

Question 44: Possible Evenki words (10 pts)

All languages typically have restrictions on the kinds or number of consonant combinations that are possible in their words. Such restrictions on possible combinations of sounds in a word of a language are known as **phonotactic constraints**. For example, in English a word can begin with the consonant sequence *spl* or *spr*, but not *slr*. So we could say that *splem* and *sprem* are possible English words, even if they don't actually exist, but *slrem* could not be. The rules for combining consonants differ depending on the place in the word, e.g. at the start or at the end.

Examine the following Evenki words focusing on the phonotactic constraints that seem to apply to this language. Your task is to determine whether the list of forms following the examples are possible Evenki words or not given the restrictions suggested by the data on how sounds can combine to form words in Evenki.

Evenki is an endangered Tungusic language spoken by 28,000 people in Inner Mongolia and Heilongjiang in China. Words are shown in phonetic transcription, with letter values pretty much what you would expect. English translations are shown for information only, and have no bearing on the solution.

<i>hunatpa</i>	'the girl'	<i>bira</i>	'river'
<i>girki</i>	'friend'	<i>amtan</i>	'taste'
<i>avsa</i>	'box'	<i>agdy</i>	'thunder'
<i>aglan</i>	'meadow'	<i>atyrgan</i>	'old woman'
<i>gurgakta</i>	'moustache'	<i>dasna</i>	'roof'
<i>dolbo</i>	'at night'	<i>bilga</i>	'throat'
<i>dylgan</i>	'voice'	<i>kilup</i>	'club'
<i>amnga</i>	'mouth'	<i>ollo</i>	'fish'
<i>tygde</i>	'rain'	<i>hulla</i>	'blanket'
<i>halka</i>	'hammer'	<i>anngani</i>	'year'

Are the following forms possible Evenki words? Please tick the appropriate box in your answer book 'yes', 'no' or 'don't know' if you are unable to determine based on the data.

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| (a) <i>stilga</i> | (f) <i>davla</i> |
| (b) <i>dongkit</i> | (g) <i>gydard</i> |
| (c) <i>bagdaka</i> | (h) <i>anaran</i> |
| (d) <i>bargi</i> | (i) <i>urekent</i> |
| (e) <i>trygan</i> | (j) <i>gdollo</i> |