

2011 Solutions

(D) Double or Quit in Caterpillar Country (1/3)

DI.

(i)

Notice that all words in the list end in either *-eme* or *-eke*. These endings are found on the same verb stem, e.g., *ath* 'grind', and they correspond to a difference in the TIME of the grinding event relative to the time of the utterance in which the verb is used. Similarly, the contrasting pair *unthepuntheme* and *unthepuntheke* both refer to continued 'going', and whether reference is to a present or past event is conveyed by the choice of suffix. Given that these suffixes are found on all verbs, irrespective of their meaning, eliminates the possibility that they express differences in 'type of action'. That they are found on simple verbs as well as 'start action' and 'continue action' verbs eliminates the possibility that they express differences in either 'start of action' or 'duration of action'.

Answer: B. Time of action

(ii) a.

To answer this question, one needs to compare the 'simple' verb form with the corresponding 'frequent' form. Starting with the first contrasting pair, *atherreme* 'is laughing' and *atherreperreme* 'keeps laughing', one needs to isolate the basic stem. Given what we know from the previous question, we can remove the 'time' or 'tense' suffix *-eme* common to both verb forms, which gives us *atherr-* as the stem. In the 'frequent' form, this is followed by *-ep*, which is in turn followed by the final vowel and consonant of the basic stem, giving *atherr-ep-err-*. This is the 'frequent' stem to which the 'tense' suffix is then added.

To verify if this procedure works for all of the 'frequent' verbs in the list, one needs to compare them with the corresponding simple form:

mpwar-eme 'is making' *mpwar-ep-ar-eme* 'keeps making'
atak-eme 'demolishes' *atak-ep-ak-eme* 'keeps demolishing'
unth-eme 'is going along' *unth-ep-unth-eme* 'keeps going along'

The final pair shows us that all consonants following the stem-final vowel (which happens to be the same as the stem-initial vowel, because there is only *one* vowel in this stem) are duplicated after *-ep*. By lining up all the verbs, we can see that the hypothesis we made on the basis of the first pair we examined holds, but we need to include the final vowel of the stem and any/all consonants which follow it in the part that is copied.

Answer: Add ep to the verb stem followed by duplication of the last/final vowel and consonant(s) of the verb stem.

(ii) b.

We proceed in the same way as for a.

ath-eme vs *ath-elp-ath-eme*



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mpwar-eme vs *mpw-elp-empwar-eme*

ar-eme vs *ar-erlp-ar-eme*

atak-eme vs *at-erlp-atak-eme*

We can see that the 'commencing' form takes the first consonant or consonants of the basic stem and the preceding vowel if it exists, adds *elp* or *erlp* (the latter after *r* or *t*), and then adds the basic stem. This then forms the complex stem to which the 'tense' suffix is added.

Answer: Add *elp* or *erlp* (the latter after *r* or *t*) after the first/initial consonant(s) of the verb stem followed by the whole (verb) stem.

(iii)

If we check to see if this procedure or 'rule' gives us the attested forms in our list, we notice that we would expect *mpw-elp-mpwar-eme* and not the actual form, which has the vowel *-e-* between *-elp* and the verb stem. We could 'tweak' our rule in a couple of different ways: one way would be to stipulate that *-elp* or *-erlp* must be followed by a vowel, so that if the stem does not start with a vowel, then *-e-* is inserted before the stem. Another possibility is to assume that all stems are underlyingly vowel-initial, but that word initial *e* is not pronounced, but is pronounced inside a word. This would give us:

empwar-eme (pronounced *mpwareme*) > *empw-elp-empwar-eme* (pronounced *mpw-elp-empwar-eme*)

Answer:

m	p	w	e	l	p	e	m	p	w	a	r	e	m	e			
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(iv)

In our list of 'commencing verbs', we can see that *-e(r)lp* is always followed by a vowel.

Answer: B. vowel

D2.

We already have the information we need to create new verbs, as long as we can identify the stem.

arlkw-eme 'is eating': to form the 'past' form, we replace the suffix *-eme* with *-eke*.

kwern-eme 'is swallowing': to form the 'past' 'frequent' form, we need to apply our rule from D1 (ii) a:

stem + *ep* + final VCs of stem + tense suffix



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kwern-ep-ern-eke

itirr-eme 'is thinking': to form 'present' 'commencing' form, we apply the rule in D1 (ii) b:

first consonant(s) and preceding vowel + *erlp* + stem + suffix

it-erlp-itirr-eme

Answers:

(a) was eating

a	r	l	k	w	e	k	e							
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(b) kept swallowing

k	w	e	r	n	e	p	e	r	n	e	k	e		
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(c) starts to think

i	t	e	r	l	p	i	t	i	r	r	e	m	e	
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Grading:

D1i: 45/38 points for the correct answer.

D1ii: 15/19 points per correctly filled in blank.

D1iii: 75/38 points for the correct answer.

D1iv: 45/38 points for the correct answer.

D2: 75/38 points per correct answer.

Total: 15 points

