



Historical Linguistics

Amy Reynolds

23 July 2012

LING 101 SSII

Overview

- Historical Reconstruction (cont'd)
- History of English as a language
- Writing Systems

Review

- Language Families
- Grimm's Law
- Comparative Method

Historical Reconstruction

- You can use the systematic correspondences from genetically related languages to understand the language changes that occurred to produce each and **reconstruct** an ancestor language
- This technique is called **comparative reconstruction**
 - It can be done with any aspect of linguistic structure: phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, ...
- A reconstructed ancestor language is called a **proto-language**

Grimm's Law

- Grimm's Law represents a **consonantal shift** which occurred after the **Germanic** family branched off of the **Proto-Indo-European**.
- The consonantal shift applied to the class of **stops** in Proto-Germanic
 - *voiceless stops > voiceless fricatives
 - *voiced unaspirated stops > voiceless stops
 - *voiced aspirated stops > voiced unaspirated stops

Grimm's Law

- This shift applied across the board, which means that all words in English that are native to English will differ from their counterparts in other IE languages in this manner.
- This makes it easy to distinguish words that are native to English from words that were **borrowed**
 - Why *father*, but *paternal*
 - Why *three*, but *triangle*
 - Why *two*, but *duo*

History Problems

1. Work through the dataset **line by line**, looking for any sound correspondences where the languages differ.
2. **Note each sound correspondence on the side.** Also note all **data numbers** that show that correspondence.
3. Note on the side what **sound change rules** could account for the distribution of sounds across the languages. Use the general outline of $A > B / (\text{environment if any})$
4. Look at where the segments for the sound correspondences occur in other parts of the dataset. Does the distribution of sounds within each language rule out any of your potential sound change rules? If your potential sound change rule doesn't work, get rid of it.
5. Create your proposed proto-forms based on the data and your proposed rules
 - **For sound change rules in historical datasets, it is essential that you write down what languages it applies to!**

History Problems

- Middle Chinese

No.	Mandarin (Beijing)	Hakka (Huizhou)	Gloss
1	[la]	[<u>lat</u>]	'spicy hot'
2	[<u>lan</u>]	[lam]	'basket'
3	[<u>lan</u>]	[<u>lan</u>]	'lazy'
4	[pa]	[pa]	'fear'

- Step 1 and 2:
 - Note all sound correspondences

History Problems

- Middle Chinese

No.	Mandarin (Beijing)	Hakka (Huizhou)	Gloss
1	[la]	[<u>lat</u>]	'spicy hot'
2	[<u>lan</u>]	[lam]	'basket'
3	[<u>lan</u>]	[<u>lan</u>]	'lazy'
4	[pa]	[pa]	'fear'

- Step 1 and 2:

No.	Mandarin (Beijing)	Hakka (Huizhou)	Data No.s	Possible Rules
1	∅	t	1	
2	n	m	2	

History Problems

- Middle Chinese

No.	Mandarin (Beijing)	Hakka (Huizhou)	Gloss
1	[la]	[<u>lat</u>]	'spicy hot'
2	[<u>lan</u>]	[lam]	'basket'
3	[<u>lan</u>]	[<u>lan</u>]	'lazy'
4	[pa]	[pa]	'fear'

- Step 3:

No.	Mandarin (Beijing)	Hakka (Huizhou)	Data No.s	Possible Rules
1	∅	t	1	*∅ > t / __# in Hakka *t > ∅ / __# in Mandarin
2	n	m	2	*m > n in Mandarin *n > m in Hakka

History Problems

- Middle Chinese

No.	Mandarin (Beijing)	Hakka (Huizhou)	Gloss
1	[la]	[<u>lat</u>]	'spicy hot'
2	[<u>lan</u>]	[lam]	'basket'
3	[<u>lan</u>]	[<u>lan</u>]	'lazy'
4	[pa]	[pa]	'fear'

- Step 4:

No.	Mandarin (Beijing)	Hakka (Huizhou)	Data <u>No.s</u>	Possible Rules
1	∅	t	1	*t > ∅ / __# in Mandarin
2	n	m	2	*m > n in Mandarin

History Problems

- Middle Chinese
- Step 5:

No.	Mandarin (Beijing)	Hakka (Huizhou)	Gloss	Proto-form
1	[la]	[<u>lat</u>]	'spicy hot'	*[<u>lat</u>]
2	[<u>lan</u>]	[lam]	'basket'	*[lam]
3	[<u>lan</u>]	[<u>lan</u>]	'lazy'	*[<u>lan</u>]
4	[pa]	[pa]	'fear'	*[pa]

Sound Correspondences

No.	Mandarin (Beijing)	Hakka (Huizhou)	Data <u>No.s</u>	Possible Rules
1	∅	t	1	*t > ∅ / __# in Mandarin
2	n	m	2	*m > n in Mandarin

History Problems

- Proto-Romance Dataset

No.	Spanish	Sardinian	Romanian	Gloss
1	[ilo]	[filu]	[fir]	thread
2	[við̃a]	[bita]	[vita]	life
3	[vino]	[binu]	[vin]	wine
4	[riva]	[riba]	[ripa]	bank
5	[rio]	[riu]	[riu]	river
6	[riso]	[rizu]	[ris]	laugh
7	[muð̃a]	[muta]	[muta]	change

- Step 1 and 2:

No.	Spanish	Sardinian	Romanian	Data No.
1	∅	f	f	1
2	l	l	r	1
3	o	u	∅	1, 3, 6
4	v	b	v	2, 3
5	ð̃	t	t	2, 7
6	v	b	p	4
7	o	u	u	5
8	s	z	s	6

Historical Reconstruction

- Proto-Cape York Panam

Atampaya, Angkamuthi, Yadhaykenu, and Wudhani are Pama-Nyungan languages spoken in the north of Cape York Peninsula in Queensland, Australia. Examine the data below then answer the questions that follow. *Note:* [ɣ] is a voiced velar fricative, [ŋ] and [t] have dental or alveolodental articulations, [ɲ] is a voiced palatal nasal.

	<u>Atampaya</u>	<u>Angkamuthi</u>	<u>Yadhaykenu</u>	<u>Wudhani</u>	
1.	yantu	antu	antu	antu	'canoe'
2.	ɲaŋka	aŋka	aŋka	aŋka	'mouth'
3.	winta	winta	winta	inta	'arm'
4.	wuŋa	wuŋa	wuŋa	uŋa	'sun'
5.	wapun	apun	apu	apun	'head'
6.	ujpuɲ	ujpuɲ	ujpuɲ	ujpuj	'fly'
7.	ajpaɲ	ajpaɲ	ajpaɲ	ajpaj	'stone'
8.	lalan	jalan	jala	alan	'tongue'
9.	.ɲuŋka	.juŋka	.juŋka	.uŋka	'cry'
10.	.ɲuɖu	.juɖu	.juɖu	.uɖu	'dead'

History of English

- Old English (circa 500 – 1000 A.D.)
 - Began with the immigration of the Germanic Tribes of Angles, Saxons, and Jutes to England in around 500 a.d.
 - Linguistic Markings:
 - Highly inflected language
 - Very similar to other Germanic languages

History of English

- Middle English (circa 1000 – 1500 A.D.)
 - Began with the change of power when William the Conqueror invaded England in 1066, effectively wiping out the English monarchy and nobility and replacing it with fellow Anglo-Normans.
 - The English Language Rises
 - King John (1166-1216) and the loss of Normandy
 - The Black Plague in the 1300s allowed for a more upwardly-mobile middle class to arise.
 - Linguistic markings:
 - French became official language of the court
 - Sustained period of borrowing
 - Loss of numerous cases from Old English

History of English

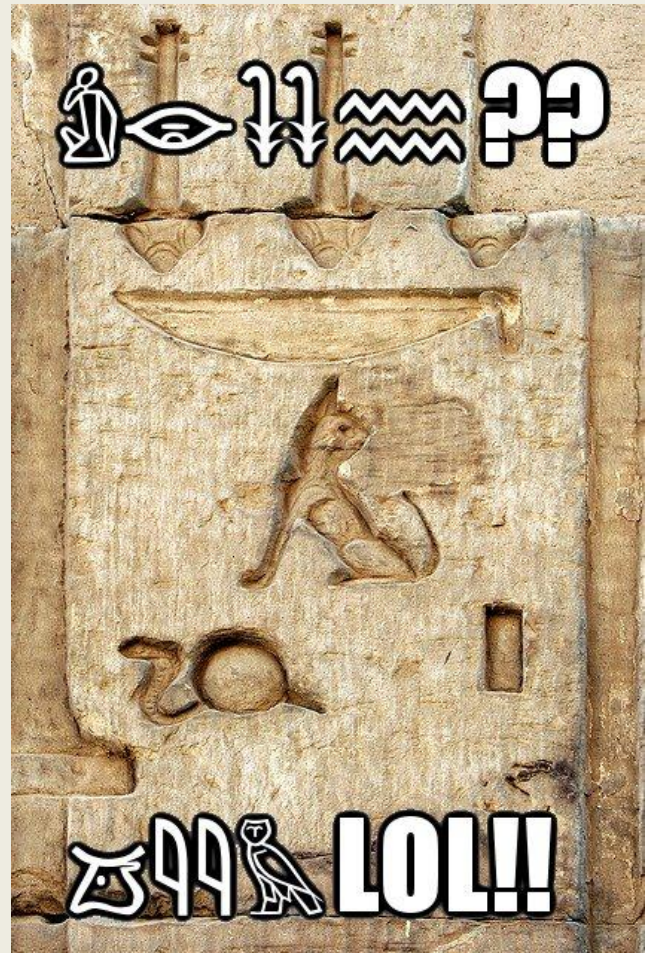
- Modern English (1500s to present)
 - Developed with the arrival of the printing press. Increasing literacy.
 - Also, English had become the standard language of the court again.
 - Linguistic Markings:
 - Continued simplification of cases
 - Great English Vowel Shift

Writing Systems

- The alphabet is actually a relatively new development in the history of writing. What other sorts of writing are there?
 - Logographic
 - Phonographic
 - Syllabic
 - Alphabetic

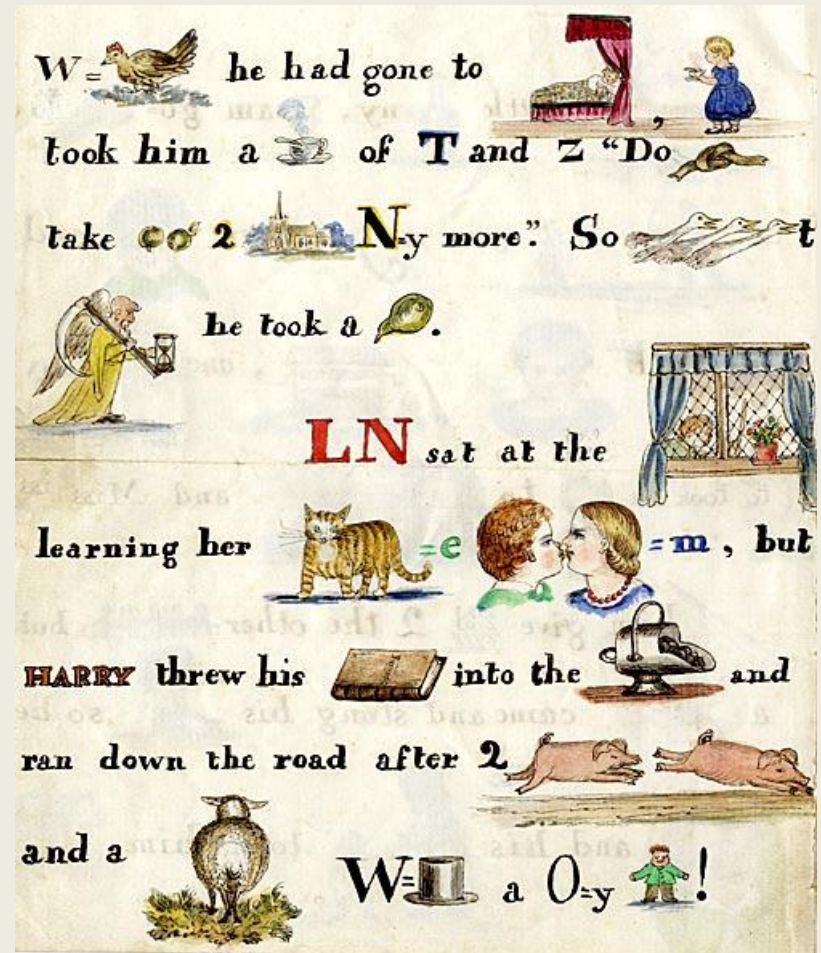
Writing Systems

- Logographic
 - Symbols meant to represent entire words or concepts.
 - Meaning-based
 - Does not contain any phonetic information.
 - Egyptian Hieroglyphics
 - Early Chinese writing
 - Modern Examples?
 - Pictograms
- No actual completely logographic systems!

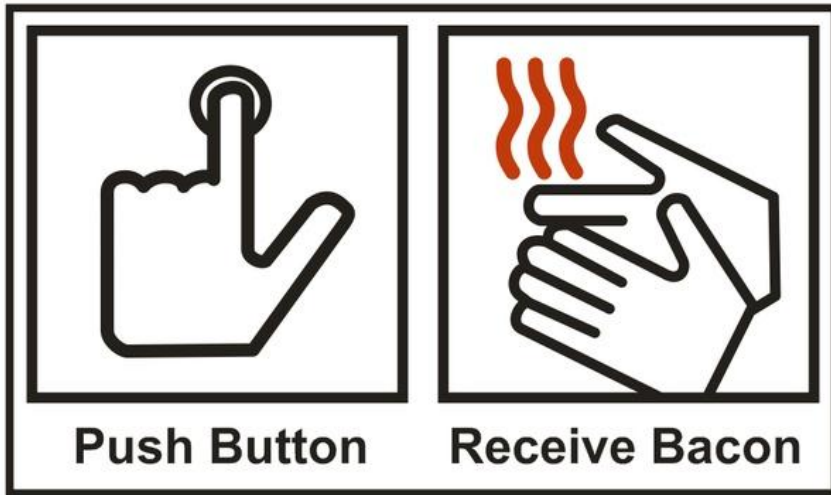


Writing Systems

- Phonographic
 - Symbols correspond to segments or syllables
 - Syllabic
 - Symbols represent entire syllables
 - Works better for languages with simple syllable structure
 - E.g. Japanese, Cherokee
 - Alphabetic
 - Symbols (or combinations of symbols) represent segments
 - E.g. Greek, Latin, English
- Rebuses
 - Sumerian Symbols 4000 B.C.
 - Modern-Day examples?



Writing Systems



Writing Systems

- Modern Day
combination of systems:
- I went 2 the restaurant
and had some gr8 food.
- C U l8r!
- ☺

Homeworks

- [Writing Assignment 9](#)
- Homework Assignment:
 - p. 291, Exercise 1, (a) – (g)
 - p. 294, Exercise 10
 - p. 294, Exercise 11
 - p. 291-92, Exercise 2
 - p. 292, Exercise 3
 - The tilde above certain vowels indicates that it is nasal.

Have a good day!

