

Solution of Problem 3

There are two types of English expressions in the problem: some (I) consist of a date, a month and a day of the week, others (II) name the number of the day of the week within the month instead of the date. The word order in the Basque expressions of type (I) is ⟨month⟩ ⟨date⟩, ⟨day of the week⟩, whilst in type (II) it is ⟨month⟩ ⟨number of the day⟩ ⟨day of the week⟩. The last word ends in *-a*, whereas the preceding words have no final *-a* (except for the word *hogeita*, which means ‘20’ in compound numerals). The element *-garren* forms ordinal numbers. The word *astea* is not a name of a day of the week (six of those we have seen in examples 1–10, the seventh occurs in Assignment 3). Since Assignment 2 features the word ‘week’, we can guess that this is the meaning of the word *astea*.

Assignment 1.	<i>urtarrilaren hogeita hirugarrena, larunbata</i>	<i>the 23rd of January, Saturday</i>
	<i>abenduaren azken astea</i>	<i>the last <u>week</u> of December</i>
	<i>otsailaren lehenengo osteguna</i>	<i>the first Thursday of February</i>
	<i>ekainaren bederatzigarrena, igandea</i>	<i>the ninth of June, Sunday</i>
	<i>abenduaren lehena, <u>asteazkena</u></i>	<i>the first of December, Wednesday</i>
	<i>irailaren azken asteazkena</i>	<i>the last Wednesday of <u>September</u></i>
	<i>azaroaren hirugarren ostirala</i>	<i>the third Friday of November</i>
	<i>urriaren azken larunbata</i>	<i>the last Saturday of October</i>
	<i>irailaren lehena, astelehena</i>	<i><u>the first of September, Monday</u></i>
	<i><u>urtarrilaren</u> bigarrena, ostirala</i>	<i>the second of January, Friday</i>
Assignment 2.	<i>the first Monday of December</i>	<i>abenduaren lehenengo astelehena</i>
	<i>the 29th of November, Saturday</i>	<i>azaroaren hogeita bederatzigarrena, larunbata</i>
	<i>the second week of January</i>	<i>urtarrilaren bigarren astea</i>
	<i>the third of February, Monday</i>	<i>otsailaren hirugarrena, astelehena</i>

Assignment 3. *Astelehena* ‘Monday’, *asteazkena* ‘Wednesday’; *asteartea*, the only day of the week not found in in Assignment 1, is ‘Tuesday’. All three names are formed from the word *aste* ‘week’. *Astelehena* means literally ‘first (day) of the week’, *asteazkena* ‘last (day) of the week’. Tuesday’s Basque name can be translated more or less as ‘day in the middle of the week’.

No one knows for sure why Basque calls Wednesday ‘last day of the week’. In Basque dialects other variants of the names of the days of the week are also found, including loans from Romance languages.