

**ALL407 MAIN EXAM**

**UNIVERSITY OF ESWATINI  
DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE  
MAIN EXAMINATION PAPER: DECEMBER 2018  
B. A. DEGREE**

**TITLE OF PAPER: HISTORICAL AND COMPARATIVE BANTU  
LINGUISTICS**

**COURSE NUMBER: ALL407**

**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

Choose one question from this section

**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 H from language J
  2. Language B from language G
  3. Language C 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]

### Question 2

- 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]

## SECTION B

Choose one question from this section

### Question 3

- a) Describe two (2) strategies used in the reconstruction of proto sounds. (4 marks)
- b) Distinguish between the methods of internal reconstruction and that of comparative reconstruction. (3 marks)
- c) With the use of examples, distinguish between a proto language and an attested parent language. (5 marks)
- d) When listing the sound correspondences between languages that you are comparing, when might you use;
- i) A zero morpheme (4 marks)
- ii) A dash
- e) When reconstructing proto sounds, the phonemic inventory of the proto language being reconstructed should be taken into consideration. With illustrations, support the authenticity of this statement. (5 marks)
- f) What is the difference between fortition and lenition? (4 marks)

[25 marks]

**Question 4**

- 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]

**SECTION C**

*Choose one question from this section*

**Question 5**

- 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)

<b>Ur-Bantu</b>	<b>Swahili</b>	<b>Kongo</b>	<b>Zulu</b>	<b>Bemba</b>	
mu-yaka	mw-aka	mw-aka	um-ɲaka	umw-aka	'year'
mu-kila	m-kia	ɲ-kila	um-sila	umu-tjila	'tail'
mu-kipa	m-sipa	-----	um-sip <sup>h</sup> a	-----	'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 /-sip<sup>h</sup>a/ from the Ur-Bantu stem /-kipa/. (2 marks)
- iii) State one phonological process which took place in the development of the Bemba stem /-tjila/ 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 6**

Consider the data from two Bantu languages; Setswana and Tshivenda and answer the questions which follow:

**1. Setswana**

rat-a	rat <sup>w</sup> -a	rat-iw-a	'be loved'
bop-a	bof <sup>w</sup> -a	bop-iw-a	'be moulded'
t <sup>h</sup> ab-a	t <sup>h</sup> ad <sup>ɟ</sup> <sup>w</sup> -a	t <sup>h</sup> ab-iw-a	'be stabbed'
bof-a	bof <sup>w</sup> -a	bof-iw-a	'be bound'
rɛm-a	rɛŋ <sup>w</sup> -a	rem-iw-a	'be chopped'
ɔɟ-a	ɔɟ-iw-a		'be eaten'
ts'amay-a	ts'amay <sup>w</sup> -a	ts'amay-iw-a	'go (pass.)'

**3. Tshivenda**

vul-a	vul <sup>w</sup> -a	vul-iw-a	'be opened'
φat-a	φat <sup>w</sup> -a	φat-iw-a	'be built'
φ-a		φ-iw-a	'be given'
k-a		k-iw-a	'be picked'
tap'-a	tap <sup>y</sup> -a	tap'-iw-a	'be flicked'
k <sup>h</sup> op <sup>h</sup> -a	k <sup>h</sup> op <sup>h</sup> <sub>ɣ</sub> -a	k <sup>h</sup> op <sup>h</sup> -iw-a	'be broken off'

Discuss, with relevant examples, the formation of the passive in siSwati and then compare and contrast it with the formation of the passive in Setswana and Tshivenda as exemplified in the above data.

[25 marks]

SECTION D

Choose one question from this section

Question 7

- a) Discuss how the following Modern Bantu words were derived from Proto-Bantu ( Your discussion should show a step-by-step derivation of these forms):

Proto-Bantu	Kaonde	Lungu	Bemba	
*di,ud-	zul-a	zyul-a	ful-a	'uproot' (6 marks)
*gubo	fubu	vuwu	vubu	'hippo' (6 marks)
*tig-	f-a	sy-a		'leave' (4 marks)

- b) Discuss the following terms/concepts in relation to linguistic comparison and reconstruction:

- i) Arbitrariness;
- ii) Relatedness hypothesis; (9 marks)

[25 marks]

Question 8

- 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. (10 marks)

- 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. (5 marks)

- c) With illustrations from any Bantu language, distinguish between the following linguistic concepts:

- i) open and close vowels; (4 marks)
- ii) tone spread and tonal shift; (6 marks)

[25 marks]