

UNIVERSITY OF ESWATINI
DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE
RESIT EXAMINATION PAPER
JUNE 2021

B. A. DEGREE

TITLE OF PAPER: HISTORICAL AND COMPARATIVE BANTU
LINGUISTICS

COURSE NUMBER: ALL407/IDE ALL407

TIME ALLOWED: THREE (3) HOURS

- INSTRUCTIONS:
1. ANSWER FOUR (4) QUESTIONS IN ALL.
 2. CHOOSE ONE QUESTION FROM SECTION A, ONE QUESTION SECTION B, AND TWO QUESTIONS FROM SECTION C
 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

- 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]

Question 2

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 F
 2. Language E from language G
 3. Language C from language I
- (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

Choose one question from this section

Question 3

- a) The difference between partial reduplication and complete reduplication is rather unclear and relative. Discuss this statement, using examples from any relevant Bantu languages.
(10 marks)
- b) With illustrations from siSwati, discuss any **five** strategies used to resolve vowel hiatus
(15 marks)

[25 marks]

Question 4

- a) With the aid of examples from relevant Bantu languages, discuss the similarities and differences between Meinhof's Law and Kwanyama Law.
(10 marks)
- b) With the aid of examples from any relevant Bantu languages, discuss the operation of Dahl's Law.
(10 marks)
- c) What is the difference between the downstep and the downdrift of tone? (5 marks)

[25 marks]

SECTION C

Choose two questions from this section

Question 5

- 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]

Question 6

- a) Critically evaluate **two** criticisms that have been made against Greenberg's classification of African languages. (9 marks)
- b) 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. (8 marks)
- c) With illustrations from any relevant Bantu languages distinguish between Vowel Harmony and Nasal Harmony (8 marks)

[25 marks]

Question 7

- 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 Nguni and isiXhosa? (9 marks)
- b) Discuss two types of adjectival prefixes. Give for each type, one example from any relevant Bantu language. (4 marks)
- c) Provide a list of Guthrie's Proto-Bantu nominal class number and prefixes (1-15) and show what they become in siSwati. (12 marks)

[25 marks]