

Associated Canadian Theological Schools LIN 555: Historical and Comparative Linguistics

Dr. Keith Snider
Fall - 2009
3 credit hours

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Office phone 3958
M-W-F
9:00-9:50 am

I. Course Description

An introduction for graduate students to the field of historical and comparative linguistics. Topics covered include: the comparative method, sound change, borrowing, internal reconstruction, linguistic classification, , and models of linguistic change. Readings and course assignments will involve material from both Indo-European and non-Indo-European languages. In addition, there will be a major project to reconstruct elements of proto-Guang by comparing different Guang languages of Ghana.

II. Objectives

By the end of this course, each student should:

- a) be able to explain how sounds change both phonemically and allophonically,
- b) be able to determine the direction in which a sound change has occurred,
- c) be able to determine whether a given lexical item is borrowed or not and determine in which direction the borrowing took place,
- d) be able to reconstruct the different elements of a proto-language,
- e) be able to identify groupings and sub-groupings within the language family tree,
- f) look forward to doing historical and comparative linguistics, and
- g) gain a better appreciation for the Designer of the complex and beautiful patterns that they will discover during this course.

III. Course Textbooks

Hale, Mark. 2007. *Historical Linguistics: Theory and Method*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

IV. Course Assignments

- a) The student will read the assigned textbook and write graded summaries of each chapter.
- b) There will also be a number of exercises assigned that are based on the *Guang Comparative Linguistics Analysis Project*.
- c) Towards the end of the course, students will pull together their knowledge of one aspect of proto-Guang and write a 10-15 page paper that clearly and accurately describes their reconstruction.

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage	Grade Point
A+	97-100	4.30
A	93-96	4.00
A-	90-92	3.70
B+	87-89	3.30
B	83-86	3.00
B-	80-82	2.70
C+	77-79	2.30
C	73-76	2.00
C-	70-72	1.70
F	Below 70	0.00

V. Miscellaneous Notes/Policies

[Example: instructors sometimes have preferences for hard-copy versus electronic submission of assignments, or information to give about the use of the course website.]

VI. Course Outline

- a) Linguistic reconstruction
- b) Sound change
- c) Borrowing
- d) Internal reconstruction
- e) Models of linguistic change

VII. Late Assignment Policy

All assignments are due at the beginning of the class period on the indicated date. For unexcused late assignments, a grading penalty of 5% of the possible grade, per day or part of day, will be imposed. If because of exceptional circumstances you realize that it is not going to be possible to turn in an assignment when it is due, please make every reasonable effort to discuss this with me *before* the assignment due date.

VIII. Attendance

Students are expected to attend all classes on a regular basis. In cases where a student has missed 25 percent or more of the sessions, his/her final letter grade will be reduced by one letter grade (e.g., A- > B-).

Supplement: Important Academic Notes from ACTS

Web Support – Student Portal <https://students.twu.ca>

All students at TWU have a TWUPass username and password. This is determined at the time of an online application or can be managed through the computing services help desk or the link on the student portal. Your student email account is also available through this student portal and is vital for communication about grades, account statements, lost passwords, sign-up instructions, etc. If you do not know your account or password, there is a link at the login area called “I forgot my password.” When you click on that link, you will be walked through the process of retrieving your account information.

Campus Closure

In the event of deteriorating weather conditions overnight or other emergency situations, every effort will be made to communicate information regarding the cancellation of classes to the radio stations CKNW (980 AM), CKWX (1130 AM), MAX (850 AM), PRAISE (106.5 FM) and KARI (550 AM) by 6:30 a.m., and an announcement will be placed on the University's switchboard as well as on the website <http://www.twu.ca/conditions/>. The first announcement regarding a closure will cover the period up to 1:00 p.m. only. If classes are to be cancelled beyond 1:00 p.m., this decision will be announced by the same means before 11:00 a.m. that day. Students and faculty should assume that all night classes will continue to operate. If the emergency continues into the evening, students and faculty may check for a closure notice on the University's switchboard and website after 3:00 p.m. that day.

Paper Formatting

Students need to adhere to the CanIL Style Sheet. Linguistic reconstruction

Research Ethics

Please note that all research projects involving human participants undertaken by members of the TWU university community (including projects done by ACTS students to satisfy course or degree requirements) **MUST** be approved by the Trinity Western University Research Ethics Board. Information and forms may be found at <http://www.twu.ca/academics/research/ethics/>. Those needing additional clarification may contact Dr. Bruce Guenther. Please allow at least three (3) weeks from the date of submission for a review of the application.

Academic Integrity and Avoiding Plagiarism at TWU

In cases of academic dishonesty, the university policy outlined in the *Academic Calendar* will be followed. Academic dishonesty may include cheating on exams, tests, lab results, etc.; impersonating another student at a test or exam; falsifying or misrepresenting information on academic records, submitting the same or substantially the same essay for credit in more than one course without faculty permission; or plagiarism. It is the student's responsibility to know

and understand what constitutes plagiarism. In cases of academic dishonesty, if the faculty member is convinced that the incident was deliberate, a grade of zero will normally be given for that assignment. In the event of a second deliberate offence, a grade of F will normally be given for the course. Any penalties less severe than these will be at the discretion of the faculty member. Following TWU academic policy, all incidents of academic dishonesty will result in the faculty member completing a *Record of Academic Dishonesty* form and sending it to the student with copies to the Associate Academic Vice President, the Faculty/School Dean, and the CanIL Academic Dean. This action may result in additional penalties if there are prior records of academic dishonesty on file. The record of academic dishonesty will be kept confidential and will remain on file indefinitely in the respective offices.

Learning what constitutes plagiarism and avoiding it is the student's responsibility. An excellent resource describing plagiarism and how to avoid it has been prepared by TWU Librarian William Badke and is freely available for download (PPT file) or used as flash (self running) tutorials of varying lengths from:

<http://www.acts.twu.ca/lbr/plagiarism.ppt>

<http://www.acts.twu.ca/lbr/Plagiarism.swf> (14 minute flash tutorial)

http://www.acts.twu.ca/lbr/Plagiarism_Short.swf (8 minute flash tutorial)

Equity of Access

It is the responsibility of a student with a learning disability to inform the ACTS Director of Student Life of that fact before the beginning of a course so that necessary arrangements may be made to facilitate the student's learning experience. We are unable to accommodate any student who informs the Director of Student Life of a disability after the beginning of class.