

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND
DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE
MAIN EXAMINATION PAPER: MAY 2016
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. ANSWER ONE QUESTION FROM SECTION A.
 3. ANSWER THREE QUESTIONS FROM SECTION B.
 4. LINGUISTIC EXPRESSIONS AND FORMALISM SHOULD BE USED WHENEVER APPROPRIATE.
 5. 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										
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

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

1. Setswana

rat-a	rat ^w -a	rat-iw-a	'be loved'
bop-a	bot ^w -a	bop-iw-a	'be moulded'
t ^h ab-a	t ^h ad ^w -a	t ^h ab-iw-a	'be stabbed'
bof-a	bof ^w -a	bof-iw-a	'be bound'
rem-a	re ^w -a	rem-iw-a	'be chopped'
d ₃ -a	d ₃ -iw-a		'be eaten'
ts'amay-a	ts'amay ^w -a	ts'amay-iw-a	'go (pass.)'

3. Tshivenda

vul-a	vul ^w -a	vul-iw-a	'be opened'
φat-a	φat ^w -a	φat-iw-a	'be built'
φ-a		φ-iw-a	'be given'
k-a		k-iw-a	'be picked'

tap'-a	tapʷ-a	tap'-iw-a	'be flicked'
k ^h op ^h -a	k ^h op ^h ʷ-a	k ^h op ^h -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]

Question 3

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

Verb	Noun
1. tuma "send"	N-tuma → ndume "messenger"
2. βesa "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) What is the difference between the downstep and the downdrift of tone? (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 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 siSwati? (8 marks)
- c) Discuss two types of nominal prefixes. Give for each type, one example from any relevant Bantu language. (4 marks)

[25 marks]

Question 5

With the aid of examples from relevant Bantu languages, discuss the operation of each of the following Laws:

- a) Dahl's Law
- b) Meinhof's Law
- c) Kwanyama Law

[25 marks]

Question 6

- 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.
(18 marks)
- b) With the aid of one example each from any Bantu language, briefly explain the following terms:
 - a. Nominaliser (2 marks)
 - b. initial element (2 marks)
 - c. derivative radical (3 marks)

[25 marks]