

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND
DEPARTMENT OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE

FINAL EXAMINATION
MAY 2018

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

COURSE NUMBER: AL412/IDE-AL412

TIME ALLOWED: THREE (3) HOURS

- INSTRUCTIONS:
1. ANSWER FOUR (4) QUESTIONS IN ALL.
 2. CHOOSE TWO QUESTIONS SECTION A
 3. CHOOSE ONE QUESTION FROM SECTION B
 4. CHOOSE ONE QUESTION FROM SECTION C.
 5. LINGUISTIC EXPRESSIONS AND FORMALISMS SHOULD BE USED WHENEVER APPROPRIATE.
 6. MARKS WILL BE DEDUCTED FOR UNTIDY WORK, WRONG SPELLING, AND UNGRAMMATICAL SENTENCES.
 7. ALL EXAMPLES SHOULD BE GLOSSED.

THIS PAPER IS NOT TO BE OPENED UNTIL PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED BY THE INVIGILATOR.

SECTION A

*(Answer Question One and any other Question from this section)***Question 1**

Consider the data provided below taken from four Polynesian languages and answer the questions which follow:

MAORI	HAWAIIAN	SAMOAN	FIJIAN	
pou	pou	pou	bou	'post'
tapu	kapu	tapu	tapu	'forbidden'
tani	kani	tani	tani	'cry'
takere	taʔele	taʔele	takele	'keel'
hono	hono	fono	vono	'sit'
marama	malama	malama	malama	'moon'

Now answer the following questions:

- Using the comparative method, reconstruct proto-words for each of the six items provided in the data. (6 marks)
- With the use of distinctive features, formalize the diachronic rules which applied to the proto-forms to evolve the reflexes in the Hawaiian and Maori languages. (8 marks)
- Which language(s) would you consider to be the most innovative and why? (2 marks)
- Consider the following data in conjunction with those already provided above.

MAORI	HAWAIIAN	SAMOAN	FIJIAN	
kaho	ʔaho	ʔaso	kaso	'thatch'

Given the following hypothetical Maori items, what would their cognates be in Hawaiian, Samoan, and Fijian?

- mahu
 - pohana
 - hokere
- (9 marks)

[25 MARKS]

Question 2

Examine the data below from Bahasa Indonesia in which the active and passive verb forms are presented and do the tasks which follow:

Active	Passive	
məmbuka	dibuka	'open'
məndapat	didapat	'get'
məŋjelaskan	dijelaskan	'explain'
məŋgosok	digosok	'rub'
məmərlukan	dipərlukan	'need'
mənanam	ditanam	'plant'
məŋarəŋ	dikarəŋ	'compose'
məŋurus	diurus	'arrange'
məŋeja	dieja	'spell'
məŋambil	diambil	'take'
məŋikat	diikat	'tie'
məŋerikan	dihərikan	'give a fright'
məŋhapuskan	dihapuskan	'wipe'

- (i) Use the internal method of reconstruction to suggest what the original active and passive prefixes might have been. (2 marks)
- (ii) Identify those words whose prefixes in the active form have undergone changes and give a step-by-step derivation of the surface forms, to show how they have changed. (14 marks)
- (iii) Identify the words that have retained their original forms of the active prefix and give good reasons why they have retained such forms. (9 marks)

[25 MARKS]

Question 3

- 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 B

(Choose one Question from this section)

Question 4

- a) 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 **three** TRIGGERS of this language change. (15 marks)
- b) With the aid of illustrations from any language(s), briefly explain what you understand by each of the following linguistic terms and concepts:

- i) Implicational universals; (3 marks))
- ii) Isolating language; (4 marks))
- iii) Sporadic sound change; (3 marks))

[25 MARKS]

Question 5

- a) Consider the data below from a Proto language and Lenakel and do the tasks which follow:

Proto Language

*namatana

Lenakel

nɪmrɪn

Name the phonological processes, in their order, which took place in the derivation of the Lenakel forms, and briefly account for the order you suggest.
(10 marks)

- b) With the aid of illustrations from any language(s), discuss the relationship between linguistic typology and language universals.
(6 marks)

Consider the following vowel systems from Classical Latin and Tonkawa and answer the question that follows:

Classical Latin

i	u
e	o
a	

Tonkawa

i	o
e	a

Both Classical Latin and Tonkawa have the vowels /o/, /e/, and /a/ in their vowel systems. Give a description of these vowels in each of the languages, and briefly account for the description.
(9 marks)

[25 MARKS]

SECTION C

(Choose One Question from this section)

Question 6

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 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 French and Italian?
(7 marks)
- (b) "There is no precise figure for the number of languages spoken in the world today". Provide evidence to support this statement along with relevant examples.
(10 marks)
- (c) Briefly distinguish the terms Genealogical and Typological classification of languages.
(8 marks)

[25 MARKS]