

**STUDY QUESTIONS FOR THE FINAL EXAM (August 15, 2011)****1. GLOTTOCHRONOLOGY**

- a. Define the term “glottochronology”. What is the basic assumption behind this concept?
- b. List the three assumptions stated by Swadesh.
- c. Explain the mechanism of glottochronology by referring to the following five words from Swadesh’s list (*animal, four, head, I, sun*) in order to date the time of separation of English and German. Refer to Robert Lee’s formula. Comment.
- c. Criticism of glottochronology: Discuss and provide examples.
- d. Comment on Dolgopolsky’s list.

**2. SOUND CHANGE**

- a. Define the term “sound change.” Provide an example to demonstrate your understanding of this concept.
- b. List the most common conditioned and unconditioned sound changes.
- c. Distinguish between phonetic and phonemic sound changes. Provides examples.
- d. Define the term “split”. Distinguish between primary and secondary splits. Illustrate your discussion with examples.
- e. Proto-Indo-European phonological processes leading to sound changes: be prepared to describe these processes and to comment on them.

**3. MORPHOLOGICAL CHANGE**

- a. Phonological processes may become morphologized. Discuss, and provide an example.
- b. Grammaticalization: define, and provide an example.
- c. Define the concept of “analogy.” Provide an example.
- d. Define the concept of “leveling.” Illustrate your discussion by explaining the leveling that took place in Latin in connection with the  $s > r / V\_V$  sound change.
- e. Discuss the mechanism of proportional (or four part) analogy. Illustrate your discussion with an example.
- f. Back formation:
  - i. Define, and provide an example.
  - ii. What are the differences between back formation and proportional analogy? Provide an example.
- g. Folk etymology: define, and provide an example.
- h. Contamination: define, and provide an example.
- i. Syncretism: define, and present the Latvian example.
- j. Can we predict analogical change? Discuss this issue by referring to the theories of J. Kurylowicz and W. Mańczak.

**4. SYNTACTIC CHANGE**

- a. Syntactic change is the least researched area in historical linguistics. Why is this so? Discuss.
- b. Can the comparative method be applied to syntax? Discuss. Provide examples.
- c. Describe the process in the shift of relative clause constructions. Refer to the Hittite example.
- d. The relevance of syntactic universals: Discuss.

## 5. SEMANTIC CHANGE

- a. List the conditions for semantic change. Provide examples.
- b. Loanwords: how do words get borrowed? Provide an example.

## 6. UNANSWERED QUESTIONS

- a. What is the basic question historical linguists should ask in connection with language change? Is there any satisfactory answer available to this question? Comment.
- b. Describe the attempt by A. Martinet to explain unconditional sound changes by referring to the mechanisms of (i) push chain, and (ii) drag chain. Illustrate your discussion with examples.

## PRACTICAL EXERCISES

- a. Demonstrate your understanding of the comparative method by (i) reconstructing the proto-forms from the cognates of Spiiktumi, a hypothetical language and (ii) formulating the sound changes relevant to the four languages in maximally general rules.
- b. 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:

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