

Problem 2. Jam Sai (5 marks)

Jam Sai (sometimes spelled Jamsay) is a Dogon language spoken in Mali and Burkina Faso, by about 130,000 speakers.

Below are some verb pairs in the Jam Sai language with their meanings.

Note that **y** is a consonant; **ɛ** and **ɔ** are vowels; **ñ** is like the *ny* in *canyon*; **ŋ** the *ng* in *sing*. The superscript **n** indicates that the previous sound is *nasalised* – pronounced with air coming out of the nose. Jam Sai is a tonal language, but tones have not been written as they are not relevant to this problem.



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|--------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| aya | <i>to hear</i> | ayawa | <i>to make hear</i> |
| dine | <i>to sit</i> | diniwⁿe | <i>to plant</i> |
| gɔnɔ | <i>to bend</i> | gɔnɔrnɔ | <i>to unbend</i> |
| jimnɛ | <i>to go blind</i> | jimniwⁿɛ | <i>to blind</i> |
| jugɔ | <i>to know</i> | juguwɔ | <i>to inform</i> |
| karna | <i>to do</i> | karnawⁿa | <i>to force</i> |
| le | <i>to screw</i> | lere | <i>to unscrew</i> |
| ma | <i>to seal</i> | marⁿa | <i>to unseal</i> |
| pere | <i>to jump</i> | perewe | <i>to make jump</i> |
| pine | <i>to close</i> | pinirⁿe | <i>to open</i> |
| wɛjɛ | <i>to get used to</i> | wɛjewɛ | <i>to accustom</i> |
| ya | <i>to go</i> | yawa | <i>to let go</i> |

Here are a few more simple Jam Sai verbs:

| | | | |
|-------------|---------------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| cine | <i>to disappear</i> | pite | <i>to be inflated</i> |
| ñe | <i>to exist</i> | ko | <i>to eat</i> |
| domo | <i>to wind up</i> | taya | <i>to wear shoes</i> |
| pegɛ | <i>to insert</i> | muŋo | <i>to tie</i> |
| ɛrne | <i>to be full</i> | | |

Q 2.1 Using each of the above words exactly once, translate the following into Jam Sai:

(a) *to untie*

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(b) *to feed*

(f) *to appear*

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(c) *to inflate*

(g) *to unwind*

(d) *to remove*

(h) *to fill up*

(e) *to put on shoes*

(i) *to create*

Problem 2. Jam Sai Answers and Explanation (1/1)

Total: 18 points

Q 2.1 2pt if correct; 1pt if one letter is wrong (treat **n** as a letter). Max 18.

| | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| (a) to untie | mujurⁿo | (f) to appear | cinirⁿe |
| (b) to feed | kowo | (g) to unwind | domorⁿo |
| (c) to inflate | pitiwe | (h) to fill up | ernewⁿe |
| (d) to remove | pegere | (i) to create | ñewⁿe |
| (e) to put on shoes | tayawa | | |

Explanation

The data show two types of verb derivation: one causative (to make something happen) and the other negative or opposite.

In both cases, an infix is inserted before the final vowel, consisting of a copy of the first vowel of the stem, then **w** for the causative, **r** for the negative. In addition, if there is a nasal consonant (**m**, **n**, **ñ**, **ŋ**) anywhere in the stem, the **r** or the **w** is nasalised.

Note that this can also be analysed as a suffix that changes the final vowel of the stem.