

INTRODUCTION TO HISTORICAL LINGUISTICS

Instructor: Natalie Operstein
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Lectures: MW 2-3:50pm, Bunche 3156
 Office Hours: M 4-6pm, Campbell 2126B

Course Description

This course provides an introduction to the principles of historical and comparative linguistics. We will examine the concepts and methods of linguistic reconstruction and change, the processes which trigger change in language, and the methods used to determine, describe, and account for language change. The course will emphasize practical skills of linguistic analysis, with part of each class devoted to data analysis and problem solving. The course grade will be calculated as follows:

Homework Assignments:	30%
Term Paper Prospectus:	2%
Term Paper:	23%
Midterm:	15%
Final Exam (Cumulative):	30%

Textbook

Campbell, Lyle. 2004. *Historical Linguistics: An Introduction*. 2nd ed. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Approximate Course Outline

(timing and order of topics to be adjusted as needed)

Week	Date	Topics	Readings	Important Dates
1	04/2	Comparative & Historical Linguistics.	Chapters 1, 2	
	04/4	Sound Change.	Chapter 2	Homework 1 out.
2	04/9	Sound Change.	Chapter 2	
	04/11	Comparative Reconstruction.	Chapter 5	Homework 1 in; Homework 2 out.
3	04/16	Comparative Reconstruction.	Chapter 5	
	04/18	Language Classification and Subgrouping.	Chapter 6	Homework 2 in; Homework 3 out.
4	04/23	Language Classification and Subgrouping.	Chapter 6	
	04/25	Internal Reconstruction.	Chapter 8	Homework 3 in; Homework 4 out.
5	04/30	Internal Reconstruction.	Chapter 8	
	05/2			MIDTERM. Homework 4 in; Homework 5 out.
6	05/7	Analogical Change.	Chapter 4	
	05/9	Linguistic Borrowing.	Chapter 3	Homework 5 in; Homework 6 out.
7	05/14	Areal Linguistics.	Chapter 12	Paper Prospectus is due.
	05/16	Grammatical, Semantic, and Lexical Change.	Chapter 9	Homework 6 in; Homework 7 out.
8	05/21	Grammatical, Semantic, and Lexical Change.	Chapter 10	
	05/23	Models and Causes of Language Change.	Chapters 7, 11	Homework 7 in; Homework 8 out.
9	05/28	Memorial Day - No Class		
	05/30	Language Birth: Pidgins and Creoles.	(Course Website.)	Homework 8 in.
10	06/4	Language Birth: Pidgins and Creoles.	(Course Website.)	
	06/6	Distant Genetic Relationship.	Chapter 13	Term Paper is due.