LNGT0101
Introduction to Linguistics
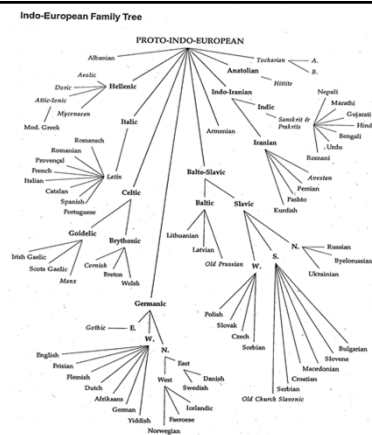
Lingu-ist-ic-s
[lĭŋ-gʷĭ-stɪks]

Lecture #22
Dec 3rd, 2012

Announcements

- On Wednesday we wrap up everything, and then do course response forms in the last 15 minutes of class time.

- Any questions or issues on your LAPs?

Transition from last class

- **Historical linguistics** is mainly concerned with establishing genetic relationships between different languages and the reconstruction of earlier languages from which these related languages descended.
- **Reconstruction** proceeds via the **comparative method** through looking a **cognates** to reconstruct **proto-forms**. A reconstructed language is a **proto-language**.
- **Proto-Indo-European** (PIE) is the most well-studied proto-language in historical linguistics, instigated by Sir William Jones' in 1786.

Indo-European Family Tree

The discovery of Proto-Indo-European

- Thirty years after Jones' initial remark, a young Danish scholar, named Rasmus Rask, postulated general correspondences between the consonants of Germanic languages and those of Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin.
- He noted, for example, that where the ancient languages showed a [p] sound, the corresponding words in the Germanic languages showed an [f].
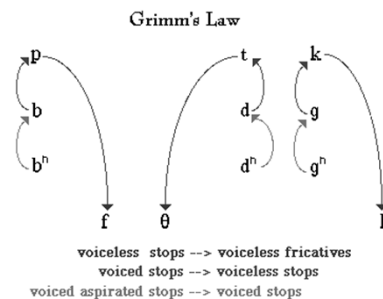
The discovery of Proto-Indo-European

Sanskrit	Latin	English
pitar-	**p**ater	**f**ather
pad-	**p**ed-	**f**oot
——	**p**iscis	**f**ish
pasu	**p**ecu	**f**ee

Grimm's Law

- In 1822, a German scholar, named Jakob Grimm, extended Rask's observations and provided a detailed exposition of the Germanic consonant shift that came to be known as *Grimm's Law*.
- The crucial observation was that where ancient languages showed a voiceless stop [p, t, k], Germanic languages like English and Gothic showed a corresponding fricative [f, θ, h]:

Grimm's Law

voiceless stops --> voiceless fricatives
voiced stops --> voiceless stops
voiced aspirated stops --> voiced stops

Grimm's Law

Sanskrit	Greek	Latin	Gothic	English
pad-	**p**od-	**p**ed-	**f**otus	**f**oot
trayas	**t**reis	**t**res	**th**reis	**th**ree
——	**k**ardia	**k**or	**h**airto	**h**eart

Grimm's Law (note * = proto)

PIE form	Sanskrit	Latin	English
*p	**p**itar-	**p**ater	**f**ather
*t	**t**rayas	**t**rés	**th**ree
*k	**ś**un	**c**anis	**h**ound
*b	No cognate	la**b**ium	li**p**
*d	**d**va	**d**uo	**t**wo
*g	a**j**ras	a**g**er	a**cr**e
*bh	**bh**rātar-	**fr**āter	**br**other
*dh	**dh**ā	**f**ē-ci	**d**o
*gh	va**h**-	ve**h**-ō	wa**g**on

English words not affected by Grimm's Law

- A puzzle: Some words in English were not affected by Grimm's Law:

Latin	English	
ped-	pedestrian	(no p → f)
tenuis	tenuos	(no t → θ)
canalis	canal	(no k → h)

- Why?

The second Germanic consonant shift

- A second consonant shift took place in some Germanic languages (e.g., Modern German), but not in others (e.g., Modern English):

Proto-sound	After vowels	Elsewhere
*p	f	pf
*t	s	ts
*k	x	k
*d	t	t

The second Germanic consonant shift

Modern English	Modern German
o**p**en	o**ff**en
path	**pf**ad
bi**te**	bei**ss**en
to	**z**u (z = ts)
boo**k**	Bu**ch** (ch = x)
come	**k**ommen
ri**de**	rei**t**en
door	**T**ür

So, how do we decide on the proto-form?

- Reconstruction of proto-forms makes use of two main strategies:
  a. **the phonetic plausibility strategy**
  b. **the majority rules strategy**

- When both strategies lead to a tie, the data may point to a more *logical* change than another.

The phonetic plausibility strategy

- The phonetic plausibility strategy requires that any sound changes posited to account for differences between proto-forms and later forms must be phonetically plausible.

Some phonetically plausible sound changes

- Voiceless consonants become voiced between vowels and before voiced consonants.
- Stops become fricatives, particularly between vowels.
- Consonants become palatalized before front vowels.
- Consonants become voiceless at the end of words.
- Oral vowels become nasalized before nasals.
- Fricatives become [h].
- [h] deletes between vowels.

The majority rules strategy

- The majority rules strategy stipulates that if no phonetically plausible change can account for the observed differences, then the sound found in the majority of cognates should be assumed to be the proto-sound.

Romance cognates

French	Italian	Spanish	Portuguese	
cher	caro	caro	caro	"dear"
champ	campo	campo	campo	"field"
chandelle	candela	candela	candeia	"candle"

- The regular sound correspondence for the initial sound is ʃ-k-k-k
- Two hypotheses: (a) k → ʃ, or (b) ʃ → k.
  By phonetic plausibility, (a) wins.
  By majority rules, also (a) wins.
- Then, we do the same for every other sound in the cognates.

Reconstructing Proto-Uto-Aztecan

38. Proto-Uto-Aztecan

	Shoshone	Ute	Northern Paiute	Gloss
a.	[tuhu]	[tuu]	[tuhu]	'black'
b.	[nika]	[nįka]	[nika]	'dance'
c.	[kasa]	[kąsi]	[kasa]	'feather'
d.	[tuku]	[tųku]	[tuku]	'flesh'
e.	[juhu]	[juu]	[juhu]	'grease'
f.	[pida]	[pida]	[pita]	'arm'
g.	[kadi]	[kadi]	[kati]	'sit'
h.	[kwasi]	[kwąsi]	[kwasi]	'tail'
i.	[kwida]	—	[kwita]	'excrement'

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Dialect 1	Dialect 2	Gloss	Earlier Form (to be completed)
[kasa]	[kaθa]	hunt (noun)	*
[si]	[si]	yes	*
[gajo]	[gaʎo]	rooster	*
[dies]	[dieθ]	ten	*
[pojo]	[pojo]	kind of bench	*
[kaje]	[kaʎe]	street	*
[majo]	[majo]	May	*
[kasa]	[kasa]	house	*
[siŋko]	[θiŋko]	five	*
[dos]	[dos]	two	*
[pojo]	[poʎo]	chicken	*

a. Find the correspondence sets—there are fourteen of them, for example p-p.
b. Reconstruct each of the fourteen protosounds, for example *p.
c. What, if any, are the sound changes that took place in the two dialects?
   Dialect 1:
   Dialect 2:
d. Complete the table by filling in the reconstructed earlier form.

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Middle Chinese

35. 🔊 Middle Chinese
For this exercise, we have simplified the Chinese data somewhat.

	Mandarin (Beijing)	Hakka (Huizhou)	Gloss
a.	[tɕin]	[kim]	'zither'
b.	[la]	[lat]	'spicy hot'
c.	[mɔ]	[mɔk]	'lonesome'
d.	[lan]	[lam]	'basket'
e.	[tɕi]	[gip]	'worry'
f.	[lan]	[lan]	'lazy'
g.	[pa]	[pa]	'fear'

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Language contact

Creating language out of thin air:
The case of Pidgins and Creoles

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How about we listen to this English-based speech variety?

- **English-based speech variety**

- How much did you understand?
- Maybe we can try reading. Not sure it'll help, but let's try.

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Emergence of Pidgins and Creoles

- A *pidgin* is a system of communication used by people who do not know each other's languages but need to communicate with one another for trading or other purposes.
- By definition, then, a pidgin is not a natural language. It's a made-up "makeshift" language. Notice, crucially, that it does not have native speakers.

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Pidginization areas

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The lexicons of Pidgins are typically based on some dominant language

- While a pidgin is used by speakers of different languages, it is typically based on the lexicon of what is called a "dominant" language in the area where it is spoken.
- Dominant languages were typically those of the European colonialists, e.g., French, English, Dutch, etc.
- The dominant language is called the **lexifier**, or the **superstratum** language. The native languages of pidgin users are called **substratum** languages.

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Pidgins are linguistically simplified systems

- As you should expect, pidgins are very simple in their linguistic properties.
- Lexicon:
  a. Words from lexifier languages;
  b. Words belong to open classes (nouns, verbs, adjectives);
  c. No or few closed class words (prepositions, conjunctions, determiners, etc.)

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Pidgins are linguistically simplified systems

- Since pidgin vocabulary is pretty limited, meanings are extended (remember semantic broadening?)
- So, *stick* is not only used for sticks, but also for trees, in Solomon Islands Pidgin.
- In Korean Bamboo English, *grass* is used in "gras bilong head" to mean "hair", and in "gras bilong mouth" to mean "moustache".
- Compounds are also frequent, e.g., *dog baby* for "puppy", or
    "*Him cow pig have kittens*?"

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Pidgins are linguistically simplified systems

- Phonology:
  a. Phoneme inventory: Consonants and vowels that are phonetically easy.
  b. Syllable structure: Typically CV or CVC.
  c. Stress: fixed stress location.
- Morphology:
    Pretty much none. No plural, tense or aspect marking. No agreement, either.
- Syntax:
    Variable word order, influenced by the user's native language.
    Sentences are simple and short with no embedding.

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A pidgin example

- Hawaiian Pidgin English (HPE), ignoring pronunciation:
  - You see, I got wood there; plenty men here no job, come steal.
  - Honolulu come; plenty more come; too much pineapple there.
  - No can. I try hard get good ones. Before, plenty duck; now, no more.
  - All 'ight, all 'ight, I go; all same, by'n bye Honolulu all Japanese.

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Kids?

- Suppose you're a child born in a speech community where a pidgin is spoken (either by your parents or by the other kids in the neighborhood).
- The pidgin utterances are your primary linguistic data (PLD).
- But remember that a pidgin is not a natural language.
- So, what language are you going to end up learning on the basis of these PLD?

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Creole: The birth of a language

- As it turns out, kids impose **structure** on the language input they receive, ending up with a language that has prepositions, articles, tense marking, aspect morphology, embedded sentences, etc.
- When a pidgin is acquired as a first language by a generation of children, it becomes a *creole*. A creole thus, unlike a pidgin, is a natural language.

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HPE vs. HCE

a Pidgin:
No, the men, ah–pau [finished] work–they go, make garden. Plant this, ah, cabbage, like that. Plant potato, like that. And then–all that one–all right, sit down. Make lilly bit story.

b Creole:
When work pau [is finished] da guys they stay go make [are going to make] garden for plant potato an' cabbage an' after little while they go sit down talk story ['shoot the breeze'].

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Next class agenda

- Finishing our discussion of pidgins and creoles.

- Revisiting language and thought. Read Chapter 1, pp. 29-34. Also read Crystal's discussion of "Language and thought", pp. 14-15 in the Encyclopedia on reserve.

- Course response forms.

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