

**UNIVERSITY OF ESWATINI
DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE
MAIN EXAMINATION PAPER
NOVEMBER 2019**

**TITLE OF PAPER: INTRODUCTION TO HISTORICAL AND
COMPARATIVE LINGUISTICS: WESTERN**

COURSE NUMBER: IDE-AL412

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
LANGUAGE CHANGE
Choose one question from this section

Question 1

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]

Question 2

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

- i) apocope and syncope;
 - ii) epenthesis and metathesis;
 - iii) aphaeresis and prothesis;
 - iv) phonetic unpacking and vowel breaking;
 - v) Regressive assimilation and progressive assimilation.
- (20 marks)

b) What is phonetic fusion? (5 marks)

[25 Marks]

SECTION B
COMPARATIVE RECONSTRUCTION
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; (4 marks)
 - i) A zero morpheme
 - 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

Consider the data below from Spanish, Sardinian, and Rumanian, all of which are Romance languages, and answer the questions which follow:

Spanish	Sardinian	Rumanian	
hilo	filu	fir	'thread'
vida	bita	vita	'life'
vino	binu	vin	'wine'
riva	riba	ripa	'bank'
rio	riu	riu	'river'
riso	rizu	ris	'laugh'

- ii) Using the comparative method, reconstruct proto-words for each of the six items provided in the data. (6 marks)
- iii) Wherever the proto-word has changed in the daughter language, name the daughter language and state the phonological process which took place during the development of the daughter language. (8 marks)
- iv) Using distinctive features, formalise the processes that took place in the development of the following words from the proto language:
- [vida] 'life' (Spanish).
 - [ris] 'laugh' (Rumanian). (7 marks)
- v) Given that [muta] is the Sardinian word for 'change', what would be its cognate form in
- Spanish
 - Rumanian (4 marks)

[25 Marks]

SECTION C
INTERNAL RECONSTRUCTION
Choose one question from this section

Question 5

- a) Examine the data below from Huli (spoken in Papua New Guinea) and do the tasks which follow:

A.	ebero	'I am coming'
	eberu	'you are coming'
	ibira	's(h)e is coming'
	ibiru	'I came'
	ibiri	'you came'
	ibija	's(h)e came'

B.	biraro	'I am sitting'
	birare	'you are sitting'
	birara	's(h)e is sitting'
	biraru	'I sat'
	birari	'you sat'
	biraja	's(h)e sat'
C.	wero	'I am putting'
	were	'you are putting'
	wira	's(h)e is putting'
	wiru	'I put'
	wija	's(h)e put'
	widaba	'put everyone!'
D.	homaro	'I am dying'
	homare	'you are dying'
	homara	's(h)e is dying'
	homaru	'I died'
	homari	'you died'
	homaja	's(h)e died'

- i) Reconstruct the original pronominal suffixes. (6 marks)
- ii) Reconstruct the original roots for the verbs; come, sit, put, and die. (4 marks)
- iii) Identify the words whose roots have undergone changes in (A) and then give a step-by-step derivation of the surface forms to show why they have changed. (6 marks)
- iv) In the same category (A), identify the words that have retained their forms of roots and give good reasons why they have retained such forms. (6 marks)
- b) When might you want to use the method of Internal Reconstruction instead of the Comparative Method? (3 marks)

[25 Marks]

Question 6

- a) Examine the data below from Bislama (spoken in Vanuati) and do the tasks which follow:

Root		Transitive verb	
rit	'read'	ritim	'read'
bon	'burnt'	bonem	'burn'
smok	'smoke'	smokem	'smoke'
skras	'itch'	skrasem	'scratch'
slak	'loose'	slakem	'loosen'
stil	'steal'	stilim	'steal'
rus	'barbecue'	rusum	'barbecue'
tait	'tight'	taitem	'tighten'
boil	'boil'	boilem	'boil'
ciki	'cheeky'	cikim	'give cheek to'

pe	'payment'	pem	'pay for'
rere	'ready'	rerem	'prepare'
drai	'dry'	drain	'dry'
draun	'sink'	draunem	'push under water'
melek	'milk'	melekem	'squeeze liquid out of'
level	'level'	levelem	'level out'

- i) State what you think the original form of the transitive suffix might have been. (1 mark)
 - ii) Identify the words whose suffixes have undergone changes and then give a step-by-step derivation of the surface forms to show why they have changed. (9 marks)
 - iii) Identify the words that have retained their forms of suffixes and give good reasons why they have retained such forms. (12 marks)
- b) When might you want to use the method of Internal Reconstruction instead of the Comparative Method? (3 marks)

[25 Marks]

**SECTION D
MISCELENEOUS**

Choose one question from this section

Question 7

The Family Tree Model and the Wave Theory Model are both used in representing relationship between languages. Discuss these two models, providing evidence for each one of them. Which model do you think is more plausible and why?

[25 Marks]

Question 8

- a) Does a proto-language die out and then get replaced by its daughter languages? What is, for example, the nature of the relationship between Latin and Portuguese? (8 marks)
- b) The scope of historical linguistics can be viewed from both a practical point and from a theoretical perspective. Discuss. (8 marks)
- c) What do you think is the importance to historical linguistics of the fact that Sanskrit, Latin, and Greek were written languages? Would we have been able to make the same advances if they were not? (5 marks)
- d) Distinguish between Historical linguistics and History of linguistics. Support your argument with examples. (4 marks)

[25 Marks]