshing the page or closing the browser during the exam may result in loss of unsaved responses.

During the exam, all forms of academic misconduct are strictly prohibited, including but not limited to the use of external resources, communication with others, and the use of generative AI tools.

If any misconduct is detected, the participant's submission will be immediately disqualified, and future participation in the competition may be restricted.

Unless a question explicitly requires multiple answers, participants must provide only one answer per sub-question. If multiple answers are provided where only one is required, the response will be marked incorrect even if one of the answers is correct. When multiple answers are required, they must be listed and separated by commas, following the instructions given in the problem.

Problem 1 (20 points). Here are some phrases in language A and their English translations:

Language A	English	Language A	English
ji bi nu	<i>my house</i>	an bi jamsem	<i>his cassava</i>
gap bi gan	<i>rat's offspring</i>	ji bi nggwe i	<i>my own garden</i>
ai bi kwem	<i>father's canoe</i>	ndar bi im gro	<i>dog's mother's eye</i>
nan syim	<i>your hand</i>	ji bi nggon bi nyom i	<i>my wife's own machete</i>
Sepenyel gwes	<i>Sepenyel's leg</i>	yewon bi sukduno i	<i>shaman's own teaching</i>

Here are some more words in language A and their English translation:

bur	<i>land</i>	nggwa	<i>body</i>
gum	<i>name</i>	syor	<i>cassowary</i>
gwembo	<i>nose</i>	bei	<i>sago</i>

(a) Translate to English:

1. **syor bi gan**
2. **Sepenyel bi kwem i**
3. **ndar gwembo**
4. **an bi bur i**
5. **nan bi im gum**

(b) Translate to language A:

6. *your rat's leg*
7. *machete's name*
8. *shaman's wife's own home*
9. *father's body*
10. *my own sago*

(c) A linguist thought that there was an error in one of the phrases in language A, given in (a). Identify the phrase and provide your explanation on why the linguist thought it was wrong.

△ Cassava is an edible plant. Sago is a fruit. Machete is a knife. Cassowary is a species of bird. Sepenyel is a personal name in language A.

Gangrae Kim

Problem 2 (20 points). There are many Arabic-derived words in different languages of the world. Here are some words in language B that are derived from Arabic and the original words in Arabic listed in romanized forms:

Arabic	Language B	English
karaba	karaba	<i>to force</i>
daba	daba	<i>hoe</i>
ali	ali	<i>the exalted</i>
ḍamaʕ	ḍama	<i>community</i>
sunna	sunna	<i>Sunnah</i>
balaaqa	balaka	<i>to rush ahead</i>
kitaab	kitabu	<i>book</i>
ḫalwa	kaluwa	<i>retreat</i>
sabab	sababu	<i>cause</i>
daliil	dalilu	<i>motive</i>

(a) Fill in the table.

Arabic	Language B	English
ḍabbar	(1)	<i>the majesty</i>
ʕumra	(2)	<i>the small pilgrimage</i>
wakiil	(3)	<i>witness</i>
daraḍa	(4)	<i>influence</i>
maqaama	(5)	<i>glory</i>
taariix	(6)	<i>history</i>

(b) The word **kutuba** in language B means *sermon*, derived from the Arabic word **ḫutba**. Based only on the form **kutuba** in language B, propose five possible corresponding forms in Arabic, excluding **ḫutba**. (Any answers beyond the fifth will not be graded.)

△ ʕ, ḍ, ḫ are consonants. The doubling of a letter indicates the letter is pronounced long. Sunnah is a Muslim law based on the teachings and practices of the Prophet Mohammad and observed by orthodox Muslims.

Knowledge of Arabic is not necessary for the solution of the problem.

Gangrae Kim

Problem 3 (20 points). Here are some phrases in language C and their English translations in arbitrary order:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| 1. ii sakovai | A. <i>this red dog</i> |
| 2. ii sikili chuu'u | B. <i>the big bread_{sg}</i> |
| 3. ime sisikili karim | C. <i>the big pots</i> |
| 4. ime totosai panimim | D. <i>these white bread_{pl}</i> |
| 5. uu bwe'u paanim | E. <i>this watermelon</i> |
| 6. uu huya | F. <i>these red houses</i> |
| 7. uu sawai kari | G. <i>the yellow house</i> |
| 8. ume bwebwe'u soto'im | H. <i>those big dogs</i> |
| 9. waa tosai chuu'u | I. <i>the tree</i> |
| 10. wame bwebwe'u chu'um | J. <i>that white dog</i> |

(a) Determine the correct correspondences.

Here are some more words in language C: **chukui** *black*, **husai** *brown*, **moosen** *sea turtle*.

(b) Translate to Language C. Exactly one of the phrases has two possible forms; provide both:

11. *those sea turtles*
12. *that black dog*
13. *the brown pot*
14. *these yellow watermelons*
15. *these big trees*

(c) Explain why one of the phrases in (b) can be translated in more than one way.

△ ' is a consonant.

The doubling of a letter indicates the letter is pronounced long.

sg indicates that the noun is singular. *pl* indicates that the noun is plural.

Shinkyecom Byun

Problem 4 (20 points). Here are some sentences in language D and their English translations:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| 1. amonehe bare hero nani | <i>The woman ate the banana.</i> |
| 2. owa mowi to okanani | <i>I shot the night monkey.</i> |
| 3. poni shapoto zoho naki | <i>Did she carry the basket?</i> |
| 4. hozawa amonehe dama kanani | <i>The giant anteater grabbed the woman.</i> |
| 5. warikoze bakho kanaki | <i>Did the great long-nosed armadillo reach?</i> |
| 6. owa shapoto dama onani | <i>I grabbed the basket.</i> |
| 7. owa zowato khi onaki | <i>Did I see the girl?</i> |

Here are some more words in language D: **etero** garment, **ini** my grandmother, **modo** lesser anteater, **pasho** water.

(a) Translate to English:

8. **zowato bare zoho nani**
9. **mowi hozawa khi kanaki**
10. **poni etero dama naki**
11. **owa bakho onani**

(b) Translate to language D:

12. *My grandmother shot the great long-nosed armadillo.*
13. *Did I carry the water?*
14. *The girl saw the woman.*
15. *Did I eat the lesser anteater?*

△ A night monkey, a giant anteater, a great long-nosed armadillo and a lesser anteater are mammals.

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Good luck!