

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES & LITERATURE

FINAL EXAMINATION PAPER, MAY 2007

TITLE OF PAPER: INTRODUCTION TO HISTORICAL AND
COMPARATIVE LINGUISTICS (WESTERN AND
BANTU)

COURSE CODE: AL401/IDE-AL401

TIME ALLOWED: THREE (3) HOURS

- INSTRUCTIONS:**
1. ANSWER FOUR (4) QUESTIONS IN ALL.
 2. ANSWER ONE (1) QUESTION FROM EACH SECTION.
 3. LINGUISTIC EXPRESSIONS AND FORMALISMS, SHOULD BE USED WHEREVER APPROPRIATE.
 4. MARKS WILL BE DEDUCTED FOR UNTIDY WORK, WRONG SPELLING AND UNGRAMMATICAL SENTENCES.
 5. ALL EXAMPLES SHOULD BE GLOSSED.

THIS PAPER IS NOT TO BE OPENED UNTIL PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED BY THE INVIGILATOR.

SECTION A

**SOUND CHANGE, MORPHOLOGICAL CHANGE, SYNTACTIC CHANGE,
SEMANTIC CHANGE, WRITTEN RECORDS, TYPOLOGICAL AND
GENEALOGICAL CLASSIFICATION**

QUESTION 1

(a) According to Lehmann (1992) there are two constructions that can be used to establish the normal or an unmarked word order in a language. Discuss briefly these constructions. (5)

(b) Lehman (1992:103-104) states that a Verb Object (VO) order in a language implies certain patterns. With the aid of examples discuss briefly five of these constructions or patterns. (20)

[25 MARKS]

QUESTION 2

(a) Briefly explain the difference between "genealogical" and typological classification. (2)

(b) What is meant by the term "Indo-European" family? (2)

(c) According to Lehmann (1992) what evidence are the successive stages of any language determined? (1)

(d) List at least three criteria that could be used in dating the successive stages of any language. (3)

(e) List at least thirteen (13) names of sub-groups of the Indo-European family as found in Lehmann (1992). (13)

(f) Briefly explain why do some scholars propose a Balto-Slavic subgroup, while others propose two independent subgroups, as suggested by Lehmann (1992). (4)

[25 MARKS]

QUESTION 3

With the aid of historical examples, define the following phonetic/phonological processes that are associated with sound change:

(a) excrescence (4)

(b) dissimilation (4)

(c) haplology (4)

- (d) metathesis (4)
- (e) fusion (4)
- (f) compensatory lengthening (5)

[25 MARKS]

QUESTION 4

- (a) Crowley (1992:151-154) stated that “changes in meaning can be divided into four types”. He continued to point out that “we can recognise a number of different forces which operate to influence the directions which these changes take”. Do the following:
 - (i) List the four types. (4)
 - (ii) List the four forces that can influence the directions of the changes. (4)
- (b) Again, according to Crowley (1992:148-150), it has been observed that there are three mechanisms that are involved in the process of grammaticalization.
 - (i) List the three mechanisms. (3)
 - (ii) Using the morpheme – burger, give the name of the mechanism that was used in deriving it in English; and briefly discuss how it became a new morpheme in English. (10)
- (c) State two important reasons of writing systems in historical linguistics. (4)

[25 MARKS]

SECTION B

METHODS USED IN HISTORICAL LINGUISTICS

QUESTION 5

- (a) By means of internal reconstruction, recreate the shapes or forms of the intransitive forms in an earlier stage of X, and indicate what changes have taken place. The data is from a hypothetical language.

	Gloss	Intransitive	Transitive
1	sit	sai	saiba
2	come	tau	tausa
3	laugh	kau	kauta
4	write	baka	bakava
5	eat	solu	solia
6	wet	sima	simana
7	cry	bili	bilima
8	buy	sau	sauma
9	wash	toso	tosova
10	talk	vawa	vawaka

(12)

- (b) When is the method of glottochronology used? (2)
- (c) Give two assumptions that are associated with the method of glottochronology. (4)
- (d) On which languages was this method used first? (1)
- (e) Briefly explain how this method is applied to languages. (5)
- (f) Briefly explain why is it that this method does not work in handling other languages. (1)

[25 MARKS]

QUESTION 6

- (a) State the rule that came to be known as Grimm's Law later. The rule must be stated in words. (4)
- (b) With the aid of examples discuss three findings from the study of the Germanic obstruents which contributed to the refinement of comparative method. (21)

[25 MARKS]

QUESTION 7

- (a) Consider the modified data from Cowan (1971) and answer the questions that follows:

Gloss	Mongul	Manchu	Yakuts
1. take	ali	ali	il
2. nipple	erun	fluxu	uon
3. thread	utasun	futa	utax
4. gradual	ulam	ula	ullariy
5. thumb	erekei	ferxe	arbax
6. cheese	urgu	fuca	urgut
7. fork	aca	acan	as
8. fox	unegen	funexe	unugas

Reconstruct the initial consonant of Proto-Altaic, if any, from the data and the rules that relates Proto-Altaic to the daughter languages. (7)

(b) Briefly discuss at least two similarities and two differences between the comparative and the internal reconstruction methods. (8)

(c) According to Crowley (1993:123), the internal reconstruction method can be used under certain circumstances. List four of these circumstances. (8)

(d) What is meant by Pre and Proto in historical and comparative linguistics. (2)

[25 MARKS]

QUESTION 8

According to Crowley (1992:108-109) the comparative method “involves carefully carrying out all” the steps that are involved. State the seven steps. [25 MARKS]

SECTION C

COMPARATIVE BANTU AND OTHER NON-WESTERN LANGUAGES

QUESTION 9

(a) List all the Ur-Bantu noun prefixes as found in Meinhof (1932), the basic noun prefixes of siSwati as well as the Southern Sotho ones. These prefixes should be listed side by side. (12 ½)

(b) Briefly discuss the structural differences that can be observed between Ur-Bantu prefixes and;

(i) - the basic noun prefixes of siSwati; (7)

(ii) - the basic noun prefixes of Southern Sotho (5 ½)

Do not discuss any phonological changes. (12 ½)

[25 MARKS]

QUESTION 10

Under each section consider the data given and then answer the questions that follow. The data is from Meinhof (1932).

(a)	<u>Ur-Bantu</u>		<u>Nyamwezi</u>	
1.	* - kati >	>	- gathi	“in the middle”
2.	* - tatu	>	- dathu	“three”
3.	* -pita	>	- bitha	“pass”

- (i) Write the simple sound shift that took place between Ur-Bantu /*p, *t, *k/ and Nyamwezi. (1 ½)
- (ii) Give the expected forms of the above words in Nyamwezi. (1 ½)
- (iii) Briefly explain what happened to the above mentioned Nyamwezi words since they are not the expected forms. (2)
- (iv) Give the name of the "Law" that was responsible to make the Ur-Bantu forms become what they are in Nyamwezi. (1 ½)

(b) Consider the following data:

<u>Ur-Bantu</u>		<u>Kuanyama</u>	
1. * Ondando	>	ondado	"purchase"
2. * ondonda	>	ondoda	"step"
3. * ongombe	>	ongobe	"beast"

- (i) Give the name and state the rule in words that is responsible for changing the Ur-Bantu forms to the Kuanyama ones. (3)
- (ii) Give the expected forms of the above words in Kuanyama. (1 ½)
[4 ½]

(c) Consider the following data:

<u>Ur-Bantu</u>		<u>Ganda</u>	
1. * embambo	>	emambo	"peg"
2. * endameba	>	enamba	"whole"
3. * endungi	>	enungi	"good"

- (i) Give the name and state the rule in words that is responsible for changing the Ur-Bantu forms to the Ganda ones. (3)
- (ii) Give the expected forms of the above words in Ganda. (1 ½)
[4 ½]

(d) Consider the following examples:

	<u>Ur-Bantu</u>		<u>kongo</u>	
1.	* - komele	>	- komene	“chain up”
2.	* - tinili	>	- tinini	“run”
3.	* - manula	>	- manuna	“take down”

(i) Give the name and state the rule in words that is responsible for changing the Ur-Bantu forms to the Kongo ones.

(3)

(ii) Give the expected forms of the above words in Kongo.

(1 ½)

[4 ½]

(e) Consider the following data:

	<u>Ur-Bantu</u>		<u>siSwati</u>	
1.	* -kumi	>	- shumi	“ten”
2.	* -kila	>	- sila	“tail”
3.	* - tekela	>	- shelela	“slide down”

(i) Give the name of the rule that changed the Ur-Bantu form to siSwati ones.

(1)

(ii) Give two reasons why Meinhof (1932:179-130) gave this name to the process/rule you mentioned under (e(i)) above.

(4)

[5]

[25 MARKS]

QUESTION 11

- (a) Define the expression “sound-shift” according to Meinhof (1932). (2)
- (b) What is the meaning of Ur in the word Ur-Bantu? (1)
- (c) Give the list of Ur-Bantu vowels and show what they became in your main language, that is, siSwati. (7)
- (d) Who is often referred to as the “Father of Bantu Philosophy”? (1)
- (e) Who is the first person to use the term “Bantu”? (1)
- (f) Give the sound shifts that took place between Ur-Bantu and siSwati for the following and illustrate with one example:

1	*pu	8	*tu
2	*pû	9	*tî
3	*twa	10	*li
4	*kya	11	*lwa
5	*tya	12	*ta
6	*pwa	13	*ki
7	*lu		

(13)

[25 MARKS]

QUESTION 12

- (a) Consider the following Moari data from Langacker (1967:204) and answer the questions that follow:

	<u>Active</u>	<u>Passive</u>	
1.	awhi	awhitia	“embrace”
2.	hopu	hopukia	“catch”
3.	aru	arumia	“follow”
4.	tohu	tohuŋia	“point out”
5.	mau	mauria	“carry”
6.	wero	werohia	“stab”

- (i) Reconstruct the earlier forms of the verbs listed above. (12)
- (ii) What method did you use in reconstructing the earlier forms of these verbs and why? (1)
- (iii) Explain how the active forms were formed from your reconstructed forms. (The explanation should not exceed two lines). (2)
- (iv) Explain how the passive forms were formed from your reconstructed forms (The explanation should not exceed two lines). (2)

[17]

- (b) Hinnebusch (1999) indicated that there are seven (7) observations that should be made when studying the Bantu-speaking peoples. List these observations. (8)

[25 MARKS]

SECTION D

**CLASSIFICATION OF BANTU OR AFRICAN LANGUAGES AND TYPOLOGY
AND SOME TOPICS RELATED TO THE COURSE**

QUESTION 13

- (a) Guthrie (1967) established certain criteria that the language should have in order to be classified as Bantu. Give the names/titles of the two major criteria. (4)
- (b) Each of the major criteria you gave under (13(a)) above were further subdivided into two sub-characteristics, meaning that they ranged from (1) to (4). With the aid of examples from siSwati, discuss the first (or number 1) subcharacteristic.

(21)

[25 MARKS]

QUESTION 14

- (a) Define the expression "typological classification". (2)
- (b) In classifying languages on their "basic order" how many criteria did Greenberg (1972:306-336) use? (2)
- (c) State the criteria that Greenberg (1972:306-336) used according to this article. (6)
- (d) Using the "basic order" give the number of possible word orders Greenberg (1972:306-336) came up with and state them. (7)
- (e) State constructions that, according to Lehmann (1992) could be used in establishing a normal word order in a language. (4)
- (f) Given these constructions you mentioned above under (14(e)) what is the normal word order of siSwati and why? (4)

[25 MARKS]

QUESTION 15

- (a) Lepsius (1880) divided African languages into three main groups. List the first group only with its sub-groups and the languages only that are found under the Eastern sub-group. (18)
- (b) List the first seven of the twelve characteristics that Lepsius (Doke and Cole:1961) proposed for the Bantu family. (7)

[25 MARKS]

QUESTION 16

- (a) It is often claimed that Doke's (1945) classification of Bantu languages was based on four-fold sub-division. List and define the four sub-divisions. (12)
- (b) The titles or the sources on Greenberg's contributions in connection with the classification of African languages are found in two documents. Give the titles of these documents. (4)
- (c) According to Winston (1972) there were certain criteria that were used in the classification of African languages. Briefly discuss three of these criteria. (9)

[25 MARKS]