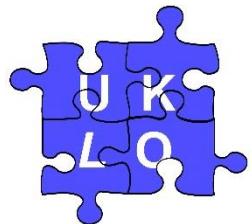


Your name:

# The UK Linguistics Olympiad 2017



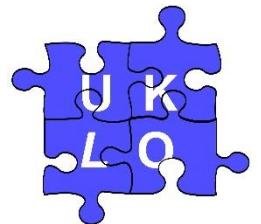
## Problem 4. A little Tshiluba (10 marks)

Tshiluba, spoken by about 6 million people, is one of the official languages of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It belongs to a group of languages known as the Bantu languages.

Below are some sentences in Tshiluba, along with their English translations. Fill the empty cells 1-8.

Tshiluba	English
mukaji uvwa mumona muana.	The woman saw the child.
bakaji bavva bamona muana.	The women saw the child.
muluma uvwa mumona bakaji.	The man saw the women.
muluma uvwa mumona bambuji.	The man saw the goats.
muluma udi mumona bambuji.	The man sees the goats.
banzolu bavva bamona bantambwe.	The chickens saw the lions.
tubambwa tuvwa tumona baluma.	The small dogs saw the men.
mbwa uvwa mumona ntambwe.	The dog saw the lion.
ntambwe uvwa mumona tubanzolu.	The lion saw the small chickens.
kanzolu kavwa kamona tubantambwe.	The small chicken saw the small lions.
tubakulu tuvwa tumona mbwa.	The small adults saw the dog.
kamulunda kavwa kapeta kantambwe.	The small friend found the small lion.
1	Dog
2	The man saw the child.
3	The chicken saw the dogs.
4	The adult found the goat.
5	The small goats found the small child.
balunda	6
cimuma	fruit
bimuma	fruits
cimuma civwa cimona ntambwe.	7
ntambwe uvwa mumona tubimuma.	8

Your name:



# The UK Linguistics Olympiad 2017

## Solution and marking.

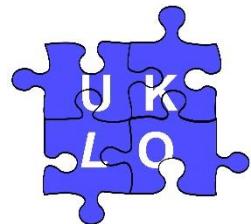
### Scoring:

- 1 point for each correct word. No half marks. (max. 25)
  - No points for 'the', accept without 'the'.
- Score positively – 1 for each target word, ignore extra non-target words.
  - But insist on correct order; if A ... B should be B ... A, accept A but not B.
  - Insist on correct number (singular/plural)
  - Accept a noun only if its grammatical function is right.
  - Reject active-passive exchanges even if the meaning is the same.
- Score generously – if different scores are possible, choose the highest.

Tshiluba	English	points
mukaji uvwa mumona muana.	The woman saw the child.	
bakaji bavva bamona muana.	The women saw the child.	
muluma uvwa mumona bakaji.	The man saw the women.	
muluma uvwa mumona bambuji.	The man saw the goats.	
muluma udi mumona bambuji.	The man sees the goats.	
banzolu bavva bamona bantambwe.	The chickens saw the lions.	
tubambwa tuvwa tumona baluma.	The small dogs saw the men.	
mbwa uvwa mumona ntambwe.	The dog saw the lion.	
ntambwe uvwa mumona tubanzolu.	The lion saw the small chickens.	
kanzolu kavva kamona tubantambwe.	The small chicken saw the small lions.	
tubakulu tuvwa tumona mbwa.	The small adults saw the dog.	
kamulunda kavva kapeta kantambwe.	The small friend found the small lion.	
1 mbwa	Dog	1
2 muluma uvwa mumona muana.	The man saw the child.	4
3 nzolu uvwa mumona bambwa.	The chicken saw the dogs.	4
4 mukulu uvwa mupeta mbuji.	The adult found the goat.	4
5 tubambuji tuvwa tupeta kamuana.	The small goats found the small child.	4
balunda	6 friends [not: friend]	1
cimuma	fruit	
bimuma	fruits	
cimuma civwa cimona ntambwe.	7 The fruit saw the lion.	3
ntambwe uvwa mumona tubimuma.	8 The lion saw the small fruits.	4

Your name:

# The UK Linguistics Olympiad 2017



## Commentary

This problem is about the syntax and morphology of a typical Bantu language, in which prefixes distinguish singular and plural nouns, and are repeated on words to which they are related, including verbs. But there are some extra twists to the story. In the following N, S and P stand for prefixes which are explained below.

- N ('number') distinguishes singular and plural:
  - N is generally *mu* for the singular and *ba* for the plural, but
  - before words beginning with n/m + consonant, which also happen to be animal names, *mu* disappears (e.g. *mbwa*, *ntambe*).
- S ('small') means 'small':
  - S is *ka* (singular) or *tu* (plural).
  - S stands before N (e.g. *kamuntu*)
- P ('prefix') is the prefix which is repeated on the verb and 'the' (see below).
  - P is the noun's first prefix, so if there is an S, S = P; otherwise N = P.
- Subjects and objects are treated differently:
  - Between the subject and the verb there is a word whose function and meaning are unclear ('the'? 'past tense'?): P + *vwa*.
  - The subject stands before the verb while the object follows it.
  - The verb has the P of its subject but not of its object.