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Fall 9-1-2000

LING 474.01: Language History, Variety, and Change

Deirdre Black

The University Of Montana

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Ling 474:01 Language History, Variety, and Change
Fall 2000
DHC 117, MWF 11-12

Deirdre Black
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Hrs: 10-11 MWF; by appt
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Required Text: Hock, Hans Heinrich and Brian D. Joseph. 1996. *Language History, Language Change, and Language Relationship*. Walter de Gruyter & Co.

Reserve Room Readings: numerous texts tba

Films: *In Search of the First Language*
Selections from *The Story of English*
Selections from the *Nova Series*
(among others that may be available)

Requirements and Grading System

All students are required to complete five written assignments (5 x 10%), a midterm (25%), and a final (25%). In addition, graduate students must complete a small research project and provide a short presentation of that research to the class.

Description

This class provides a descriptive and theoretical overview on the origins of language, language development, and dialect variation. While the text selected is aimed at the non-specialist, those students with a background in linguistics will find the topics relevant, challenging, and nicely detailed. Specific topics include: language relationship, with a particular emphasis on Indo-European; the history of writing systems; changes in lexicon and grammatical structure; variety and change of sign languages; dialect variation, with a particular emphasis on American English; language contact; and, language reconstruction.

Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students will:

1. be familiar with the grammatical components of natural language and the tendency for grammatical features to vary over space and through time;
2. have explored some of the causes of language variation and change, as well as language birth and death;
3. have examined certain varieties of American English; and,
4. understand the inevitability of language variation and change.

Course Outline

<u>Weeks 1-2</u>	<i>Introductory: introduction, Indo-European, and writing</i>
<u>Weeks 3-5</u>	<i>Change in Structure: phonology, morphology, and syntax</i>
<u>Week 6</u>	<i>Change in the Lexicon: semantics, borrowing, and coinage</i>
<u>Week 7</u>	<i>Review and Midterm Exam</i>
<u>Weeks 8-10</u>	<i>Language and Dialect</i>
<u>Weeks 11-13</u>	<i>Languages in Contact</i>
<u>Weeks 14-15</u>	<i>Language Relationship Review</i>
<u>Week 16</u>	<i>Final Exam on Monday December 18 from 8:00-10:00am</i>

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Name: _____

Fall 1999
Midterm