

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE

FINAL EXAMINATION PAPER - MAY 2018

B.A. DEGREE

TITLE OF PAPER:

INTRODUCTION TO HISTORICAL AND COMPARATIVE  
LINGUISTICS: BANTU

COURSE NUMBER:

AL 413 / IDE-AL 413 (MAIN)

TIME ALLOWED:

3 HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. ANSWER FOUR (4) QUESTIONS IN ALL.
2. ANSWER ONE QUESTION FROM SECTION A.
3. ANSWER THREE QUESTIONS FROM SECTION B.
4. LINGUISTIC EXPRESSIONS AND FORMALISMS SHOULD BE USED WHEREVER APPROPRIATE
5. ALL EXAMPLES SHOULD BE GLOSSED.

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INVIGILATOR

SECTION A  
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 marks)
- ii) Work out the shared cognate percentages between the different groups, to find the second level of linguistic relationship. (8 marks)
- iii) Show the relationship of these languages in a family tree diagram. (5 marks)
- iv) Estimate, according to glottochronology, the period of time the following languages may have separated from each other:
  1. Language D from Language E
  2. Language C from Language H
  3. Language B from Language F
 (9 marks)

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.

[25 marks]

## SECTION B

*Answer Question 2 and any other two questions in this section*

### Question 2

a) Study the Lamba data provided below, and do the tasks which follow.

-cit.il-	'do for'	<	-cit-	'do'
-pat.il-	'scold for'	<	-pat-	'scold'
-kunt.ile	'shake for'	<	-kunt-	'shake'
-cet.el	'spy for'	<	-cet-	'spy'
-sonk.el-	'pay tax for'	<	-sonk-	'pay tax'
-lim.in-	'cultivate for'	<	-lim-	'cultivate'
-kan.in-	'deny for'	<	-kan-	'deny'
-pum.in-	'beat for'	<	-pum-	'beat'
-fweny.en-	'scratch for'	<	-fweny-	'scratch'
-pon.en-	'fall for'	<	-pon-	'fall'

- i) Name the verbal extension found in the data above. (2 marks)
- ii) List the allomorphs of this extension in Lamba, and describe the distribution of the allomorphs. (8 marks)

b) Compare the Lamba data provided in (a) above with these given below:

-alw.il-	'change for'	<	-alul-	'change'
-cofw.el-	'bend for'	<	-cofol-	'bend'
-kamw.in-	'tear for'	<	-kamun-	'tear'
-know.en-	'break for'	<	-konon-	'break'

Explain how the extension you mentioned in (a (i)) above operates in these items.

(5 marks)

- c) With illustrations from Meinhof's Ur-Bantu and siSwati vowel systems, discuss the \*7 > 5 vowel shift. (10 marks)

[25 marks]

### Question 3

a) Study the Shona nouns given below and answer the questions that follow:

Verbs	Nouns
1. tuma 'send'	N-tuma → ndume 'messenger'
2. Besa 'carve'	N-βesa → mbeso 'adze'

- i) Explain how the process of homorganic nasal assimilation operated in the derivation of nouns from verbs in Shona. (4 marks)
- ii) Account for the difference in the stem-initial segment in [ndume] and /N-tuma/ in (1), and between [mbeso] and /N-βesa/ in (2) above. (6 marks)
- b) With illustrations from any relevant Bantu languages, discuss the following linguistic terms and concepts:
- i) Vowel harmony and Nasal harmony (8 marks)
- ii) Opaque segments (3 marks)
- c) Discuss **two** types of nominal prefixes. For each type, give one example from any relevant Bantu language. (4 marks)
- [25 marks]**

### Question 4

- a) With the aid of examples from Ganda and Lamba, discuss the similarities and differences in the operation of Meinhof's Law in the two languages. (9 marks)
- b) Discuss Malcolm Guthrie's theory and Joseph Greenberg's theory of Bantu origin and spread. (6 marks)
- c) With the aid of examples from Gikuyu and Nyamwezi, discuss the operation of Dahl's Law. (10 marks)
- [25 marks]**

### Question 5

- a) Provide a list of Guthrie's Proto-Bantu nominal class number and prefixes (1 – 15) and show what they become in siSwati. (12 marks)
- b) What is the difference between the downstep and the downdrift of tone? (5 marks)

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

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

(8 marks)

[25 marks]

### Question 6

Malcolm Guthrie proposed criteria to be used in the identification of languages as belonging to the Bantu family. Discuss and critically evaluate these criteria. [25 marks]