

Language Universals and Language Typology

Veranstaltungsart: MA + Lehramt
Zeit: Fr 10:15 – 11:45
Raum: SR 601

Human languages, especially those spoken by members of unfamiliar and distant cultures, appear on the surface to be very different from one another. But closer examination reveals that languages differ in systematic ways and that they can often be divided into a relatively small number of basic types. In this course we will identify and study some of these basic patterns and consider the English language from a cross-linguistic point of view. Further, we will explore possible reasons for the existence of language types and linguistic universals, seeking explanations where possible in the communicative function of language as well as in the historical evolution of languages.

Prerequisite

Basic knowledge of grammatical categories

Requirements

Term paper
Assignments
Short report

Readings

Whaley, Lindsay J. 1997. *Introduction to Typology. The Unity and Diversity of Languages*. Thousands Oaks: Sage.
Comrie, Bernard. 1989. *Language Typology and Linguistic Universals*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. (second edition)
Croft, William. 1990. *Typology and Universals*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (first edition)

Course Schedule: Linguistic Typology

20.4. Introduction

What is typology?

Reference grammars and questionnaires

27.4. Basic notions of typological research

Whaley 1997: 1-3

Short survey of the languages of the world

Types of universals

4.5. Nominal categories

Whaley 1997: 4

Case, number, gender

11.5. Verbal categories

Whaley 1997: 12-13

Tense, aspect, mood

18.5. Fällt aus

25.5. Morphological typology

Whaley 1997: 8

Morphological language types

Head-marking and dependent marking

-> **Presentation of Assignment 1: nominal/verbal categories**

1.6. Grammatical relations 1

Whaley 1997: 9

The notion of subject, the case hierarchy

8.6. Grammatical relations 2

Dixon 1994: 1-22

Ergativity, split ergativity, syntactic ergativity

15.6. Valency

Whaley 1997: 11

Passives, middles, causatives

-> **Presentation of Assignment 2: grammatical relations**

22.6. Word order 1

Whaley 1997: 5

Basic word orders

29.6. Word order correlations

Whaley 1997: 6

Word order correlations

6.7. Complex sentences

Whaley 1997: 15

Finiteness, clause order

-> **Presentation of Assignment 3: valency/word order**

13.7. Relative clauses

Comrie 1989: 7

Types of relative clauses

The noun phrase accessibility hierarchy

20.7. Markedness

Croft 1990: 4

Markedness patterns and explanations