

Linguistic Typology and **Language Universals**

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English - German

Case, gender:

English - German

Case, gender:

	German			English
Subject	der Mann	die Frau	das Haus	the house
Direct object	dem Mann	die Frau	das Hause	the house
Indirect object	den Mann	der Frau	dem Haus	the house
Genitive	des Mannes	der Frau	des Hauses	of the house

English - German

Word order:

- (1) Die Frau sah den Mann.
- (2) Den Mann sah die Frau.
- (3) The woman (she) saw the man (him).
- (4) *The man (him) saw the woman (she).

English - German

Subjunctive:

- (1) Wenn er **käme** ...
- (2) If he **came** ...

English - German

Adverbs:

- (1) Er ging **vorsichtig** die Treppe hinunter.
- (2) He **careful-ly** walked down the stairs.

English - German

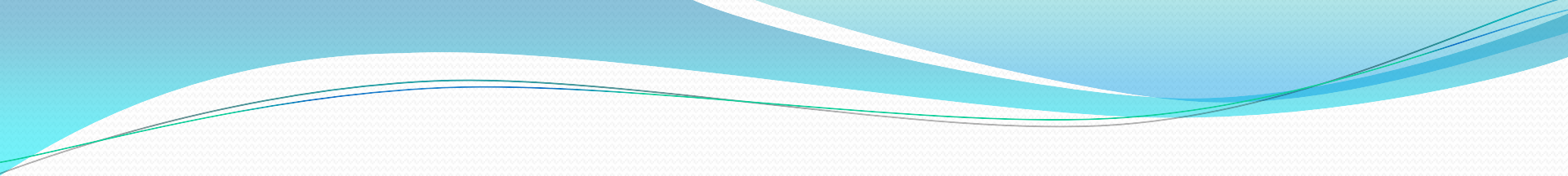
Questions:

- (1) **Gehst** du nach Hause?
- (2) **Are** you **going** home?

English - German

Subordinate clauses:

- (1) Er **wird** dich **anrufen**, wenn er deine Mail **bekommen hat**.
- (2) He **will call** you if he **has gotten** your email.



Grammatical features that English and German
have in common

English - German

Word order:

(1) auf dem Tisch

(2) ein Buch

(3) on the table

(4) a book

English - German

Analytic verb forms:

(1) hat geschrieben

(2) wird schreiben

(3) will write

(4) has written

English - German

Regular and irregular verb forms:

lachen-lachte-gelacht

laugh-laughed-laughed

schreiben-schrieb-geschrieben

write-wrote-written

English - German

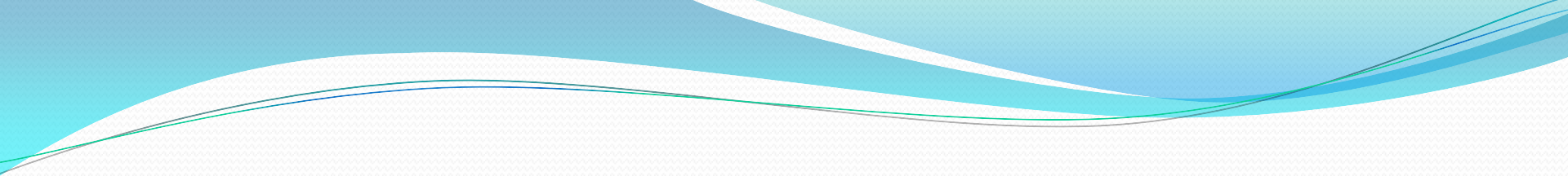
Regular and irregular verb forms:

lachen-lachte-gelacht

laugh-laughed-laughed

schreiben-schrieb-geschrieben

write-wrote-written



Grammatical features all/most languages
have in common

Universals

- All languages have vowels and consonants
- All languages have nouns and verbs
- All languages have demonstratives

Universals

- Some languages indicate grammatical relations by word order, others indicate grammatical relations by morphological means like case suffixes.
- Some languages place all nominal modifiers before the head noun, others place all nominal modifiers after the head noun.

Universals

- | | |
|--|------|
| (1) The man who slept... | SUBJ |
| (2) The man who(m) I met... | OBJ |
| (3) The man who I talked about... | OBL |
| (4) The man whose friend disappeared ... | GEN |

Universals

The Noun Phrase Accessibility Hierarchy

SUBJ > OBJ > OBL > GEN

If a language allows for the formation of a relative clause at a certain point on the hierarchy, it also allows for the formation of all relative clauses higher up on the hierarchy, while relative clauses lower on the hierarchy may not be permissible. [Keenan and Comrie 1977]

Topics

- Introduction to the field of linguistic typology
- Functional-cognitive explanations for linguistic structure:
Why is language the way it is?
- The structure of English from a cross-linguistic point of view

Syllabus

- Language families, sampling, types of universals
- Nominal and verbal categories
- Morphological marking
- Grammatical relations
- Word order
- Complex sentences
- Relative clauses
- Markedness

Readings

- Comrie, Bernard. 1989. *Language Typology and Linguistic Universals*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. (second edition)
- Croft, William. 1990/2003. *Typology and Universals*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (first edition)
- Diessel, Holger. 2006. Demonstratives, joint attention, and the emergence of grammar. *Cognitive Linguistics* 17: 463-489.
- Givón, Talmy. 1984/1990. *Syntax. A functional-typological Introduction*. Vols. 1-2. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Shopen, Timothy (ed.) 2007. *Language Typology and Syntactic Description*. Vols. 1-3. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Whaley, Lindsay J. 1997. *Introduction to Typology. The Unity and Diversity of Languages*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Requirements

- Term paper
- Oral presentations
- Three assignments

Reference grammars

(1) Lobala (Niger-Congo: Zaire)

Moto me t-a-iká mo-phé
man DEM NEG-3s-PST C1-give

ná baphalnága ná ntóma
and money and food

‘The man didn’t give him either money or food.’

(2) Hixkaryana (Carib: Brazil)

Apaytara y-ari-hira nex-e-ye wekoo
chicken 3S/3S-take-NEG be-DPST hawk

‘The hawk didn’t take the chicken.’