Answer key to exercise on finding correspondences

Correspondences and the number of instances:

d–m 1

e–n 2

f–o 1

g–p 3

i–r 2

k–t 7

n–w 1

o–x 2

p–y 2

q–z 3

r–a 1

t–c 2

u–d 2

v–e 1

w–f 5

x–g 3

Just by looking at nine cognate words, we find regular correspondences such as e–n, i–r, o–x, p–y, t–c, u–d with two instances each; g–p, q–z and x–g with three instances each; w–f with five instances and k–t with seven instances.

Therefore we can assume a genetic relation between languages A and B. It is very likely that more instances of all of the correspondences will be found if we look at more cognate words.

Another important point of this exercise is that mere similarity in shape between cognate words is not necessary. As we can see, no word in Language A looks similar to any word in Language B. Yet we do find regular correspondences.

Actually the languages A and B were derived by enciphering an original language in Caesar’s cipher.

Caesar’s Cipher that we used here:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z |
| C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K | L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z | A | B |
| L | M | N | O | P | Q | R | S | T | U | V | W | X | Y | Z | A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I | J | K |

The first line is the original alphabet.

The second line is shifted by 2 to derive language A.

The third line is shifted by 11 to derive language B.

Can you decipher the first, second or third groups of three words in either language A or B to see what the message is?

The answers are:

Group 1: E pluribus unum

Group 2: Cogito ergo sum

Group 3: Veni vidi vici