UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

SUPPLEMENTARY EXAMINATION PAPER: JULY 2008

B.A. DEGREE

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

COURSE NUMBER: AL401/IDE-AL401

TIME ALLOWED: THREE (3) HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS: 1. ANSWER FOUR (4) QUESTIONS IN ALL.

2. CHOOSE ONE QUESTION FROM EACH SECTION.

3. LINGUISTIC EXPRESSIONS AND FORMALISMS SHOULD BE USED WHENEVER 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

LEXICOSTATISTICS AND GLOTTOCHRONOLOGY

Question 1

(a) Swadesh (1955) discusses guidelines for the preparation of word-lists used in lexicostatistics. Discuss **six** of the guidelines, giving one example under each point. (19)

(b) Lexicostatisticians classify and subgroup languages according to their shared cognate percentages in core vocabulary. List the **six** subgroups. (6)

[25 marks]

SECTION B

LINGUISTIC RECONSTRUCTION

Question 2

Consider the data below from three Middle-Indic languages and answer the questions which follow:

Magadhi Prakrit	Pali	Maharastri Prakrit	
1. abala	apara	avara	'other'
2. diba	dipa	diva	'lamp'
3. hasta	hatt^{h}a	hatt^{h}a	'hand'
4. loga	loka	loa	'world'
5. nala	rara	nara	'man'
6. nisp^{h}ala	nipp^{h}ala	nipp^{h}ala	'fruitless'
7. pask^{h}aladi	pakk^{h}alati	pakk^{h}alai	'he stumbles'
8. pida	pita	pia	'father'
9. puspa	pupp^{h}a	pupp^{h}a	'flower'

a) Using the comparative method, reconstruct proto-words for each of the nine items provided in the data. (9)

b) Wherever a proto-word has changed, name the daughter language and state the phonological process which took place during the development of the daughter language from proto-Middle Indic. (9)

c) Of the three languages, which do you consider to be
   i) the most conservative;

ii) the most innovative.   (5)
Give reasons for your opinion.

d)   Given that the Maharastri Prakrit word for 'dry' is [sukkʰa], what would
      be its cognate form in-
      i) Pali;
      ii) Magadhi Prakrit?   (2)

                                                            [25 marks]

Question 3

Consider the correspondence sets from five Polynesian languages:

	Tongan	Samoan	Tahitian	Maori	Hawaiian
1.	m	m	m	m	m
2.	n	n	n	n	n
3.	ŋ	ŋ	?	ŋ	n
4.	p	p	p	p	p
5.	t	t	t	t	k
6.	k	?	?	k	?

In addition, note that Tongan has kept the phoneme *h in certain words, which has been
lost in all other Polynesian languages. Furthermore, Tongan has lost the phoneme *r from
its inventory, which was kept as /r/ or became /l/ in the other four languages:

Tongan	Samoan	Tahitian	Maori	Hawaiian	Proto-Polynesian
7. h	ø	ø	ø	ø	*h
8. ø	l	r	r	l	*r

(a) on the basis of this information and the following data, identify the 5 remaining
    consonant correspondences:

Tongan	Samoan	Tahitian	Maori	Hawaiian	
le?o	leo	reo	reo	leo	'voice'
?uha	ua	ua	ua	ua	'rain'
lili	lili	riri	riri	lili	'angry'
hae	sae	hae	hae	hae	'to tear'
hihi	isi	ihi	ihi	ihi	'strip'
huu	ulu	uru	uru	ulu	'to enter'
fue	fue	hue	hue	hue	'vine'
afo	afo	aho	aho	aho	'fishline'
vela	vela	vera	wera	wela	'hot'
hiva	iva	iva	iwa	iwa	'nine'

	Tongan	Samoan	Tahitian	Maori	Hawaiian
9.	l	-	-	-	-
10.	ʔ	-	-	-	-
11.	h	-	-	-	-
12.	f	-	-	-	-
13.	v	-	-	-	-

(b) For each of the correspondence sets in (1) – (6) and (9) – (13), reconstruct a proto-sound. If the proto-sound underwent a change, indicate what the change is and in which language it took place.

(c) Complete the following comparative table by filling in the missing words:

Tongan	Samoan	Tahitian	Maori	Hawaiian	
kaukau	—	—	kaukau	—	'to bathe'
—	mata	—	—	—	'eye'
—	tafe	—	—	kahe	'to flow'
laʔe	—	—	rae	—	'forehead'
—	—	—	—	waʔa	'canoe'
laŋo	—	—	raŋo	—	'fly'

(d) Based on the data above, reconstruct the following words: 'voice', 'angry', 'vine', 'strip'. 'to tear'.

[25 marks]

SECTION C

LANGUAGE CHANGE

Question 4

a) Distinguish between the following types of sound change. Give for each argument an example from any language:

   i) apocope and syncope;
   ii) haplology and metathesis;
   iii) aphaeresis and prothesis; (20)
   iv) phonetic unpacking and vowel breaking;
   v) assimilation and dissimilation.

b) What is phonetic fusion? (5)

Question 5

a) Consider the following sentences from Malay and do the tasks that follow:

1. di padaŋ itu ada sæor ləbu
 There is an ox in the field
2. saya ada sækor ayam
  I have a hen
3. saya nampak sækor kuda
  I see a horse
4. səoraŋ murid məŋhadiri səkolah itu
  A pupil attends the school
5. ada səoraŋ peladʒar di dalam səkolah itu
  There is one student in the school
6. di padaŋ itu ada baŋak ləbu
  There are many oxen in the field
7. saya ada baŋak ayam
  I have many hens
8. saya nampak baŋak kuda
  I see some horses
9. ramai murid-murid məŋhadiri səkolah itu
 Many pupils attend the school
10. peladʒar-peladʒar sədaŋ bəladʒar
  Students are studying

(i) Match each of the following notions with a morpheme in the Malay data:

Nouns	Verbs	Articles	
ox	attend	a/one	
field	see	the	(4)
hen			
school			

ii) Briefly discuss the formation of the plural in Malay. Support your points with relevant examples from the data.   (6)

iii) Considering the data above, compare and contrast the article-noun word order pattern in Malay and English.   (3)

b) Consider the data provided below from Mbabaram, a language spoken in North Queensland Australia:

          *wula   →   lo   'die'

*ŋali	→	li	'we'
*guju	→	ju	'fish'
*guwa	→	wo	'west'
*bamba	→	mba	'belly'
*wuna	→	no	'lie down'
*diba	→	be	'liver'
*gumbi	→	mbi	'penis'
*naga	→	ga	'east'
*ɲulu	→	lu	'he'

i) Some word-final /a/ became [e], some became [o], and some remained unchanged. What were the conditioning factors? (8)

ii) Initial syllables were lost. Did this change take place before or after the changes affecting the final /a/? Explain with relevant examples from the data. (4)

[25marks]

SECTION D

MISCELLANEOUS TOPICS

Question 6

(a) Does a proto-language die out and then get replaced by its daughter languages? What, for example, is the nature of the relationship between Latin and Portuguese? (8)

(b) "There is no precise figure for the number of languages spoken in the world today". Provide evidence to support this statement along with relevant examples. (8)

(c) Briefly distinguish the terms Genealogical and Typological classification of languages. (5)

(d) What is the difference between Lexicostatistics and Glottochronology? (4)

[25 marks]

Question 7

Historical and Comparative Linguistics has been defined as the study of language change (O'Grady and Dobrovolsky 1987:193). With illustrations from English and / or any other Indo-European language, discuss the NATURE and TRIGGERS of this language change.

[25 marks]