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.

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LEXICOSTATISTICS AND GLOTTOCHRONOLOGY

Answer Question 1

Question 1

Examine the shared cognate percentage figures for the following ten hypothetical languages:

A

68 B

13 11 C

39 37 9   D

39 36 8   66 E

35 33 10 67 65 F

37 35 9   57 53 50 G

30 33 36 54 56 33 34 H

22 28 27 53 51 46 57 67 I

31 24 21 56 54 47 58 66 69 J

With reference to the above data,

(i)   Find out which languages are most closely related to each other and group them accordingly.   (3)

(ii) State the shared cognate percentage figures between the following languages:
       1.   Language B and language F;
       2.   Language E and language G;
       3.   Language A and language D;   (5)
       4.   Language B and language I; and
       5.   Language C and language H

b)   What is the difference between Lexicostatistics and Glottochronology?   (5)

c)   Swadesh (1955) discusses guidelines for the preparation of word-lists used in lexicostatistics. Discuss **four** of the guidelines, giving one example under each point.   (12)

[25 marks]

SECTION B

LINGUISTIC RECONSTRUCTION

Choose one question from this section

Question 2

a)   Study the data provided below from four languages of the Tupi-Guarani family. Then do the tasks which follow:

GUARANI	TUPINAMBA	SIRIONO	GUARAYO	
kitʃi	kiti	kisi	kitʃi	'cut'
tʃĩ	tiŋ	sĩ	tʃĩ	'white'
meʔẽ	meʔeŋ	meẽ	meẽ	'give'
kwa	pwar	kwa	kwa	'tie'
ki	kib	ki	ki	'louse'
kiʔa	kiʔa	kia	kia	'dirty'

   i)   Using the comparative method, reconstruct proto-words for each of the six items provided in the data.   (6)

   ii)   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-Tupi-Guarani.   (6)

   iii) Giving reasons for your opinion, which of the three languages do you consider to be:
              1. the most conservative;
              2. the most innovative.   (4)

b)   Consider the data below from six Bantu languages and then do the tasks that follow:

Tongan	Samoan	Tahitian	Maori	Hawaiian	
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.   (5)

c) Complete the following comparative table by filling in the missing words:
            (10)

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'.   (5)

[25 marks]

LANGUAGE CHANGE

*Choose **one** question from this section*

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 compensatory lengthening?   (5)

                                            [25marks]

Question 5

a) 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 TRIGGERS of this language change.   (13)

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

Choose one question from this section

Question 6

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

[25 Marks]

Question 7

a)   List the Proto-Bantu nominal prefixes 19-23 and for each class show how the Proto-Bantu prefix is reflected in any one modern day Bantu language.   (5)

b)   Wherever the Proto-Bantu prefix has changed in a modern Bantu language illustrated in (a) above, state the phonological process which occurred during the development of the modern Bantu language.   (6)

c)   With illustrations from Meinhof's Ur-Bantu and siSwati vowel systems, discuss the *7 > 5 vowel shift.   (8)

c)   Discuss two types of adjectival prefixes. Give for each type, one example from any relevant Bantu language.   (6)

[25 marks]