

STUDY QUESTIONS FOR THE MID-TERM EXAM (June 21, 2006)**1. INTRODUCTION: PRINCIPLES AND METHODS FOR HISTORICAL LINGUISTICS**

- a. What are the objectives of historical linguistic investigation concerning language change?
- b. Define the concepts of (i) sound change, (ii) morphological change, and (iii) syntactic change. Provide examples to illustrate your definitions.
- c. Define the concepts of (i) etymology, (ii) cognates, and (iii) etymological doublets. Provide examples to illustrate your definitions.
- d. What is the *Uniformation Principle*? Provide an example to illustrate your definition.
- d. What is the objective of the comparative method?
- e. State the two tendencies that make it possible to determine language relationships. Provide an example to illustrate your discussion.
- f. What is the objective of the method of internal reconstruction?
- g. State the basic assumption underlying the method of internal reconstruction. Provide an example to illustrate your discussion.

2. THE BACKGROUND OF HISTORICAL LINGUISTIC STUDY

- a. Who was Sir William Jones? What is the significance of his work?
- b. Briefly summarize the findings of (i) Rasmus Rask, (ii) Franz Bopp, and (iii) Jacob Grimm.
- c. Who were the Neogrammarians? Summarize the works of (i) Karl Brugmann and (ii) Hermann Paul.
- d. Summarize the views of (i) Leonard Bloomfield and (ii) Charles Hockett with regard to language change. Comment on their views.
- e. Generative explanations: Discuss by referring to the (i) views of Paul Postal and (ii) the model developed by R. King and E. Klima.
- f. What is the attitude of sociolinguists toward "free variations"?
- g. What type of rule did Labov (1972) propose and how can language change be explained on the basis of this proposed rule?
- h. The actualization problem: Discuss.

3. GENEALOGICAL CLASSIFICATION

- a. By whom was the family tree theory formulated? What does the theory assume?
- b. Define the terms (i) parent (or mother) language, (ii) daughter language and (iii) sister language. Provide an example to illustrate your definition.
- c. List and discuss the shortcomings of the family tree theory.
- d. Briefly describe the Indo-European language family by referring to (i) the approximate date when PIE was spoken, (ii) the place where it may have been spoken, and (iii) the main subgroups of the IE language family.
- e. Briefly describe the Indo-Iranian subgroup
- f. What was the significance of discovering the Hittite language?

- g. The satem-centum subdivision:
 - i. What is this classification based on? Provide an example!
 - ii. What is the significance of the satem-centum subdivision? Explain by referring to contact between the Finno-Ugric and the Indo-European language families.
- h. Explain the problems in assuming genealogical relationship on the basis of similarities in vocabulary and grammatical elements between language families. Refer to evidence of language contact between (i) Finno-Ugric and Indo-European, (ii) Finno-Ugric and Altaic, (iii) Finno-Ugric and Yukaghir.
- i. What is the difference between the nostratic and multilateral approaches?
- j. What is the problem with long-range multilateral comparisons?
- k. What are the limits of the comparative method with regard to the study of early periods (e.g. periods before that of PIE).
- l. What is the wave theory? In what way is it different from the family tree theory? Provide an example to illustrate your discussion.

4. PRACTICAL EXERCISE

There will be a set of related words presented to you, and you will be asked to (i) reconstruct the proto-form, (ii) formulate the sound changes, and (ii) argue for your solution.

Readings: Chapters 1,2, and 4.
Lecture notes, and handouts.