

## Understanding English Grammar: A Linguistic Introduction

### Problem of the Month, September 2011: Rodluvan and Mormor

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An excerpt from a well known story is given below in two languages (X and Y) that are closely related to each other and also to English. However the two versions are not perfect translations of one another.

Excerpt in language X:

- X1. Rodluvan: Men mormor, varfor har du sa stora ogon?
- X2. "Mormor": Det ar bara for att jag skall se dig battre, mitt barn.
- X3. Rodluvan: Men mormor, varfor har du sa stora oron?
- X4. "Mormor": Det ar bara for att jag skall hora dig battre, mitt barn.
- X5. Rodluvan: Men mormor, varfor har du sa stora tander?
- X6. "Mormor": Det ar bara for att jag skall kunna ata upp dig!

(Almost) the same excerpt in language Y

- Y1. - Sa store ører du har, bestemor, sa Rødhette.
- Y2. - Det er fordi jeg skal kunne høre deg bedre, svarte ulven.
- Y3. - Sa store øyne du har, bestemor, sa Rødhette.
- Y4. - Det er fordi jeg skal kunne se deg bedre, svarte ulven.
- Y5. - Sa store hender du har, bestemor, sa Rødhette.
- Y6. - Det er fordi jeg skal kunne klemme deg bedre, svarte ulven.
- Y7. - Sa stor munn du har, bestemor, sa Rødhette.
- Y8. - Det er fordi jeg skal kunne ete deg bedre, svarte ulven.

Problem 1: Translate sentences X1 and X2 into grammatical English using your own words and word order.

Problem 2: In the blanks below, indicate which of the 6 sentences in excerpt X correspond in content to each sentence in excerpt Y. Two sentences in Y have no corresponding sentence in X.

\_\_\_\_\_ Y1      \_\_\_\_\_ Y2      \_\_\_\_\_ Y3      \_\_\_\_\_ Y4  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Y5      \_\_\_\_\_ Y6      \_\_\_\_\_ Y7      \_\_\_\_\_ Y8

Problem 3: For each of the Language Y words in the following chart, indicate its translation in Language X and in English. If you believe that a given word is not translated at all, use an X to indicate that.

| Language X | Language Y | English |
|------------|------------|---------|
|            | sa         |         |
|            | store      |         |
|            | ører       |         |
|            | du         |         |
|            | har        |         |
|            | bestemor   |         |
|            | sa         |         |
|            | Rødhette   |         |
|            | det        |         |
|            | er         |         |
|            | fordi      |         |
|            | jeg        |         |
|            | skal       |         |
|            | kunne      |         |
|            | høre       |         |
|            | deg        |         |
|            | bedre      |         |
|            | svarte     |         |
|            | ulven      |         |
|            | øyne       |         |
|            | se         |         |
|            | hender     |         |
|            | klemme     |         |
|            | stor       |         |
|            | mun        |         |
|            | der        |         |
|            | ete        |         |