

# Latvian Olympiad in Linguistics 2016

## First round, January 9

### **Remember!**

*Do not copy the statements of the problems! In order to save your time, in assignments where it is required to explain your solution, do not describe the solution process step by step. Instead, write down your observations.*

*Worse: "Having studied sentences 17 and 23 I noticed that in both of them the prefix X- is used..."*

*Better: "In language N the prefix X- marks the plural number."*

*Pay attention to details! Sometimes they matter a lot. Good luck!*

**Problem #1 (10 points).** Four out of five of the following sentences contain a word combination with a particular feature.

1. He wants to buy a pet rabbit from a zoo shop but he is also considering other alternatives.
2. He walks leisurely down a mountain path enjoying the beauty of nature.
3. He spotted 7 different species of animals in the forest.
4. He went to Ireland to work, but now he wants to return back to Latvia.
5. He climbed up the stairs, saying that he would be back soon.

Assignment. Write out the word combinations with the abovementioned feature (**6 points**) and explain what the feature is (**4 points**).

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**Problem #2 (10 points).** Given are some of the numerals from 1 to 9 written out in Jul'hoan dialect of the !Kung language<sup>1</sup> in random order:

a. n!àni

b. n!àni ko n!àni

c. nlè!é

d. tsàqn

e. tsàqn ko n!àni

f. tsàqn ko tsàqn ko n!àni

g. tsàqn ko tsàqn ko tsàqn ko

tsàqn

Assignment 1. Write out the given numerals using numbers (**5 points**).

Assignment 2. Write out the two remaining numerals in Jul'hoan dialect of the !Kung language (**5 points**). If for any of them you have more than one option, please indicate which one you think is more plausible and why.

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<sup>1</sup>!Kung language belongs to the Khoisan language family. It is spoken by about 16 000 people in Namibia, Botswana and Angola.

l and ! are special (clicking) sounds of the !Kung language.

**Problem #3 (10 points).**

The problem will be made available in February 2017.

**Problem #4 (25 points).** Given are sentences in the Finnish<sup>4</sup> language and their English translations:

**1. Kauniin naisen hameet ovat keltaisia.**

Skirts of a beautiful girl are yellow.

**2. Nämä ovat ohuita koiria.**

These are thin dogs.

**3. Tumman metsän ruskeat puut ovat suuria.**

Brown trees of a dark forest are big.

**4. Suuret pääät ovat kauniita.**

Big heads are beautiful.

**5. Tummat hiukset ovat täällä.**

Dark tresses<sup>5</sup> are here.

**6. Nämä ovat kiinnostavia mieleenpainuvia junia.**

These are interesting memorable trains.

**7. Ohuet koirat ovat ruskeita.**

Thin dogs are brown.

**8. Mieleenpainuvat luolat ovat täällä.**

Memorable caves are here.

Assignment 1. Translate into English (**1 point**):

**9. Metsät ovat täällä.**

**10. Keltaiset junat ovat suuria.**

Assignment 2. Translate into Finnish (**1 point**):

11. These are dark trees.

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Given are some more Finnish sentences:

**12. Nämä ovat ruskeat silmät.**

These are brown eyes.

**13. Nuoren tupakoitsijan hampaat ovat keltaiset.**

Teeth of a young smoker are yellow.

**14. Mustat sukset ovat mieleenpainuvat.**

Black skis are memorable.

**15. Nämä ovat vakaan käden sormet.**

These are fingers of a strong hand.

**16. Nämä ovat ohuen lapsen hampaan juuret.**

These are roots of a tooth of a thin child.

Assignment 3. Translate into English (1 point):

17. **Puun juuret ovat vakaat.**

18. **Tupakoitsijat ovat ohuita.**

Assignment 4. Translate into Finnish (7 points):

19. These are black caves.

20. Girls are young.

21. These are beautiful dark tresses.

22. Hands are big.

23. These are skirts of a child.

24. Big trees are strong.

25. These are beautiful children.

26. Teeth of a dog are strong.

Assignment 5. Explain your solution! (12 points).

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After successfully solving this problem, one student started to read books in Finnish. In one of them, he noticed the sentence "**Nämä ovat ruskeita suksia.**".

‘But this is a mistake!’ the student thought. ‘It must be "**Nämä ovat ruskeat sukset.**"!’

Actually, it was not a mistake – the sentence "**Nämä ovat ruskeita suksia.**" is also possible in the Finnish language, however, it is grammatically correct not in every context.

Assignment 6. Translate the sentence (1 point) and describe a situation in which this sentence would be grammatically correct (2 points)!

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<sup>4</sup>The Finnish language belongs to the Finno-Ugric branch of the Uralic language family. It is spoken by approximately 6 million people mostly in Finland.

<sup>5</sup>Tresses are long locks of woman’s hair.

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**Problem #5 (10 points).**

The problem is not available at the moment.

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