

Anthropology 411/English 404, Spring 2005

## Historical Linguistics

**Instructor** Jack B. Martin, Tucker 209, 221-3930, [jbmart@wm.edu](mailto:jbmart@wm.edu)

**Office hours** TR 2-3

**Class time and place** TR 12:30-1:50, Morton 38

Historical linguistics is the study of language change and the methods by which language prehistory may be studied.

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

**Schedule at a glance** (major assignments in *italics*)

	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	Topics and readings:
Jan.			...	19	20	21	22	1 Introduction, C1
	23	24	<u>25</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>29</u>	2 Sound change, C2
	<u>30</u>	<u>31</u>	1	2	3	4	5	3 Analogical change, C4; <i>Quiz 1</i>
Feb.	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	4 Comparative method and reconstruction, C5; Guest lecture
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	5 Comparative method and reconstruction, C5; Classification, C6
	20	21	<u>22</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>26</u>	6 Linguistic prehistory, C15; <i>Quiz 2</i>
	<u>27</u>	<u>28</u>	1	2	3	4	5	7 Philology, C14; Case study: W&M Timucua project
Mar.	6	7	8	9	<del>10</del>	<del>11</del>	12	8 SPRING BREAK
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	9 Models of language change, C7
	20	21	22	23	24	<u>25</u>	<u>26</u>	10 Internal reconstruction, C8
	<u>27</u>	<u>28</u>	29	30	<u>31</u>	1	2	11 Semantic and lexical change, C9; <i>Quiz 3</i>
Apr.	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	12 Syntactic change, C10
	10	11	12	13	<i>14</i>	15	16	13 Explaining language change, C11; <i>Project due</i>
	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	14 Borrowing, C3; Areal linguistics, C12
	<u>24</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>26</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>30</u>	15 Distant relations, C13; Summary
May	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
	8	9	10	<i>11</i>	...			<i>Final exam, May 11, 8:30-11:30 am</i>

### Prerequisites

Anthropology/English 220; other courses (especially English 307) may be helpful.

### Requirements

Homework	15%	(The cumulative grade may be lowered with noticeably poor attendance.)
Quizzes	35%	
Project	17%	
Final exam	33%	

- **Homework** is designed to make sure you are doing the reading, attending, and understanding concepts. The ability to organize data in problems and find elegant solutions is essential. Assignments are due at the beginning of class. Late assignments may be accepted up to one week late, but the grade will be lowered.
- The **quizzes** test terminology and the ability to do problems.
- The **project** (usually a paper) is due in week 13. The paper should be about 8 pages, double-spaced. An **abstract** of your paper is due by the end of week 3 so that your project topic can be approved. Some possible topics:
  - a. Research the history of a particular language, language family, or branch of a family. Summarize relations within the family, the reconstructed phonemes, earliest sources on each language, sound changes, etc.
  - b. Research the history of a language isolate (Japanese, Korean, Basque, etc.). Summarize the earliest sources, attempts to connect the language with other language families, sound changes, and major developments in the history of the language.
  - c. What is the origin of ...? Try to determine where a certain phenomenon comes from (e.g., what are the sources of future tense, possession, infixes, etc.).
  - d. Study a particular historical phenomenon across languages (e.g., metathesis, apocope, etc.). Make a thorough search for examples and try to explain them.
  - e. Borrowing project. Collect borrowings in one language from another (e.g., English loanwords in Vietnamese). Classify these according to the type of change that occurs (as in the exx. in ch. 3).
  - f. Philology project (see me).
  - g. Classification project. Pick an area (Africa, S. America, N. America, Australia, Siberia) and review proposals to classify languages in the area. Try to provide specific examples of cognates and reconstructions.
- The **final exam** is cumulative and concentrates on problem sets and terminology.