UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND
DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE
MAIN EXAMINATION PAPER: MAY 2013
B. A. DEGREE

TITLE OF PAPER: INTRODUCTION   TO   HISTORICAL   AND
                     COMPARATIVE LINGUISTICS: BANTU

COURSE NUMBER: AL413/IDE AL413

TIME ALLOWED: THREE (3) HOURS

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

               2.   CHOOSE ONE QUESTION FROM EACH SECTION

               3.   LINGUISTIC EXPRESSIONS AND FORMALISM
                     SHOULD BE USED WHENEVER APPROPRIATE.

               4.   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

Answer Question 1

Question 1

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

A

89   B

88   87   C

28   30   29   D

26   34   30   86   E

28   27   32   56   54   F

27   29   31   57   53   62   G

30   33   36   54   56   63   64   H

22   28   27   53   51   66   65   87   I

31   24   21   56   54   67   68   86   89   J

With reference to the above data,

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

(ii) Work out the shared cognate percentages between the different groups, to find the second level of linguistic relationship. (8 marks)

(iii) Estimate according to glottochronology the period of time the following languages may have separated from each other.

       Language H from language I
       Language B from language G   (9 marks)
       Language E from language J

Note: Use the formula below to work out the time depth:
$$t = \frac{\log C}{2 \log r}$$
The value of **r** in this formula is set at **0.805**

(b)   Briefly explain what constitutes the basic or core vocabulary of a language.

(5 marks)

[25 marks]

SECTION B
Choose one question from this section

Question 2

a) Consider the noun stems in the data provided below from Ur-Bantu and from three Modern Bantu languages and do the tasks that follow: (The items have been divided into prefix and stem for you)

Ur-Bantu	Swahili	Kongo	Zulu	Bemba	
mu-yaka	mw-aka	mw-aka	um-ɲaka	umw-aka	'year'
mu-kila	m-kia	ŋ-kila	um-sila	umu-tʃila	'tail'
mu-kipa	m-sipa	-------	um-sipʰa	---------	'vein'

i)   State **one** phonological process which took place in the development of Swahili, Kongo, and Bemba stems for the item 'year' from Ur-Bantu stem /-yaka/.   (2 marks)

ii)   State two phonological processes which took place in the development of the Zulu stem /- sipʰa/ from the Ur-Bantu stem /-kipa/.   (2 marks)

iii)   State one phonological process which took place in the development of the Bemba stem /- tʃila / from the Ur-Bantu stem /-kila/.   (2 marks)

iv)   State one phonological process which took place in the development of the Swahili stem /-kia/ from the Ur-Bantu stem /-kila/.   (1 marks)

b) With the use of distinctive features, formalize the diachronic phonological rules you stated in (ii) and (iii).   (10 marks)

c) With the aid of examples from Ganda Lamba, discuss the similarities and differences in the operation of Meinhof's Law in the two languages.

(8 marks)

[25 marks]

Question 3

(a) Study the Lamba data given below and answer the questions that follow:

	Underlying representation	Surface representation	
1.	iN-βeβa	imbeβa	"mouse"
	iN-βaŋgo	imaŋgo	"bonds"
2.	iN-loβo	indoβo	"hook"
	iN-lembo	inembo	"tattoos"

i)   Account for the difference in the stem-initial segment in [imbeβa] and /iN-βeβa/ in (1) and between [indoβo] and / iN-loβo / in (2) above.

(4 marks)

ii)   Account for the stem-initial segment in [imbeβa] and / imaŋgo / in (1) and between [indoβo] and /inembo/ in (2) above.   (6 marks)

iii) Name the historical rule responsible for the variations you accounted for in (1) and (2) above.   (2 marks)

b) With the aid of one example each from any Bantu language, briefly explain the following terms:

    i)   sub-class
    ii)   verbaliser
    iii) stabiliser   (8 marks)
    iv)   derivative radical

c) The difference between partial reduplication and complete reduplication is rather unclear and relative. Explain.   (5 marks)

[25 marks]

SECTION C

Choose __one__ question from this section

Question 4

a) With the aid of examples form relevant Bantu languages, discuss the similarities and differences between Meinhof's Law and Kwanyama Law.
(8 marks)

b) Provide a list of Guthrie's Proto-Bantu nominal class number and prefixes (1-15) and show what they become in siSwati.   (12 marks)

c) What is the difference between the downstep and the downdrift of tone? (5 marks)

[25 marks]

Question 5

a)   Study the Zulu data provided below, and do the tasks which follow:

-bon-	'see'	-bonw-	'be seen'
-thand-	'love'	-thandw-	'be loved'
-bong-	'praise'	-bongw-	'be praised'
-ph-	'give-	-phiw-	'be given'
-dl-	'eat'	-dliw-	'be eaten'
-mb-	'dig'	-mbiw-	'be dug'

i)   Name the verbal extension found in the data above.   (2 marks)
ii)   List the allomorphs of this extension in Zulu, and describe the distribution of the allomorphs on the basis of these data above.   (3 marks)

b)   Compare the Zulu data provided in (c) above with those given below, and do the task which follows:

-tap-	'gather'	-tatshw-	'be gathered'
-boph-	'tie'	-boshw-	'be tied'
-hluph-	'tease'	-hlushw-	'be teased'
-thum-	'send'	-thunyw-	'be sent'
-lob-	'write'	-lotshw-	'be written-

Account for the morphophonemic changes affecting the final consonant of the base radical in the data above   (5 marks)

c)   With illustrations from any Bantu language, discuss any *five* characteristics that are proposed by Guthrie for identifying languages as belonging to the Bantu family.   (15 marks)

[25 marks]

SECTION D

Choose one question from this section

Question 6

a) With illustrations from any relevant Bantu languages discuss the following linguistic terms and concepts:

    i)   Vowel harmony and Nasal harmony   (8 marks)
    ii)   Opaque segment   (5 marks)

b)   Does a proto-language die out and then get replaced by its daughter languages? What is, for example, the nature of the relationship between Nguni and isiXhosa?

(8 marks)

c)   Discuss two types of adjectival prefixes. Give for each type, one example from any relevant Bantu language.   (4 marks)

[25 marks]

Question 7

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

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

[25 marks]