

Linguistics 3026, Historical Linguistics; Spring, 2018

Section Code: 53811; section V1

Instructor: Rennie Gonsalves; E-mail: renisong@brooklyn.cuny.edu;

BC Tel: 718-951-5928

Class Meets: TBA

Office Hours: 9:00-10:00 & 12:30-1:30 on Tuesdays; and 9:00-10:00 on Thursdays, in 1420 Ingersoll

Description:

This class will be an introduction to historical linguistics, with an emphasis on describing and illustrating the different kinds of changes that occur in languages over time. We will begin with a hypothetical story about how a language of a tribe of people on an island might change as a result of migration of parts of the tribe to different geographical regions of the island. We will use this story to illustrate how the genetic relationships between languages might come about, how a bunch of daughter languages at a particular point in time might have developed out of a single mother language from a much earlier point in time. We will illustrate these concepts with references to a few language families—the Romance Languages, the Indo-European Languages, and the Austronesian languages. Much of the linguistic evidence used throughout the semester will come from these language families, with a special emphasis on the Austronesian languages, a group of languages that has been the center of much recent attention in the field of historical linguistics. After a brief preparatory look at the structure of language—the sound system or phonological component, the word-building or morphological component, the grammatical or syntactic component, and the meaning or semantic component—we will begin the central portion of our study with a look at types of sound change. We will learn about some simple formal devices used to describe sound changes and then go on to study and practice methods used to reconstruct the sound systems of earlier stages of a language. Here our study of the comparative method and the method of internal reconstruction will make up a central part of what we will do in this class, but we will also spend considerable amounts of time on other areas of historical linguistics, including the study of endangered languages; the use of computational and statistical methods; and morphological, syntactic, lexical and semantic change in languages. Our text for this course, *An Introduction to Historical Linguistics*, by Terry Crowley and Claire Bower, includes exercises at the end of each chapter, and we will spend much of our class time working on and reviewing these exercises. Homework will include reading the chapters and doing the exercises. In class we will go over the central concepts of each chapter, and then devote most of the class to going over the exercises in small groups and also as a whole class. At the end of each week there will be a 15-minute mini quiz on some of the key concepts covered during that week. Your grade for this class will be based on your attendance and participation, the weekly quizzes, a midterm, and a final.

Required Text:

Crowley, Terry, and Claire Bower, *An Introduction to Historical Linguistics; Fourth Edition*, Oxford University Press, 2010 (available at the Brooklyn College Bookstore).

Course Schedule:

1 January 30: Introductions, backgrounds, preview of the text.

The relationships between languages and the causes of language change. Review of the IPA charts of consonants and vowels.

Homework for next class: Read Chapter 1, do exercises 1-8, pages 20-21.

- 2 February 1: Chapter 1 continued.
The languages of Australia and Melanesia, including Papua New Guinea.
- 3 February 6: Chapter 2, Types of Sound Change: lenition and fortition, sound loss, sound addition, metathesis, fusion, fission and breaking.
Homework: Read pages 23-36 of chapter 2.
- 4 February 8: Chapter 2; assimilation, dissimilation, tone changes, unusual changes;
Homework: Read pages 36-48. Do exercises 1-10, pages 49-51.
- 5 February 13: Chapter 2; Focus on reviewing exercises 1-10
and doing exercises 11-21.
Homework: Read Chapter 3, Expressing Sound Changes;
Do exercises 1-10, pages 62-64.
- **6 February 15: Chapter 3, Expressing Sound Changes; Exs. 1-10; Quiz 1, Types of Sound Change, CH2
Homework: Read Chapter 4, pages 65-75; Do exercises 1-5, pages 76-77.
- Conversion Day: Tuesday, February 20, Follows a Monday Schedule.**
- 7 February 22: Chapter 4, Phonetic and Phonemic Change;
Review of Exercises 1-5.
Homework: Read in Chapter 5, pages 78-91.
- **8 February 27: Chapter 5, The Comparative Method (1): Procedures; Quiz 2, On Chapters 3 & 4
Homework: Read in Chapter 5, pages 91-103.
Do exercises 1-4.
- 9 March 1: Chapter 5; Review of exercises 1-4 and doing exercises 5-8, page 104;
Homework: do exercises 9-14, pages 105-107.
- 10 March 6: Chapter 5; review of the comparative method; focus on selected exercises.
Homework: Read chapter 6, pages 108-117.
Do exercises 1-5, page 117.
- 11 March 8: Chapter 6, Determining Relatedness; review of exercises 1-5.
Homework: Do exercises 6-10.
- 12 March 13: Review of chapters 1 to 6.
- *13 March 15: **Midterm Exam** (Open Book).
- 14 March 20: Homework: Read chapter 7, pages 121-131.
Do exercises 1 and 2, page 132.
- 15 March 22: Chapter 7, Internal Reconstruction;
Review exercises 1 and 2; do exercise 3, 4, and 5.
Homework: complete exercises 3, 4, and 5.
- 16 March 27: Chapter 7, review of exercises;
Homework: Read in chapter 8, 126-149.
- **17 March 29: Chapter 8, Computational and Statistical Methods; Quiz 3, On Internal Reconstruction, CH 7. Homework: Read 149-159; Exercises 1-3.

Spring Break: March 30-April 8

- 18 April 10: Chapter 8, review of exercises 1-3; do exercises 4 and 5.
Homework: read in chapter 9, pages 162-171.
- 19 April 12: Chapter 9, The Comparative Method (2): History and Challenges;
Homework: read pages 171 to 182. Do exercise 1.

- 20 April 17: Chapter 9, focusing on reviewing exercise 1.
 Homework: Read chapter 10, pages 185 to 194;
 Do exercise 1, pages 194 to 196.
- **21 April 19: Chapter 10, Morphological Change; Quiz 4, CH 8 & CH 9
 Review exercise 1; do exercise 2.
 Homework: Read chapter 11, pages 199 to 215.
 Do exercises 1 to 3, pages 215 to 216.
- 22 April 24: Chapter 11, Semantic and Lexical Change; focus on exercise 1 to 3;
 Homework: Read in chapter 12, pages 217 to 229.
- **23 April 26: Chapter 12, Syntactic Change; Quiz 5, On CH 10 & CH 11
 Homework: Read in chapter 12, pages 229 to 241.
 Do exercises 1 and 2, pages 242 to 243.
- 24 May 1: Chapter 12, Syntactic Change; reviewing exercises 1 and 2,
 and doing exercises 3 and 4.
 Homework: Read chapter 13, pages 246 to 261.
 Do exercises 1 to 3.
- 25 May 3: Chapter 13, Observing Language Change, focusing on exercises 1 to 3.
 Homework: Read in chapter 14, pages 264 to 279.
- 26 May 8: Chapter 14, Language Contact;
 Homework: Read in chapter 14, pages 279 to 293;
 Do exercises 1 and 2.
- 27 May 10: Chapter 14, review of exercises 1 and 2.
- 28 May 15: Review of chapters 7 to 14.

*Tuesday, May 21: **Final exam**, 1:00 to 3:00 pm (room to be announced).

*exam dates; **quiz dates.

Participation:

Students must attend regularly, arrive on time and must be prepared to participate, having done the assigned work. Participation will count for 20% of the overall grade for the course.

Exams:

There will be an open-book midterm and an open-book final.

Quizzes:

There will be 5 in-class short quizzes (about 30 minutes each) throughout the semester.

Grading:

Grades will be based on the following percentages:

Attendance and participation-20%, quizzes-10%, homework assignments-10%, midterm exam-25%, final examination-35%.

Statement on the University's policy on Academic Integrity

The faculty and administration of Brooklyn College support an environment free from cheating and plagiarism. Each student is responsible for being aware of what constitutes cheating and plagiarism and for avoiding both. The complete text of the CUNY Academic Integrity Policy and the Brooklyn College procedure for implementing that policy can be found at this site:

<http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/bc/policies>. If a faculty member suspects a violation of academic integrity and, upon investigation, confirms that violation, or if the student admits the violation, the faculty member MUST report the violation.

Statement in Reference to the Center for Student Disability Services

In order to receive disability-related academic accommodations students must first be registered with the Center for Student Disability Services. Students who have a documented disability or suspect they may have a disability are invited to set up an appointment with the Director of the Center for Student Disability Services, Ms. Valerie Stewart-Lovell at 718-951-5538. If you have already registered with the Center for Student Disability Services please provide your professor with the course accommodation form and discuss your specific accommodation with him/her.

Academic Calendar, Spring, 2018, & Schedule of Classes

<http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/web/about/administration/enrollment/registrar/bulletins/spring18/calendar.php>

Other Important Information Regarding College Regulations

* All students should read carefully and thoroughly the 2014-2015 Brooklyn College Bulletin, especially pp. 41-73, for a complete listing of academic regulations of the College