

Your name:

# The UK Linguistics Olympiad 2017



## Round 2 Problem 2. Proto-Algonquian

Proto-Algonquian, like Proto-Indo-European, is an extinct language that has been reconstructed on the basis of its modern descendants. It is believed to have been spoken about 3000 years ago by the ancestors of the current speakers of the various Algonquian languages, which are spoken in Canada and the USA. In the data below, the ‘:’ indicates a long vowel, and the ‘θ’ indicates a ‘th’ sound, as in ‘thing’.

Here are some Proto-Algonquian words that can be translated as entire English sentences. (The data are somewhat simplified.)

kewa:pameθehm	I see you (singular).
kewa:pameθehmwa:	I see you (plural).
newa:pama:ehma	I see him/her.
newa:pama:ehmaki	I see them.
kewa:pameθehmwa:ena:n	We see you (plural).
newa:pama:ehmena:na	We see him/her.
newa:pama:ehmena:naki	We see them.
kewa:pamiehm	You (singular) see me.
kewa:pama:ehm	You (singular) see her/him.
kewa:pamiehmwa:	You (plural) see me.
kewa:pamiehmwa:ena:n	You (plural) see us.
newa:pamekwehmena:naki	They see us.

**Q.2.1.** On your answer sheet, translate the following into the other language.

- kewa:pamiehmena:n
- We see them.
- They see me.

**Q.2.2.** How does this bit of Proto-Algonquian grammar work? Use the table on the answer sheet to explain how each affix is used – i.e. its position within the word, and its contribution to the word’s meaning. If you introduce special conventions or notation for positions, don’t forget to explain them in the space provided.

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## Problem 2.2 Proto-Algonquian (answer sheet)

2.1. a. kewa:pamiehmena:n	
b. We see them.	
c. They see me.	

### 2.2.

affix	position	meaning

Explanation of the conventions you use in this table:

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## Solution and marking.

Scoring (max 30)

- 2.1 (max 6)
  - 2.1.a: 2 points (1 point with one error)
  - 2.1.b,c: 2 points (1 point with one incorrect morpheme)
- 2.2 (max 24)
- one for each position statement
- one for each meaning; ½ for a partial meaning
- two for a good explanation of conventions

a. kewa:pamiehmena:n	You (singular) see us.	2
b. We see them.	ne wa:pam a: ehm ena:n a ki	2
c. They see me.	ne wa:pam ekw ehm aki	2

2.

affix	position	meaning
ke (or k)	-1/prefix	2/second person/you
ne (or n)	-1/prefix	3/third person/he-she-they/him-her-them
eθ	+1/first suffix	1-2 / 1 subject, 2 object/ etc.
a:	+1/first suffix	1-3
i	+1/first suffix	2-1
ekw	+1/first suffix	3-1
ehm	+2/second suffix	? unclear. Maybe present tense?
wa:	+3/third suffix	plural 2
ena:n	+4/fourth suffix	plural 1
a	+5/fifth suffix	3/third person/etc.
ki	+6/sixth suffix	plural 3

Conventions:

- -n/+n: position
- 1, 2, 3: first, second, third person
- 1-2, etc: subject = first person, object = second person