

(L) The Goat, the Mother, and the Wardrobe (1/1)

- L1. a. The girls are wearing the shoes.
 b. The son is wearing the trousers.
 c. You (pl) are wearing the shawls.
- L2. a. Ak^wəmɜ́wə bʃ^wup’.
 b. Ab ak’asə lʃ^wup’.
 c. Anch^wak^wa ajmsək^wa rəʃop’.

Notes

The grammar here is simplified from real Abkhaz grammar. Sentences have the word order SOV, where the subject may be omitted if the agent is indicated by the personal endings. Nouns are sorted according to human/nonhuman, where human nouns take the plural suffix -ch^wa, while nonhuman nouns take -k^wa. Verbs are of the form: subject marker + verb root + p’, where the subject marker varies for person and gender. The subject markers are as follows (not all of the following are deducible from the data):

Person and gender	Subject marker (verb root 1)	Subject marker (verb root 2)
1st person singular	s	sə
1st person plural	ah	ha
2nd person singular	b	bə
2nd person plural	ʃ ^w	ʃ ^w ə
3rd person human masculine singular	i	jə
3rd person human feminine singular	l	lə
3rd person non-human singular	a	a
3rd person plural	r	rə

Challenge 1: unlike the English translation, the Abkhaz contains two different verb roots for ‘wear’, according to where on the body the clothing is worn: -ʃ^wu- is used for clothing worn on the upper half of the body, and ʃo for the lower half. Candidates have to notice this semantic difference, to know which root to use in their Abkhaz sentences in 1.2

Challenge 2: the singular word for ‘god’, anch^wa, coincidentally looks like a plural (identical, in fact, to the plural ‘mothers’). The third part of 1.2 requires the candidate to realize this and add a real plural ending onto ‘god’, to form the plural anch^wak^wa ‘gods’. Gods are nonhuman (perhaps counterintuitively, given people’s often anthropomorphic idea of gods), so they take -k^wa.

Challenge 3: no word for ‘nanny-goat’ is given, and so candidates should make the step of using the word for ‘billy-goat’ with feminine endings on the verb (which requires noticing that the verb varies according to the gender of the subject).

