

# Linguistics 611 Introduction to Historical Linguistics Wtr 2007

**Class Meetings:** M W F 9:30 - 10:48 (Bolz 128) [NB: \*NO\* class on Friday 1/5 & Monday 1/15]  
**Instructor:** Brian D. Joseph  
**Offices:** 206 Oxley Hall / 361 Hagerty Hall (NB: 206 Oxley Is my primary one)  
**Office Hours:** M W 8:30 – 9:15, or (preferably, by appointment) – my default office for office hours is the one in Oxley, though I can meet in Hagerty if needed.  
**Contact info:** Phone – 292-4981 (at both offices) / e-mail – joseph.1@osu.edu

## Readings:

1. *Principles of Historical Linguistics* by Hans H. Hock (second edition, 1991) [primarily for graduate students, though it is hoped that interested undergraduates will read it as well]
2. *Language History, Language Change, and Language Relationship. An Introduction to Historical and Comparative Linguistics* by Hans H. Hock & Brian D. Joseph (1996) [primarily for undergraduate students, though it is hoped that serious graduate students will read it as well]
3. Selected journal articles (listed under course outline, with bibliographic information from Hock's "References"; copies will (eventually) be placed on reserve in some Library reserve location and in the Linguistics Department in mail slot for Linguistics 611 in 219 Oxley

**Web site for course:** Handouts for the class (syllabus, assignments, miscellaneous notes and such, but in general NOT articles) will be available as pdf files on the web at: [www.ling.ohio-state.edu/~bjoseph/Lx611](http://www.ling.ohio-state.edu/~bjoseph/Lx611). All documents placed there will begin with "Lx611" and will have some descriptive label that should clearly identify them (e.g. Lx611Syllabus.pdf is the syllabus, Lx611BasicIssues.pdf is the "Basic Issues" handout, and so on).

## Course Requirements and Grading:

a. Midterm Exam (take-home)	25% (of final grade)
b. Final Exam (take-home)	25% ( " )
c. Term Paper (list of suggested topics to be given out)	25% ( " )
d. Homework Assignments	25% ( " )
e. Class participation	(up to) 1% (Extra)
f. Attendance: not graded, but material is routinely covered in class that is not in the books and you are responsible for it, regardless of whether you are in class or not (thus regular attendance is strongly advised!)	

Exams will be graded on a 0-100 scale, with number grades corresponding to letter grades as follows:

94 - 100 = A	84 - 86 = B	74 - 76 = C	60 - 66 = D
90 - 93 = A-	80 - 83 = B-	70 - 73 = C-	0 - 59 = E
87 - 89 = B+	77 - 79 = C+	67 - 69 = D+	

Letter grades on term papers will be converted to a corresponding score on 100-point scale, for the purposes of computing the final grade.

**Homework Policy:** Homework will be assigned periodically (about 10 in all, and about once a week, though I make no no guarantees as to their regularity). Since I cannot give you a schedule for when the assignments will be made (since they depend in part on where we have gotten in class discussions), it is YOUR responsibility to get the assignments and to make sure they are turned in on time; I will try to alert you to what is coming based on the flow of material in the class. ALL HOMEWORK MUST BE DONE AND TURNED IN ON TIME. Credit will be deducted for missing papers, or for papers turned in more than a week late or after class discussion of the assignment (still, it is better to turn in a paper

late than not at all). The homeworks will be graded on a 10-point scale, with 6 points awarded for doing the assignment and turning it in on time (thus late papers automatically lose some points), and up to 4 quality points, depending on your efforts to solve the particular problem and your actual success in solving it.

### **Course Objectives:**

- to introduce the principles and methods of traditional historical linguistics
- to examine the relation between synchronic theory and language change
- to explore the role of sociolinguistics in understanding language change

**Course Outline and Assignments:** Readings are given with numbers referring to chapters and sections (NB: chapters/sections in parentheses are optional); Hock readings are required for graduate students and suggested for undergraduates. See above in Readings section for information on required articles. Hock & Joseph readings are required for undergraduates and suggested for graduate students, as noted above. The week-by-week breakdown is approximate, designed more to give you a sense of the order of topics to be covered and the relative amount of time designated for each than to be a rigid guide for the absolute amount of time to be spent on each topic. The midterm exam date will not change, however.

**Week 1:** Introductory material: class mechanics; crucial questions of historical linguistics  
[NO CLASS  
FRI 1/5]      **Read:** Hock Preface, 1; Hock & Joseph 1

**Weeks 2-3:** More introductory material: synchrony-diachrony relationship; evidence of change  
[NO CLASS  
MON 1/15] **Comparative Reconstruction:** the comparative method -- its bases and applications; practice in reconstruction; relative chronology; checks on reconstruction; problems for comparative method -- wave theory, borrowing; comparative method in domains other than phonology (morphology, syntax, semantics, etc.); linguistic palaeontology

**Read:** Hock 19.2, 19.3, 19.5, 18.7; Hock & Joseph 16, 18

**Weeks 4-5:** Regularity of Sound Change (Neogrammarian Hypothesis)

**Read:** Hock 3, 20.2; Hock & Joseph 4 (except 4.6.3)

Sound Change: types of phonetic change; naturalness and seriation in phonetic change; place of sound changes in synchronic grammars

**Read:** Hock 4, 5.1-3, 6, (7); Hock & Joseph 4 (except 4.6.3)

**Weeks 5-6:** Genetic Relationships: Relatedness; subgrouping; "long-distance" relationships; "Proto-World"; origin of language

**Read:** Hock 18.1-6, 18.8-9; Hock & Joseph 17  
Campbell 1988; Greenberg 1989; Matisoff 1990

**Week 6:** Internal Reconstruction: stable vs. unstable sound changes; morphophonemic alternation and reconstruction; structural inconsistency and historical inference; practice in internal reconstruction; PIE laryngeals; limitations of method

**Read:** Hock 17

\*\*\* MIDTERM EXAM (distributed Friday 2/9/07; due Monday 2/12/07) \*\*\*

**Week 7:** Morphological Change: levelling; analogy; proportional model; morphological reanalysis; analogical interference in sound change; grammatical conditioning of sound change; nonproportional

analogy; one-form-one-meaning principle; analogy and psychological reality; morphological reconstruction; lexical change

**Read:** Hock 9.1-2, (10), 19.4; Hock & Joseph 5, 7, (8), 9

**Week 8:** Syntactic Change: identifying syntactic change; word order changes; interaction of universals with syntactic change; phonological and morphological sources of syntactic change; syntactic reanalysis

**Read:** Hock 13; Hock & Joseph 6

**Weeks 8-9:** Generative Historical Linguistics vs. Socio-historical Linguistics: the case of phonological change; lexical diffusion

**Read:** Hock 11, 20.1, 20.7-14; Hock & Joseph 4.6.3, 10  
Kiparsky 1968b; Kiparsky 1971; Labov 1965a [actually, 1963; typo in Hock]

**Week 10:** Language Change through Language Contact: Borrowing; Sprachbund phenomena; constraints on contact-induced change; pidgins and creoles

**Read:** Hock 14, 16.3 (16.4-5); Hock & Joseph 8, (10, 11), 12, 13, 14, (15)

Summary on Causation of Change

**Read:** Hock 8; 20.3

Wrap-up for quarter: major themes and looking ahead

**Expectations:** Here is what I expect out of you, as members of this class — I expect that you will attend class regularly, stay for the whole class each time, listen attentively while you are here, show through your behavior that you respect the fact that others in the class are here to learn, put effort into your work for the class, and be honorable and truthful in your presentation of your work; please see the statement in the next section of the syllabus for more on this matter and see me if you have any questions. For my part, as instructor, I promise to listen to and respond to your questions and comments, address issues that come up with regard to class assignments, provide you with interesting material to work on, return papers promptly to you, and generally do what is necessary so that you can achieve the objectives set out above for the class.

**Academic Misconduct:** To state the obvious, academic dishonesty is not allowed. Cheating on tests or on other assignments will be reported to the University Committee on Academic Misconduct. The most common form of misconduct is plagiarism (the representation of someone else's ideas or words as your own, without attribution). It is critical to recognize that any time you use the ideas or the materials of another person or persons, you must acknowledge that you have done so in a citation. This includes material that you have found on the Web. The University provides guidelines for research on the Web at <http://gateway.lib.ohio-state.edu/tutor/>. You may work collaboratively with others in the class (but not others who are not in the class) on homework assignments, as long as what you ultimately turn in to me represents your own statement of whatever solution you may have come up with collectively. So also with the term paper: you may discuss your work with others, even people not associated with the class, but the paper you turn in must be your own product. On the exams, however, there is to be **no** collaboration.

**Accommodation for Disabilities:** Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss his/her specific needs. Please contact the Office for Disability Services at 614-292-3307 in room 150 Pomerene Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.