

MODERN AND MEDIEVAL LANGUAGES TRIPOS Part II

LINGUISTICS TRIPOS Part II AND LINGUISTICS PRELIMINARY  
EXAMINATION

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Thursday 28 May 2009 9 to 12

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Modern and Medieval Languages Tripos Part II Paper Li.7  
Linguistics Tripos Part II and Linguistics Preliminary Examination Paper 7

HISTORICAL LINGUISTICS

Answer THREE questions, AT LEAST ONE from EACH section.

Do NOT use substantially the same material in more than ONE answer.

*STATIONERY REQUIREMENTS*

*20 Page Answer Book x 1*  
*Rough work pad*

*SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS*

*None*

You may not start to read the questions  
printed on the subsequent pages of this  
question paper until instructed that you  
may do so by the Invigilator

SECTION A

- 1 'Sound change is driven by children.' Discuss.
- 2 'Linguistic reconstruction must take account of sociolinguistics.' Discuss.
- 3 'Probably the most important single source of changes in vocabulary is the creation of new words on analogies which have spread from a few specific words.' Discuss.
- 4 'Grammaticalization calls into question a number of the basic axioms of structural linguistics, including the notion of the discreteness of categories.' Discuss.
- 5 Discuss how TWO OR MORE approaches would account for the cyclic nature of much syntactic change.
- 6 Discuss the interrelationship of metaphor, metonymy and the conventionalization of implicature in bringing about semantic change.

SECTION B

- 7 'Linguistic rules cannot be borrowed.' Discuss.
- 8 'The enterprise of large-scale syntactic reconstruction has been held back by a rigid adherence to a narrow understanding of the Comparative Method.' Discuss.
- 9 'Our typological knowledge is not so great as to outweigh other considerations in postulating past stages of languages.' Discuss.
- 10 'There are never grounds for assuming that an attested practice of writing coincides precisely with a contemporaneous practice of speaking'. Discuss.
- 11 'The shift from one linguistic system to another is generally accompanied by an extensive period of variation.' Discuss.
- 12 'It is questionable whether explanation of linguistic change is possible at all.' Discuss.

END OF PAPER