

Problem #5

It is easy to tell what all nouns and the only verb mean. All common nouns denoting people have the prefix **m-** in the singular and the prefix **va-** in the plural.

There are two possible orders of the Subject, Verb, Direct Object and Indirect Object:

(1) S V DO IO

(2) S V IO DO

The verb *buy* has the structure (a/va)(m/va)guli, with the first prefix denoting the number of S and the second, of IO; DO's number is not marked at all in the verb. We have no examples where both S and IO are plural.

Clearly one or both prefixes may be omitted; however,

(*) If IO is marked in the verb, so shall S.

If the word order is (1), both S and IO must be marked. If the word order is (2), they may but need not be, as long as (*) is fulfilled.

Assignment:

Clearly sentences (11) mean 'The woman bought the beer for Mwangi'. This can be said correctly in the following four ways:

Mdala amguli ugimbi Mwangi

Mdala amguli Mwangi ugimbi

Mdala aguli Mwangi ugimbi

Mdala guli Mwangi ugimbi

The errors are:

(11a) word order (1), but neither S nor IO marked in the verb.

(11b) only IO marked, breaking (*).

(11c) word order (1), but only S marked.

Sentences (12) mean 'Kamau bought the goat for the grandmothers'. That is:

Kamau avaguli mene vabuya

Kamau avaguli vabuya mene

Kamau aguli vabuya mene

Kamau guli vabuya mene

The errors are:

(12a) the numbers of both S and IO incorrectly marked.

(12b) word order (1), but neither S nor IO marked in the verb.

(12c) only IO marked, breaking (*). (Or else: IO not marked, which word order (2) allows, but number of S marked incorrectly).

Problem: *Olga Fyodorova* Solution: *Alexander Berdichevsky*