Linguistics 517/Anthropology 519/German 517:
Principles and Methods of Historical Linguistics

Requirements & Syllabus: Fall Term, 2006

Instructor: Sarah G. Thomason: 1169 Undergraduate Science Building; tel. (61)5-2018; email: thomason@umich.edu.
Office hours: T 1:30-2:30; W 10:00-11:30; and by appointment.


REQUIREMENTS:

Eleven homework assignments—problem sets, exercises, and one short paper (2-4 pages); class discussions; possibly one classroom presentation; and either a take-home final examination consisting of essays and problems or a term paper. There will also be two optional problem sets, for practice and (if the solutions are good) extra credit. The homework and class participation together will count for about half of the course grade, and the exam or term paper will count for the other half.

Any student who wishes to write a term paper instead of taking the final exam must turn in a 2-to-4-page proposal for the term paper by October 18; the proposal must be approved by me in order for the student to proceed with the term paper. The first draft of the term paper is due November 29, and the final draft is due December 13.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: I will give an E to any assignment on which there has been cheating of any kind, for instance plagiarism or getting prohibited help from printed sources or from another student.

SYLLABUS: TOPICS AND READINGS:

In the following week-by-week schedule, the readings in parentheses are optional, but you should try to read at least some of those items. The schedule is tentative in one respect: it is squeezed toward the end, and if possible I’d like to speed up a bit earlier in the term so that we’ll have more than one day at the end to discuss dialects and language change.
WEEKS:
1(-2?), Sept. 6(-11):
Introduction: Language change and genetic relationship.
Campbell, Preface (xiii-xv), Ch.1:1-10. Thomason et al., Introduction to Linguistics, ‘Historical Linguistics’ chapter. Thomason & Kaufman 1988, Language contact, creolization, and genetic linguistics, Ch.1:1-12. (Bloomfield, Ch.1:3-20, Ch.4:57-74, Ch.17:281-96.)

2-6, Sept. 11(?)-Oct. 11:
Sound change.

7, Oct. 16:
Fall study break: no class.

7-9, Oct. 18-30:
Grammatical change (especially analogic change).
Campbell, Ch.4:103-120, Ch.10:283-297. Hock, Ch.9:167-209, Ch.10:210-237. (Bloomfield, Ch.23:404-24.)

9-10, Nov. 1-8:
Contact-induced language change.

11-13, Nov. 13-29:
Linguistic prehistory: the Comparative Method.

14, Dec. 4-6:
Linguistic prehistory: internal reconstruction: PIE laryngeals.
Campbell, Ch.8:225-242. (Hock, Ch.17:532-555.)

15, Dec. 11-13:
Variation, change, and prehistory: dialects; and Conclusion: review.
Campbell, Ch.7:211-224. Weinreich, Labov, & Herzog 1968, ‘Empirical foundations for a theory of language change’, in Lehmann & Malkiel, eds., 95-188 (this is very long; read at least the first parts of it, the less technical bits). (Bloomfield, Ch.19:321-45.)

15-16, Dec. 13-20:
Take-home final examination.

LIST OF READINGS (not all required) and SOURCES OF EXAMPLES:

800.5 P223pa. A. Bruck et al., eds. 1974. *Papers from the parasession on natural phonology (CLS).*


In the Linguistics Department (exact location TBA) I will keep a box with most of the assigned readings in it, aside from the textbook and maybe Bloomfield. In addition to assigned readings, the box will also contain copies of students’ homework assignments from previous years, specifically for the first assignment (cognates and recurring correspondences), the analogic “laws” assignment, and the short-paper assignment. These student materials are there for you to consult, but they can’t be used as sources of data or examples—you must do your own original data collection, analysis, and reading for those assignments.

Please **DO NOT REMOVE** any of these materials from the Linguistics Department; instead, read them there, or copy them to take home.