

Время выполнения задания – 180 мин., язык - английский.

Максимальное количество баллов – 100.

Linguistic Theory and Language Description
Three hours, solutions in English

1. ?th Person Plural Paradox

Clusivity, Clusivity, there's no one like Clusivity.

(nearly T.S. Elliot)

For languages like English and Russian, a common definition of first and second person plural pronouns are 'the speaker(s*) and others' and 'the addressee(s*) and others', respectively. Pronominal plurals are then defined as 'X and others'.

(a) Which one of these two definitions is more problematic than the other, and in which way?

(b) Suggest a solution (so that the definitions of the two pronouns remain uniform, i.e. the category of pronominal plural as defined above, 'X and others', is preserved)

(c) We described the problem for 'non-inclusive' languages, i.e. for languages without the distinction between inclusive and exclusive pronoun**. We suggest that you first, deal with non-inclusive languages, as if the inclusive would not exist. When you are done with languages lacking inclusive pronouns, you may try to extend your solution so as to include languages with inclusive pronouns.

Notes:

*The issue whether there may be several speakers (as when speaking in choir) or several addressees (as when speaking to an audience) is controversial. To exclude this controversy, in the definition, we put the speaker and the addressee in the plural. Trust us and do not follow this trail.

**Inclusive is the pronoun referring to the speaker(s), the addressee(s) and probably others as opposed to the exclusive 'we' which refers to the speaker(s) and others but not the addressee(s). The distinction between inclusive and exclusive is relatively widespread in the world's languages.

2. Rotation

У нас незаменимых нет.

The government has exactly five ministers, Defense, Warfare, Intelligence, Counter-Intelligence and Prosecution. The prime minister wants to prove that there is no one who cannot be replaced in his position. He says, on each consecutive day, each minister will do a different job. But to avoid chaos, the prime minister established a set of rules according to which each minister who does a ministry X today goes to ministry Y tomorrow. These same rules apply each day. The government works six days a week.

(a) Is it possible that, in one week of work, on none of the days the distribution of the ministers across ministries will repeat exactly? (i.e., that there is no day in which the five people do exactly what they all did on another day)

(b) The prime minister introduced a new ministry, Surveillance, and appointed a new minister. How many days, at maximum, the ministers can now rotate, without a repetition as described in (a).