

## **Historical Linguistics (SS 2007)**

Prof. Dr. Holger Diessel

Veranstaltungsart: Hauptseminar  
Zeit: Fr 12:15 – 13:45  
Raum: SR 601  
Sprechstunde: Mi. 14:00  
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### **Course description**

The course is concerned with the general principles involved in language change, the linguistic and sociolinguistic processes which trigger language change, and the implications of historical linguistics for the theory of language. The first part of the course introduces students to the mechanisms of language change in phonology, morphology, syntax, and semantics. The second part of the course addresses more theoretical issues: the social and psychological mechanisms involved in language change, the relationship between language variation and language change, language contact, grammaticalization, and the invisible hand phenomenon.

### **Prerequisites**

Basic knowledge of phonetics/phonology and morphosyntax (there will be a phonetics/phonology quiz on Nov. 9<sup>th</sup>)

### **Requirements**

Short presentations  
Homework assignments 10%  
Final exam (in class) 40%  
Take home paper 50%

The homework assignments and the take home exam must be typed.

### **Readings**

1. Reading package in front of my office
2. Script can be downloaded from my homepage

## Course schedule

- 20.4. Introduction
- 26.4. The IE language family and the comparative method  
(Trask 1996: chap 7+8)
- 4.5. Phonological change 1: Ease of articulation  
(Trask 1996: chap 3)
- 11.5. Phonological change 2: The strive for symmetry  
(Trask 1996: chap 4)
- 18.5. Lexical and semantic change 1  
(Trask 1994: chap 2)
- 25.5. Lexical and semantic change 2  
**Student presentations**
- 1.6. Morphological change  
(Trask 1996: 5)
- 8.6. Grammaticalization 1  
(Trask 1996: 6) + (Hopper & Traugott 1993: chap 1)
- 16.6. Fällt aus (LOT summer school)
- 22.6. Grammaticalization 2  
(Bybee & Thompson 1997)
- 29.6. Sociolinguistic aspects of language change  
(Trask 1996: chap 10)
- 6.7. Geographical and lexical diffusion  
(Chambers & Trudgill 1998; Aitchison 2001: chap 6)
- 13.7. The invisible hand phenomenon  
(Keller 1994: 72-95)
- 14.7. **Final exam**

## **Historical Linguistics - Readings**

Aitchison, Jean. 2001. *Language Change. Progress or decay?* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chap 6

Bybee, Joan and Sandra Thompson. 1997. Three frequency effects in syntax. *Berkeley Linguistics Society* 23: 327-388.

Cambers, J.K. & Trudgill, P.. 1998. *Dialectology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Pages 3-12, 89-103, 166-175

Hopper, P & E.C. Traugott. 1993. *Grammaticalization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Pages 1-17.

Keller, R. 1994. *Sprachwandel. Von der unsichtbaren Hand*. Tuebingen: Francke, 71-95.

Trask, R.L. 1996. *Historical Linguistics*. London: Arnold.

## **Other readings**

McMahon, April M.S. 1994. *Understanding Language Change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hock, Hans Heinrich. 1991. *Principles of Historical Linguistics*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Campbell, Lyle. 1998. *Historical Linguistics. An Introduction*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Heine, Bernd, Ulrike Claudi, and Friederike Hünemeyer. 1991. *Grammaticalization. A Conceptual Framework*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Heine, Bernd and Tania Kuteva. 2002. *World Lexicon of Grammaticalization*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bybee, Joan, Revere Perkins, and William Pagliuca. 1994. *The Evolution of Grammar. Tense, Aspect, and Modality in the Languages of the World*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Diessel, Holger. 1999. *Demonstratives. Form, Function, and Grammaticalization*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.