(I) Beja (1/2)

This problem was worth five points. The scoring rubric below includes 13 points. After the papers were scored, each score was multiplied by 5/13 so that each score was in the range of 0 to 5 points.

Translate into English: 1/2 point for getting one sentence completely right. 1 point for having at most three morphemes wrong across the five sentences (the morphemes in English are the verb tenses, singular and plural, definite and indefinite, the pronouns "he" and "she", and the main words of the sentences -- subject, object and verb). 3 points for getting at most one morpheme wrong across the five sentences.
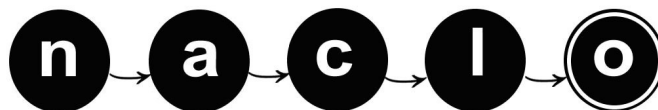
I1. The camel has seen the man.
I2. He did not eat a flower or A flower did not eat.
I3. She can eat a horse.
I4. The man can collect water.
I5. She cannot see a donkey.

Translate into Beja: 1/2 point for getting one sentence completely right. 1 point for having at most three morphemes wrong across the five sentences. The morphemes in Beja are all the prefixes and suffixes and the verb forms as well as the main lexical items ("tak" for "man", "meek" for "donkey" etc.). 3 points would have been given for at most three wrong morphemes, but nobody got this score.

I6. Tak oogwib kanriif.
I7. Idooba katamya.
I8. Uumeek oofaar tamaab kiike.
I9. Uugwib win kiike.
I10. Tuuyaas yooaab danbiilt kitte.

Explanation: This data in this problem illustrate many morphemes (prefixes, suffixes, and other ways of changing words). You could get up to six points (one point each) for explaining any of the items listed below. A seventh point was reserved for a particularly complete or insightful solution, and only one person got that point.

1. Noun gender: Simple observation: you can add a t- to the beginning of a noun to make it feminine. (You could get one point for the simple observation.)
   1.1 How Beja really works: the initial t- is part of the definite article, and the rule is that there's only one t marker: either an article t..., or a suffix -t; e.g. tilaga (g) but m'ariit (q).
2. Noun gender: Masculine nouns can be identified by the absence of a t- or –t. (see 1.1)
3. Noun number: There is one noun that appears in both singular and plural "yoo" (ox) an "yooaab" (oxen) in this problem. "Yooaab" is the only plural noun in this problem.
4. Noun definiteness: Monosyllabic nouns have a prefix oo- (accusative) or uu- (nominative) when they are definite. Feminine nouns have a t- before uu- or oo-.
5. Noun definiteness: Disyllabic nouns have a prefix i- if they are definite. If they are feminine, there is also a t- before the i-.
6. Noun case: Monosyllabic definite nouns have the prefix -uu for nominative case and -oo for accusative case.
7. Noun case: Disyllabic definite nouns have the prefix i- for both nominative and accusative. There is only one example of a disyllabic definite noun that is accusative, t-i-m'ari (the food).

8. Noun case: Masculine nouns that end in a vowel have a -b added for accusative indefinite masculine (doobaab, bridegroom; kil'oob, shell; and yooaab, oxen). doobaab contrasts with feminine t-i-dooba (the bride) where t- is the feminine prefix and i- is the definite prefix. Other accusative indefinite nouns do not end in -b (hataay, horse; yam, water). The -b is also found in participles tamaabu (n), diblaab (o).

9. Noun case: There is one feminine indefinite noun in object position: "m'ari-it" (food) which contrasts with "t-i-m'ari" (the food). We could conclude that "-it" is a suffix for feminine accusative indefinite. However, additional data would reveal that –t is also found in nominatives.

10. Predicative nouns and adjectives, positive: (e.g., is a mouse, is big): Predicative nouns and adjectives end in -u if the sentence is positive. -u has a copula (be-verb) function, suffixed on to nouns, adjectives, verb participles (tamaabu (n)) and even finite verbs (kanriifu (r)).

11. Predicative nouns, negative: (e.g., is not a donkey): The noun is followed by "k-itte" for feminine or "k-iike" for masculine.

12. Predicative nouns, definite: the definite prefix is oo- for definite predicative nouns. Predicatives are accusative (as they are in Arabic, incidentally).

13. Suffixing verb, past, feminine subject: -ta

14. Suffixing verb, present, feminine subject: -t(i)-ni.

15. Suffixing verb, present perfect, feminine subject: no examples.

16. Suffixing verb, past, masculine subject: -ya

17. Suffixing verb, present, masculine subject: -iini or -ii-ni (compared to feminine present)

18. Suffixing verb, present perfect, masculine subject: -aab followed by -u for positive or kiike for negative.
    18.1 Better still, aa + masculine accusative b + predicative

19. Suffixing verb, negative: ka-. The past tense form of the verb is used with ka- to mean present tense negative.

20. Prefixing/Infixing verb, feminine past: ti-C1 C2-i-C3. As in other Semitic languages, a verb root can consist of a skeleton of consonants (C1, C2, C3) with various prefixes and suffixes or other patterns of consonants and vowels between the root's main consonants.

21. Prefixing/infixing verb, feminine present: no example

22. Prefixing/infixing verb, feminine present perfect: no example

23. Prefixing/infixing verb, masculine past: C1 C2 i C3. This is only attested in the negative (kii-dbil, is not collecting). Negative present tense is formed with a negative prefix and the past tense form of the verb. See below.
    23.1 But the model of feminine tiCCiC would suggest iCCiC for masculine. Then the negative just requires ki + phonological adjustment.

24. Prefixing/infixing verb, masculine present perfect: C1 i C2 C3 -aab plus -u for positive or kiike for negative.
    24.1. Same as for suffixing verbs – see 18.

25. Prefixing/infixing verb, negative: ki-

26. Potential (can): present tense form of the verb plus -u for positive and kiike/kitte for negative.

27. The basic word order is subject-object-verb.

28. The subject and object can be omitted if they are pronouns. The verb will indicate the gender of the pronoun.

29. You could get a point for noticing that "t" marks feminine gender everywhere in nouns, verbs, and adjectives.