**STUDY QUESTIONS FOR THE MID-TERM EXAM  (June 22,  2011)**

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, (iii) etymological doublets, (iv) etymon, and (vi) reflex. Provide examples to illustrate your definitions.
    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 AND TYPOLOGICAL CLASSIFICATIONS**

    **Geneological 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 subdivison:
        i.  What is this classification based on? Provide an example!
        ii. What is the significance of the satem-centum subdivision? Explain by referring to contacts 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.

## Typological classification

a. Define the concept of typological plausibility. Provide an example.
b. Comment on the recent reconstruction of PIE obstruents:

    i. Summarize the reason for positing an obstruent system different from the one originally reconstructed;
    ii. Which of the two reconstructed systems do you consider more plausible? Provide arguments.

c. What is the argument against considering PIE an SOV language? Discuss by providing an example.


4. **THE COMPARATIVE METHOD**

a. Define and comment on the three types of comparison. Illustrate your discussion with examples.
b. The triangulation procedure:
    i. Reconstruct the etymon from the British English, American English and Australian English forms of *atom* by applying the triangulation procedure.
    ii. Reconstruct the PIE form of PrsSg 3 *be* from the Sanskrit, Lithuanian and Greek forms by applying the triangulation procedure.
c. Germanic Obstruents: Refinement of the comparative method:
    i. Discuss the solution to the first set of exceptions to Grimm's Law.
    ii. Discuss the solution to the second set of exceptions to Grimm's Law.
    iii. Discuss the solution to the third set of exceptions to Grimm's Law.
d. In what way has Verner's Law served as a justification for the Neogrammarian hypothesis? Discuss.
e. By describing the development of labiovelars in Greek into three sets of allophones, refer to the problem concerning the use of distinctive features in representing sound change.


5. **THE METHOD OF INTERNAL RECONSTRUCTION**

a. What is the objective of internal reconstructions? Illustrate your discussion by referring to the sound change that voiced obstruents underwent in German.
b. In Ancient Greek the sound change $s > \emptyset / V\_\_\_\_V$ has "exceptions" where the */s/* was not deleted between two vowels (e.g., ambrosia).
    i. What is the explanation of this "exception?"
    ii. Comment on the chronology of sound changes relevant to the Ancient Greek example.

c. Most IE roots are of CeC- structure, e.g., *bher- 'bear'.  What about roots such as *ag- 'lead'  *dhē- 'place' and *es- 'be'?   Explain by referring to  laryngeals.
d. The vowels in English sing, sang, sung, song  are reflexes of PIE ablauting vowels.   Explain by (i) defining the concept of grades, and (ii) by listing the PIE ablaut variants in the root *set-   sit.
e. Define the concept of merger.  Distinguish between absolute merger and partial merger.  Illustrate your discussion with examples.

## Readings:

a. Those section in the textbook indicated in the lecture notes;
b. Lecture notes;
c. Handouts.