

# THE XIX-TH CENTURY LINGUISTICS OVERVIEW /PART ONE/

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# THE FIRST AKNOWLEDGED SCIENTIFIC LINGUISTIC RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

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Comparative linguistics is a branch of *historical linguistics* that is concerned with comparing languages to establish their historical relatedness.

# THE FIRST AKNOWLEDGED SCIENTIFIC LINGUISTIC RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

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The chief goal of the nineteenth-century historical and comparative linguists was to develop and elucidate the genetic relationships that exist among the world's languages.

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They aimed to establish the major language families of the world and to define principles for the classification of languages.

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They based their theories on observations of regular sound correspondences among certain languages.

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They proposed that languages displaying systematic similarities and differences must have descended from a common source language—that is, were genetically related.

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Sir William Jones While residing in India added Sanskrit to his languages studies and observed that Sanskrit bore to Greek and Latin “a stronger affinity . . . than could possibly have been produced by accident.”

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Jones suggested that these three languages had “sprung from a common source” and that probably Germanic and Celtic had the same origin.



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Following up on Jones's research, the German linguist Franz Bopp pointed out relationships among Sanskrit, Latin, Greek, Persian, and Germanic.

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At the same time, a young Danish scholar named **Rasmus Rask** corroborated these results, and brought Lithuanian and Armenian into the relationship as well.

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Rask was the first scholar to describe formally  
the regularity of certain phonological  
differences of *related languages*.

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Rask's work inspired the German linguist Jakob Grimm (of fairy-tale fame), who published a four-volume treatise (1819–1822) that specified the regular sound correspondences among Sanskrit, Greek, Latin, and the Germanic languages.

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Not only did the similarities intrigue Grimm, but also the systematic nature of the differences.

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Where Latin has a [p], English often has an [f];  
where Latin has a [t], English often has a [θ];  
where Latin has a [k], English often has  
an [h].

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Grimm posited a far earlier language (which we now refer to as Indo- European) from which all these languages evolved.

# THE FIRST AKNOWLEDGED SCIENTIFIC LINGUISTIC RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

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Grimm's major discovery was that certain rules of sound change that applied to the Germanic family of languages, including the ancestors of English, did not apply to Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin.



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He explained the sound correspondences by means of rules of phonological change (which historical linguists called sound shift, or sound change).

## The First Consonant Shift (Grimm's Law, PG Consonant Shift)

|            |                       |   |                      |   |
|------------|-----------------------|---|----------------------|---|
| I<br>act   | PIE <b>p</b>          | > | PG <b>f</b>          | Lat. <b>p</b> es, <b>p</b> edis – Goth. <b>f</b> otus, Rus. пять – OE <b>f</b> if         |
|            | <b>t</b>              | > | <b>θ</b>             | Lat. <b>t</b> res – Goth. <b>þ</b> reip, Rus. <b>т</b> и – OE <b>þ</b> u                  |
|            | <b>k</b>              | > | <b>x</b>             | Lat. <b>c</b> ord – Goth. <b>h</b> airto, Lat. nox, noctis – Goth. <b>n</b> a <b>h</b> ts |
|            | <b>k<sup>w</sup></b>  | > | <b>x<sup>w</sup></b> | Lat. a <b>q</b> ua – Goth. a <b>h</b> wa  |
| II<br>act  | <b>b</b>              | > | <b>p</b>             | Rus. <b>б</b> олото – OE <b>p</b> ōl, Rus. сла <b>б</b> ый – OE slæ <b>p</b> an           |
|            | <b>d</b>              | > | <b>t</b>             | Lat. <b>d</b> ecem – Goth. <b>t</b> aihun, Lat. e <b>d</b> ere – Goth. e <b>t</b> an      |
|            | <b>g</b>              | > | <b>k</b>             | Lat. e <b>g</b> o – Goth. i <b>k</b> , Lat. a <b>g</b> er – OE æ <b>c</b> er              |
|            | <b>g<sup>w</sup></b>  | > | <b>k<sup>w</sup></b> | PIE * <b>g</b> vivo – Goth. <b>q</b> uis, OE <b>c</b> wic                                 |
| III<br>act | <b>b<sup>h</sup></b>  | > | <b>b</b>             | Skr. <b>b</b> hrāta – Goth. <b>b</b> rōpar  |
|            | <b>d<sup>h</sup></b>  | > | <b>d</b>             | Skr. mād <b>h</b> u – OE. me <b>d</b> u   |
|            | <b>g<sup>h</sup></b>  | > | <b>g</b>             | PIE * <b>g</b> hostis – Goth. <b>g</b> asts   |
|            | <b>g<sup>wh</sup></b> | > | <b>g<sup>w</sup></b> | PIE * <b>s</b> en <b>g</b> hw – Goth. si <b>g</b> gwan                                    |

# COGNATES

['KɒGNɛɪTS]

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Cognates are words in related languages that developed from the same ancestral root, such as English 'horn' and Latin 'cornū'.

# COGNATES

['KɒGNɛɪTS]

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Cognates often, but not always, have the same meaning in the different languages. From cognates we can observe sound correspondences and from them deduce sound changes.

# COGNATES

## ['KOGNEITS]

| Indo-European | Sanskrit   | Latin  | English |
|---------------|------------|--------|---------|
| *p            | p          | p      | f       |
|               | pitar-     | pater  | father  |
|               | pad-       | ped-   | foot    |
|               | No cognate | piscis | fish    |
|               | pasua      | pecu   | fee     |

# COGNATES

['KOGNEITS]

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Sanskrit underwent the fewest consonant changes (has more sounds in common with Indo-European), Latin somewhat more, and Germanic (under Grimm's Law) underwent almost a complete restructuring.

# COGNATES

## ['KOGNEITS]

| Indo-European | Sanskrit     | Latin    | English   |
|---------------|--------------|----------|-----------|
| *p            | p pitar-     | p pater  | f father  |
| *t            | t trayas     | t trēs   | θ three   |
| *k            | ś śun        | k canis  | h hound   |
| *b            | b No cognate | b labium | p lip     |
| *d            | d dva-       | d duo    | t two     |
| *g            | j ajras      | g ager   | k acre    |
| *bh           | bh bhrātar-  | f frāter | b brother |
| *dh           | dh dhā       | f fē-ci  | d do      |
| *gh           | h vah-       | h veh-ō  | g wagon   |

# COGNATES

['KOGNEɪTS]

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Grimm noted that there were exceptions to the regular correspondences he observed. e stated: “The sound shift is a general tendency; it is not followed in every case.”



# COGNATES

['KOGNEɪTS]

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Several decades later, in 1875, Karl Verner explained some of the exceptions to Grimm's Law. He formulated Verner's Law to show why Indo-European p, t, and k failed to correspond to f, θ, and x in certain cases:

# COGNATES

['KOGNEɪTS]

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Verner's Law:

When the preceding vowel was unstressed f, θ, and x underwent a further change to b, d, and g.

# COGNATES

## ['KOGNEITS]

| PrePG  | *p <sup>h</sup> |                 | *t <sup>h</sup> |                 | *k <sup>h</sup> |                 | *k <sup>wh</sup> |                  | *s |    |
|--------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|----|----|
| Verner | *p <sup>h</sup> | *b <sup>h</sup> | *t <sup>h</sup> | *d <sup>h</sup> | *k <sup>h</sup> | *g <sup>h</sup> | *k <sup>wh</sup> | *g <sup>wh</sup> | *s | *z |
| Grimm  | *ϕ              | *β              | *θ              | *ð              | *x              | *ɣ              | *x <sup>w</sup>  | *ɣ <sup>w</sup>  |    |    |

# THE NEO-GRAMMARIAN HYPOTHESIS OF SOUND SHIFTS

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Encouraged by the regularity of sound change, a group of young nineteenth-century linguists proposed the Neo-Grammarian hypothesis, which says that sound shifts are not merely tendencies (as Grimm claimed), but apply in all words that meet their environment.

# THE NEO-GRAMMARIAN HYPOTHESIS OF SOUND SHIFTS

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If exceptions were nevertheless observed, it was trusted that further laws would be discovered to explain them, just as Verner's Law explained the exceptions to Grimm's Law.

# Leskin Reduction of acuted syllables Law

| Акутированные слоги |              |               | Неаккутированные слоги |              |               |
|---------------------|--------------|---------------|------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| Падеж               | Полная форма | Краткая форма | Падеж                  | Полная форма | Краткая форма |
| мужской род         |              |               |                        |              |               |
| Тв. ед.             | gerúoju      | gerù          | Р. ед.                 | gẽrojo       | gẽro          |
| И. мн.              | geriéji      | gerì          | В. ед.                 | gẽrajì       | gẽra          |
| В. мн.              | gerúosius    | gerùs         | Р. мн.                 | gerũju       | gerũ          |
| И.-В. дв.           | gerúoju      | gerù          | Тв. мн.                | geraĩsiais   | geraĩs        |
| женский род         |              |               |                        |              |               |
| И. ед.              | geróji       | gerà          | Р. ед.                 | gerõsios     | gerõs         |
| Тв. ед.             | gerája       | gerà          | В. ед.                 | gẽraja       | gẽra          |
| В. мн.              | gerásias     | geràs         | И. мн.                 | gẽrosios     | gẽros         |
| И.-В. дв.           | geriéji      | gerì          | Р. мн.                 | gerũju       | gerũ          |

# Fortunatov – de Saussure Accent Shift Law

|              | 1 парадигма |        | 2 парадигма |        | 3 парадигма |         | 4 парадигма |        |
|--------------|-------------|--------|-------------|--------|-------------|---------|-------------|--------|
|              | ед. ч.      | мн. ч. | ед. ч.      | мн. ч. | ед. ч.      | мн. ч.  | ед. ч.      | мн. ч. |
| Именительный | výras       | výrai  | rātas       | rātai  | lāngas      | langaĩ  | nāmas       | namaĩ  |
| Родительный  | výro        | výru   | rāto        | rātu   | lāngo       | langũ   | nāmo        | namũ   |
| Дательный    | výrui       | výrams | rātui       | rātam  | lāngui      | langáms | nāmui       | namáms |
| Винительный  | výra        | výrus  | rāta        | ratùs  | lānga       | lāngus  | nāma        | namùs  |
| Творительный | výru        | výrais | ratù        | rātais | lāngu       | langaĩs | namù        | namaĩs |
| Мест         | výre        | výruo  | ratè        | rātuos | langè       | langu   | namè        | namu   |

"WHEN AGREEMENT IS FOUND IN WORDS IN TWO  
LANGUAGES, AND SO FREQUENTLY THAT RULES  
MAY BE DRAWN UP FOR THE SHIFT IN LETTERS  
FROM ONE TO THE OTHER, THEN THERE IS A  
FUNDAMENTAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN  
THE TWO LANGUAGES.

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RASMUS RASK  
(1787–1832)



# THE FIVE KEY STAGES OF COMPARATIVE LINGUISTICS METHODOLOGY

# COMPARATIVE LINGUISTICS IS A SOURCE OF SUCH LINGUISTIC RESEARCH SUBFIELDS AS

| Genetic linguistics         | Contrastive Linguistics              | Areal Linguistics    | Linguistic Typology                        | Linguistic Characterology |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------|--|---------------------------|
| Glottochronology            | Quantitative comparative linguistics | Linguistic Geography | Phonological, Morphological Syntactic etc. |                           |
| Etymology<br>[.etɪ'mɔlədʒɪ] | Dialectology<br>[.daɪələk'tɔlədʒɪ]   |                      |  |                           |

# COMPARATIVE METHOD OF LINGUISTIC RESEARCH

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The Comparative Method as such is not, in fact, historical; it provides evidence of linguistic relationships to which we may give a historical interpretation. ...

# COMPARATIVE LINGUISTICS IS A SOURCE OF SUCH LINGUISTIC RESEARCH SUBFIELDS AS

| Language Family              | Languages union   |
|------------------------------|---|
| Based on Genetic Family Ties | Based on Geographic and other influences and interconnections |

# COMPARATIVE LINGUISTICS IS A SOURCE OF SUCH LINGUISTIC RESEARCH SUBFIELDS AS

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**Contrastive linguistics** is a practice-oriented linguistic approach that seeks to describe the differences and similarities between a pair of languages (hence it is occasionally called "*differential linguistics*").

# COMPARATIVE LINGUISTICS IS A SOURCE OF SUCH LINGUISTIC RESEARCH SUBFIELDS AS

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**Glottochronology** [ˌglɒtəʊkrəˈnɒlədʒɪ] (from Attic Greek γλῶττα "tongue, language" and χρόνος "time") is the part of **lexicostatistics** dealing with the chronological relationship between languages.

# COMPARATIVE LINGUISTICS IS A SOURCE OF A FEW LINGUISTIC RESEARCH SUBFIELDS

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The idea of **Glottochronology** was developed by Morris Swadesh under two assumptions: that there does, indeed, exist a relatively stable "basic vocabulary" (referred to as "*Swadesh lists*") in all languages of the world; and that any replacements happen in a way analogous to radioactive decay, in constant percentages per time elapsed.

# THE KEY FUNCTIONS OF HUMAN LANGUAGE DISCUSSION

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One of the most famous and influential opponents of Saussurean standpoint on linguistic system is **Wilhelm von Humboldt /1767-1835/**.