

Your name:

The UK Linguistics Olympiad 2020

Round 1



Problem 7. A cat in a hat (20 marks)

Chintang is spoken by about 5,000 people in Nepal. It is a Sino-Tibetan language, so it is related to Chinese and Tibetan. In Devanagari script, the script usually used

for writing Chintang, its name is **छिन्ताङ्ग**. Here are 16 Chintang sentences (in semi-IPA transcription), and 16 English sentences which translate them, but which are given in a different order. In this transcription, the symbols Λ , η and ʔ represent the vowel in southern English *cup*, the *ng* in *sing* and the glottal stop.



1	cuwa uthurumbeʔ yuŋno	a	There is a hole in the towel.
2	appa chintanbeʔ yuŋno	b	The woman has gone away.
3	sencak sie	c	The rice has been cooked.
4	wapaŋa topi wadaŋse	d	There is a hat on the head.
5	kok thuktanʃe	e	My mother-in-law slept.
6	ram hariniŋ khoŋno	f	You go to the market.
7	kʌp kedadaŋse	g	The water is in his mouth.
8	tanbeʔ topi yuŋno	h	Joge sent a letter.
9	menwaŋa sencak sede	i	The mouse died.
10	tawelbeʔ uhoŋ yuŋno	j	The woman has bought a chicken.
11	anambaŋa cuwa thuŋno	k	The cup has been broken.
12	mechacha khadaŋse	l	My father is in Chintang.
13	jogeŋa ciŋthi hakte	m	The rooster has put on a hat.
14	anamma imse	n	A cat killed a mouse.
15	hana bajar akhaʔno	o	Ram plays with Hari.
16	mechachaŋa wa khedoŋse	p	My father-in-law drinks water.

Q7.1. Match the Chintang sentences (1-16) with their corresponding English translation (a-p).

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16

Q7.2. Supply the missing translations below.

a	athurumbeʔ kok yuŋno	
b	appa khade	
c	anamma ammaniŋ yuŋno	
d		There is a cat in a hat.
e		Joge plays with a chicken.
f		My hen is at the market.
g		parent-in-law

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Solution and marking.

Scoring: (max 32)

- 7.1: 1 point for each correct letter. (max 16)
- 7.2a-c: 2 points for each correct sentence, 1 with one wrong word. (max 6)
 - Treat *went away* as one word.
 - Accept synonyms, e.g. *dad* for *father*.
- 7.2d-g: 1 point for each correct word. (max 10)
 - Insist on *yujno* and *khonno* being sentence-final, but allow any other order.
 - Ignore minor copying errors (e.g. *be* for *be?*)

Q7.1

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16
g l i m c o k d n a p b h e f j

Q7.2

a	athurumbe? kok yujno	There is rice in my mouth.
b	appa khade	My father went away.
c	anamma ammaniŋ yujno	My mother-in-law is with my mother.
d	topibe? menwa yujno	There is a cat in a hat.
e	joge waniŋ khonno	Joge plays with a chicken.
f	awama bajarbe? yujno	My hen is at the market.
g	nam	parent-in-law

Commentary

There are many different ways into this problem, but here's one:

- 4 English sentences contain *is*, and 4 Chintang sentences contain *yujno*, so *yujno* = *is*.
 - *yujno* is at the end of the sentence, so maybe the last word is always the verb?
- (l) contains Chintang and (2) *chintanbe?*, so (l) = (2), and
 - *be?* = 'in'
 - *appa* = (my) father.
- 2 English sentences contain *woman* as the subject and 2 Chintang sentences contain *mechacha(ŋa)*, so *mechacha* = *woman*.
 - (j) = (16) (two non-verbs in each)
 - (b) = (12)
 - *-ŋa* is added to a noun when it's a transitive subject? (Also found in 4, 9, 11, 13.)

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- And so on.