SOME BASIC ISSUES IN HISTORICAL LINGUISTICS

1. According to Coseriu 1958:
   a. the “rational” problem of language change: Why are languages not invariant? Why are they always changing?
   b. the “general” problem of language change: What are the conditions that lead to language change?
   c. the “historical” problem of language change: Why does any particular change occur when it does?

2. According to Weinreich, Herzog, and Labov 1968:
   a. the “constraints” problem: What are the general constraints on change, if any, that determine possible and impossible changes and directions of change?
   b. the “transition” problem: By what route does language change?
   c. the “embedding” problem: How is a given language change embedded in the surrounding system of linguistic and social relations? (Cf. (1b))
   d. the “evaluation” problem: How do members of a speech community evaluate a given change, and what is the effect of this evaluation on the change?
   e. the “actuation” problem: Why did a given linguistic change occur at the particular time and place that it did? (Cf. (1c))

3. Others (including restatements of (1) and (2) in different terms):
   a. What is the relation between synchrony and diachrony? (cf. (2b))
   b. What constitutes “naturalness” in language change? (cf. (2a))
   c. What really changes when a language changes?
   d. What are the actual changes that are found in the languages of the world? (Cf. (2a))
   e. How does change occur without disrupting the function of the linguistic system?