

Problem #4

The problem features nouns and personal pronouns. Three pronouns are given in the data, the fourth (required in Assignment 2) will have to be constructed by analogy:

	Sg	Pl
1 st person	bi (bu)	
2 nd person	si	su

All expressions in the problem denote something (**X**) belonging to someone or something else (**Y**). The possessor (**Y**) comes first, unmarked. The possessee (**X**) receives a suffix (-i, -ni, -u) indicating the possessor's person and number. This marker may be preceded by the suffix -ŋi, which indicates that the possession is alienable (that is, the possessed and the possessor are not in a part-whole relationship). Two occurrences of the vowel i merge into i: on a suffix boundary.

If there are two possessors with different possessees (e.g., ‘thy son’s shoulder’), each gets the appropriate suffixes. If there are two possessors with the same possessee (‘my **boar head**’, ‘your **cow thigh**’), the possessee gets a suffix which indicates the current possessor, that is, the one of which it is not a part.

Let us summarise all of this in a table:

possessor	possessee	examples
Sg (1 st or 2 nd person)	Y X-(ŋi)-i	bi wo:i, si bogdolioi bi mo:ŋi:, si ja:ŋi: bi nakta diliŋi:, si b'atanj: bogdoloni
Sg (3 rd person)	Y X-(ŋi)-ni	ja: xabani, dili tekpuni b'ata zä:ŋini si b'atanj: bogdoloni
Pl (1 st or 2 nd person)	Y X-(ŋi)-u	su zä:ŋiu, su ja: wo:ŋiu

Assignment 1.

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| su b'atanju zä:ŋini | your son's money |
| si teŋku bugdinj: | thy stool leg |
| si teŋkuŋi: bugdini | thy stool's leg |

Assignment 2.

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| the boy's thigh | b'ata wo:ni |
| our boar | bu naktanju |
| my daughter's tree | bi aziganj mo:ŋini |

Assignment 3.

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| bi xabai | Yes: ‘my udder’ (a cow speaking, shall we say, in a fairy-tale) |
| su b'atanju bugdinjini | Yes: ‘your son's leg’ (not his own, though, but perhaps a chicken's leg belonging to him) |
| si igi | No (‘my tail’ would be si igi:) |

Assignment 4.

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| bi tekpui | ‘my skin’ (the skin of my body) |
| bi tekpuŋi: | ‘my skin’ (e.g., an animal's skin belonging to me) |

Problem and solution: Boris Iomdin