

# Typology - Linguistics 405, Fall 2015

*(subject to revision)*

Instructor	Dr. Dorothea Hoffmann	<a href="mailto:dhoffma1@neiu.edu">dhoffma1@neiu.edu</a>
Meeting	Wednesday 4:15-6:55 pm	LWH 3109
Office Hours	Wednesday 2:00-4:00 pm	LWH 2022
Phone Extension		5835

## 1 Course Description

Typology in linguistics is the study of the similarities and differences in human languages. This course examines the major grammatical categories and constructions found in the world's languages. Using a cross-linguistic comparison we seek to understand absolute linguistic universals (things all languages have), universal tendencies (things that most languages share), and implicational universals (if a language has X, then it has Y). This type of study allows us to better understand the human mind and how it processes language, what is possible and impossible in human language, and how and if languages are genetically related.

3.000 Credit Hours

## 2 Course Objectives

By the end of each course, students will have the requisite knowledge and skills to:

- explain the basic concepts, principles and terminology of typology
- apply those concepts to critical examination and analysis of data
- present hypotheses that account for the data and that make clear predictions
- critically read primary literature in the field of typology
- model the primary literature in their own writing in terms of style and organization, proper citation of references, modes of data collection,
- interpret data with sharply reasoned and clearly presented written argumentation
- access and use technology commonly used in the field of typology such as software and online databases for data collection and analysis.

Furthermore, students will be familiar with gathering data to describe languages with an eye toward linguistic features like subject, object, verb, tense, aspect, gender, case, etc. and making descriptive generalizations about Language. Each student will also investigate a particular language as part of a class project to get practice in doing fieldwork in language description. Further, based on readings and the class project, we also look at lots of data in an effort to make accurate and meaningful generalizations about languages based on samples.

At the end of the course, students will have a comprehensive understanding of crosslinguistic variation, various theoretical approaches, and contemporary issues and debates within the field of linguistic typology, including Functional approaches and Universal Grammar.

## 3 Readings

### 3.1 Textbook

Whaley, Lindsay 1997. *Introduction to Typology: The Unity and Diversity of Language*. Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks. 0-8039-5963-X

### 3.2 Additional Readings

*All additional readings will be made available on D2L.*

- Aikhenvald, A. (2006). Serial verbs constructions in a typological perspective. In R. M. W. Dixon & A. Aikhenvald (Eds.), *Serial verb constructions: A cross-linguistic typology*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1-68
- Baker, Mark. 2010. Formal generative typology. In *The Oxford handbook of linguistic analysis*, edited by Bernd Heine and Heiko Narrog, 285-312. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bickel, B.. 2007. Typology in the 21st century: major current developments. *Linguistic Typology* 11. 239-251.
- Bresnan, Joan. 2007. A few lessons from typology. *Linguistic Typology* no. 11 (1):297-306.
- Dryer, M. S. 1989. Large linguistic areas and language sampling. *Studies in Language* 13, 257-292.
- Dryer, Matthew S. 2006. Descriptive theories, explanatory theories, and basic linguistic theory. In *Catching Language: The standing challenge of grammar writing*, edited by Felix K. Ameka, Alan Charles Dench & Nicholas Evans, Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 207-243
- Evans N and Levinson SC. 2009. The myth of language universals: Language diversity and its importance for cognitive science. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 32: 429-448
- Greenberg, J. H. 1966. Some universals of grammar with particular reference to the order of meaningful elements. In J. H. Greenberg (ed.), *Universals of language*, 2nd edn. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press [1st edn 1963]. Reprinted in Denning, Keith & Suzanne Kemmer (eds), *On language. Selected writings of Joseph Greenberg*, Stanford: UP, 40-70.
- Mithun, M. 1992. Is basic word order universal? In Doris Payne, ed., *Pragmatics of word order flexibility*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 15-61
- Nichols, J. 1986. Head-marking and dependent-marking grammar. *Language* 62. 56-119.
- Nichols, J. 2007. What, if anything, is typology? *Linguistic Typology* 11, 231-238
- Polinsky, M. & R. Klünder. 2007. Linguistic typology and theory construction: common challenges ahead. *Linguistic Typology* 11, 273-283
- Song, Jae Jung. 2001. Case marking [chapter 3]. *Linguistic Typology: morphology and syntax*. Harlow, UK: Longman

### 3.3 Online Resources

- Association for Linguistic Typology* Resources page of the: Retrieved on 09/03/2014 from <http://www.linguistic-typology.org/resources.html>
- Bickel, B., & Nichols, J. 2001. *AUTOTYP: International network of typological linguistic databases*: Retrieved on 09/03/2014 from <http://www.spw.uzh.ch/autotyp>
- Distribution of languages:  
<http://www.scmp.com/infographics/article/1810040/infographic-world-languages>

Dryer, M. S. & Haspelmath, M. (eds.). (2013). *The World Atlas of Language Structures Online*. Leipzig: Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology. Retrieved on 08/29/2014, from <http://wals.info>

*Langscape*: Interactive online language map: <http://langscape.umd.edu/>

Michaelis, S. M., Maurer, P., Haspelmath, M., & Huber, M. (eds.). (2013). *Atlas of Pidgin and Creole Language Structures Online*. Leipzig: Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology. Retrieved on 08/29/2014, from <http://apics-online.info>

*Syntactic Structures of the World's Languages [SSWL]*: Retrieved on 09/03/2014 from <http://sswl.railsplayground.net/>

*The Universals Archive*: Retrieved on 09/03/2014 from <http://typo.uni-konstanz.de/archive/>

*N.B.:* The reading material should be completed by the date listed on the syllabus and questions about the reading may appear on the quizzes. Reading the material by the time it is covered in class massively increases your ability to absorb the material in class lectures and discussions.

## 4 Grading

90-100% = A 80-89% = B 70-79% = C 60-69% = D 0-59% = F

## 5 Coursework and Evaluation

1. **Quizzes:** (25%). There will be 6 quizzes of 5 points each (1 quiz is dropped) covering reading, lectures and class discussions up to the date of the quiz. The quizzes are short and unannounced and are meant to motivate you to keep up with the reading and to review class lectures and discussions.
2. **Problem Sets and Homework:** (40%) There are 4 homework problems worth 10 points each. Working in groups on these assignments is encouraged. However, you are required to write up your answers *in your own words*. The homeworks may either considered to be minipapers, or follow a set of analytic questions with clear instructions on how to answer them. The minipapers will be organized with an abstract that defines the problem and includes a synopsis of your solution. The main part of the paper will include elaboration of the problem, presentation of any relevant data, and an explicit discussion of your proposed solution. Be sure to clearly state any assumptions you make and to use in-text citations for any sources for data, definitions and theoretical concepts; a full bibliography will appear at the end of your work. Number all data that you present, and any non-English data must be presented in standard 3-line format (see below in Appendix A for the format).
3. **Collective Typology Project:** (25%) As a class, we will investigate crosslinguistic patterns for a variety of linguistic phenomenon. We will focus on the placement of heads, complements and adjuncts, but other noteworthy phenomenon of the languages as well. The project comprises two parts, 15 points each. The first part of the research calls for each student to collect data from a native speaker of some language. Generalizations of your data will be entered into a spreadsheet that allows for convenient crosslinguistic comparison. In the 2nd part of the project you study the class's collected data and look for tendencies, simple and implicational, across languages. Your discussion of the collective data should be 7-10 pages long and you need to work on it completely **on your own**. Additionally, you will prepare a very brief (3-5 min) presentation of highlights from your paper to present in the final week of classes as a basis for discussion. For more details, see Appendix A below.

4. **Reading Presentation and Participation:** (10%) Students are expected to actively participate in class discussions. Additionally, all students will lead a class discussion on an assigned reading individually or in groups of two. Please prepare a 1- or 2-page handout for these discussions highlighting the major points of the reading in bulletpoints, and providing your own evaluation of the reading in a final paragraph.
5. Finally, please take note of any changes in the syllabus, deadlines and announcements by paying attention in class and **checking your NEIU-email regularly!**

## 6 Due Dates

Homework will be posted on D2L on Thursdays prior to the week the assignment is due. All assignments should be handed in via email as a **pdf file to dhoffma1@neiu.edu AND in print by 4:15 pm** on the date indicated (a Wednesday). Extensions need to be approved prior to the deadline by the instructor. If an assignment is handed in after the deadline (yes, this includes ten minutes after the deadline), 5% of the grade will be deducted for each additional day that the assignment is late. I understand that unexpected things can come up, so the late-work policy for our course is outlined below.

**Serious Emergencies:** For serious emergencies, your instructor will decide whether your late work may be accepted for full or reduced credit. Serious emergencies include things like serious illness, accidents, natural disasters, and university server outages. E-mail your instructor the information about your emergency and request approval to make up the assignment, lab, quiz, or exam. If you receive approval, make up the work according to the plan set by you and your instructor.

**All Other Unexcused Late Work:** Unexcused late work includes course work that is turned in late because of things like job-related, technical, or other personal issues. Your instructor will decide whether your late work may be accepted.

**Submission of Assignments:** Students are expected to complete all assignments. Failure to submit any assignment will result in a zero on that assignment and an additional deduction of 10 points per missing assignment. If homework solutions are shared with the class, your instructor reserves the right to decline to accept late work after the sharing of the solutions, or to require that an alternative assignment be completed, if one is available. Only one unexcused, non-emergency late submission will be allowed per student per course.

Homework # 1	week 4	<b>Wed, Sep 16 2015 / Wed, Oct 7th 2015</b>
Homework # 2	week 8	<b>Wed, Oct 14 2015</b>
Homework # 3	week 11	<b>Wed, Nov 4 2015</b>
Homework # 4	week 13	<b>Wed, Nov 18 2015</b>
Presenting preliminary data	week 4-8	<b>Wed, Sep 16 - Wed, Oct 14 2015</b>
Project data due	week 9	<b>Wed, Oct 21 2015</b>
Collective project due	week 15	<b>Wed, Dec 2 2015</b>

## 7 Course Outline

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments due
week 1, Aug 26	Introduction and History	Whaley, Intro, ch 1, Nichols (2007)	
week 2, Sep 2	Introduction and History	Whaley ch 2, Bickel (2007), Polinsky & Klender (2007)	
week 3, Sep 9	Methods and Categorization	Whaley ch 3 + 4, Dryer (1989)	
week 4, Sep 16	Word Order	Whaley ch 5 + 6, Greenberg (1966)	Homework # 1; bring preliminary data
week 5, Sep 23	Word order continued and Morphemes	Whaley ch 7, Mithun (1992)	bring preliminary data
week 6, Sep 30	Morphological Typology	Whaley ch 8, Nichols (1986)	bring preliminary data
week 7, Oct 7	Case and Agreement	Whaley ch 9, (Song (2001))	redo Homework # 1; bring preliminary data
week 8, Oct 14	Animacy, Definiteness and Gender	Whaley ch 10	Homework # 2; bring preliminary data
week 9, Oct 21	Valence	Whaley ch 11	project data due
week 10, Oct 28	Tense and Aspect and Typological Theory	Whaley ch 12, (optional: Bresnan (2007))	
week 11, Nov 4	Mood and Negation and Typological Theory	Whaley ch 13, Evans & Levinson (2009)	Homework # 3
week 12, Nov 11	Morphosyntax of Speech Acts and Typological Theory	Whaley ch 14, (optional: Baker (2010))	<b>note:</b> directly following class: Colloquium from 6:30 to 7:30 pm
week 13, Nov 18	Subordination and Typological Theory	Whaley ch 15, (optional: Dryer (2006))	Homework # 4
week 14, Nov 25	Coordination and Subordination, Serial Verbs	Whaley ch 16, (optional: Aikhenvald (2006))	
week 15, Dec 2	What we learned and Presentations		collective project presentation and paper due

## 8 Appendix: Collective typology project.

Each student will do fieldwork with an informant to find certain descriptive facts about constituent order in a language you don't know. Then we will pool your results and look for generalizations based on the data you collectively gather from the 20-ish languages in our sample.

We'll try to get as many non-Indo-European languages as possible. So if you have potential informants from, say, German and Potawatomi, choose Potawatomi. Your descriptions should be based on the data you elicit from your informant and should not be based on information available in descriptive grammars or other published sources.

## 8.1 Part 1

Start by doing some research on basic information about the language: what language family does it belong to? which dialect of the language does your informant speak? where is the language spoken? how many speakers of the language are there? Cite your sources!

Also tell me about your informant: age, sex, education, bilingual (or more) status, how fluent in English and their native language? Can they read/write it? How often do they use the language? In what contexts? When did they learn English?

For each constituent-ordering phenomenon, gather at least three phrases/sentences to back up your claim. For example, if you want to know whether the object precedes or follows the verb, provide your informant with at least 3 simple transitive sentences to translate.

When you present your generalization, state the generalization and then provide one of the sentences that you collected as an illustration. You should also include negative data. If your informant translates 3 sentences as OV, you should then check with your informant that VO is ungrammatical. Provide this data as well in your presentation.

Recall from syntax that heads of phrases often generate complements. In sentence (1) *gave* is the head of the verb phrase and its complement is *his Queen Mab speech*.

- (1) Mercutio gave his Queen Mab speech

In English, it appears that the verbal head precedes its object. Yet this example doesn't prove that the verb must come first. To confirm that it must you have to construct the illicit order, as in (2).

- (2) \*Mercutio his Queen Mab speech gave

A native speaker of English knows (2) is ungrammatical. If you didn't know English you would ask the judgment of a native speaker to tell you it's ungrammatical. Getting negative evidence through a contrastive pair is crucial. This way you show that (in this case) not only can English put the object after the verb but in fact it must put the object after the verb. I.e., armed with (1) and (2), and at least 2 other pairs of sentences, if these are representative of English sentences generally, we can make at least a tentative claim that English verbs precede their direct objects.

Presenting data. When using example words in your running text, please *italicize* them as in “*gave* is the verbal head in example (1). In full sentence examples, you should present your data in a standard 3-line format, using the Leipzig Glossing Rules <https://www.eva.mpg.de/lingua/pdf/LGR08.02.05.pdf> as below.

- The data are presented in a 3-line format: original language, morpheme-by-morpheme gloss, a natural-language translation in English. For example:

- (3) hiro ga baaga o tabe-ta *original data*  
Hiro SBJ hamburger OBJ eat-PST *morpheme-by-morpheme gloss*  
'Hiro ate a/the hamburger' *natural-language translation*

- Space words in the original language with a tab to line up the gloss with data for easy reading. ( Rely on your informant to determine where word boundaries are.)
- A hyphen '-' separates bound morphemes.
- Note that a period '.' is used to indicate that two pieces of meaning in the source language correspond to a single morpheme in another language, English. For example in (4c), *sib-o* separates the morphemes for 'apple' and 'definite object' in Persian. But the single morpheme *-o* has two separable meanings in English: that it's a direct object and that it's definite.

- Note that the Japanese data is presented in (rough) IPA. If your research language uses a roman alphabet, you can present your data in conventional spelling. If your research language uses another writing system or is unwritten, then you must present the data in rough IPA. Try to be accurate in reflecting the pronunciation, but since our interest is word order don't sweat the phonetic details of the data transcription.
- The translations sometimes indicate for clarity that the original language expression can be translated for various meanings in English or that a second or third reading is impossible. The hash mark # indicates an impossible or infelicitous reading.

Persian verbs follow their the direct object, as demonstrated in (4a, 4b).

- (4) a. baba chai xord  
 dad tea drank  
 'Dad drank tea/some tea' # 'Dad drank the tea'
- b. \*baba xord chai  
 dad drank tea  
 'Dad drank tea' (intended meaning)
- c. baba sib-o bokhor  
 Dad apple-DEF.OBJ eat  
 'Dad ate the apple'

**The head-complement constructions we're interested in:**

1. verb / direct object (V / DO)
2. complementizer / embedded complementizer clause (COMP / CP)
3. verb / embedded complementizer clause (V / CP)
4. demonstrative / noun phrase (Dem / NP)
5. article/determiner / noun phrase (Det / NP) (including definite and indefinite articles, if articles exist at all)
6. preposition / noun phrase/determiner phrase (P / NP (DP))

**Adjunct constructions we're interested in:**

7. noun / adjective (N / Adj)
8. verb / adverb (V / Adv)
9. noun / relative clause (N / RC)

You may find for any particular phenomenon that both orders are possible generally or that both orders occur within restrictions. For example, French puts color adjectives and certain others to the right of the noun while some other adjectives go on the left. You may find that both orders are syntactically possible but with a difference in meaning (French again: *un seul ami* 'the only friend' *ami seul* 'a lonely friend'). You may also find that some items that are independent words in one language are bound morphemes in another language, but there's still an order. Finally, some things may be irrelevant to your language. For example, if your language doesn't have articles, then you can't say anything about the order of articles and nouns. Simply indicate "N/A", for "not applicable".

Begin your description with a simple list of your results, as below for German:

1. V DO\* (\*but word order varies according to sentence type)

2. COMP CP
3. V CP
4. Dem NP
5. Det / NP
6. P DP
7. Adj N
8. V Adv
9. N RC

Then provide the data that back up your claims in the list. You should have three examples of positive data to back up your claim and three pieces of negative data. In your report, use one of each for illustration. For example:

In Hyperborean, the noun precedes the adjective:

- (5) a. huy ghji  
       cute cat  
       'the cute cat'  
       b. \*ghji huy  
       cat cute

Provide footnotes with brief explanations for any generalizations you find that are not categorical.

While you are working on collecting this data, also pay attention to any other noteworthy features of the language and take notes on this. These can spring from your personal interests in linguistics. For example, is there case-marking, if so, how does it work? Are there any nominal, verbal or numeral classifier systems? What does the verb phrase look like? Are there serial verbs, particle verbs, complex predicates, etc.? What does the phonology of the language look like? How does the official orthography reflect the phonological system? How does negation work or semantic concepts such as comparisons like *a dog is larger than a cat* and so on.

Please discuss any of these findings directly with me in my office hours so I may guide you in what to look for and what questions to ask.

## 8.2 Part 2

Once all the data is collected, we put together your results in a table. Each of you will study the table and look for generalizations about the orders and relationships among them. As a simple universal you might observe that in most languages in our sample the complementizer precedes the TP. As an implicational universal you might observe that if a language's verbs precede direct objects, then that language has prepositions. In the strongest case you might generalize that (i) a particular language tends to have all its heads either on the right or on the left and that (ii) languages in general line up their complements on the left (or right). Then see if your generalizations about head-complement order are related in any way to N-A, Adv-V, NP-PP and N-RC orders. Your discussion of the collective data should be 7-10 pages and also be presented very briefly in the last week of classes as a basis for discussion.

You may also include short descriptions on particularly interesting language-specific findings you collected.

## 9 Course Policies and Statements

You are expected to read the assigned material and do the homework by the date listed in the syllabus and be prepared to discuss and ask questions based on that material. Reading the material and doing the homework before class massively increase your chances of mastering the material. If you are absent, you should get class notes and assignments from a classmate. It is your responsibility to keep up with any work you miss. Late assignments will result in a 10% deduction in your grade. Quizzes cannot be made up.

### 9.1 Academic misconduct

Academic Misconduct will not be tolerated. According to the Northeastern Illinois University Student Conduct Code, “Acts of academic misconduct include but are not limited to:

1. Cheating. Use or attempted use of any unauthorized assistance in taking an exam, test, quiz, or other assignment. (Please note, cheating on exams includes all required University, state, and/or national assessment exams.)
2. Encouraging Academic Dishonesty. Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to persuade and/or influence another to violate the University’s rules, policies, and regulations governing academic integrity.
3. Fabrication. Deliberate falsification or design of any material or excerpt in an academic assignment or exercise.
4. Plagiarism. Appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and thoughts of another author and representation of them as one’s original work. This includes (1) paraphrasing another’s ideas or conclusions without acknowledgment; (2) listing of entire paragraphs, chapters, etc. from another’s work; and (3) submission as one’s work, any work prepared by another person or agency.”

In accordance with University policy, academic misconduct will result in the **grade of F** for the course.

### 9.2 Absence Policy

Attendance in class is required and noted. Be aware that class participation points cannot be earned or made up if you are not present in class.

### 9.3 Academic Integrity Policy

By enrolling in this course, you are bound by the NEIU Student Code of Conduct: <http://www.neiu.edu/university-life/student-rights-and-responsibilities/student-code-conduct>. You will be informed by your instructor of any additional policy specific to your course regarding plagiarism, class disruptions, etc.

### 9.4 ADA Statement

Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU) complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. To request accommodations, students with special needs should make arrangements with the Student Disability Services (SDS) office, located on the main campus in room D104. Contact SDS via (773) 442-4595 or <http://www.neiu.edu/university-life/student-disability-services>.

## 9.5 Campus Safety

Web links to Campus Safety: Emergency Procedures and Safety Information can be found on NEIU-  
port on the MyNEIU tab or as follows: [http://homepages.neiu.edu/~neiutemp/Emergency\\_Procedures/  
MainCampus/](http://homepages.neiu.edu/~neiutemp/Emergency_Procedures/MainCampus/).

\*\*\*\*\*Required Information\*\*\*\*\*

“It is the understanding of the University and the Union that a safe work environment is a shared responsibility. Employees are expected to regularly monitor university communication systems, including both electronic and print media, and to participate in emergency drills when they occur. During emergency evacuations and drills, Employees will assist in the evacuation process as appropriate and leave the affected structures. As part of a university-wide initiative, faculty members will include on their syllabi a web link to emergency information for students.”

The following link will get you to all of our emergency management information:  
[http://www.neiu.edu/~police/emergency\\_management.html](http://www.neiu.edu/~police/emergency_management.html)

## 10 Student Support

### 10.1 Learning Support Center

The Learning Support Center (LSC) provides peer-directed academic tutoring for individuals and groups in the following areas:

- General Education courses
- Writing
- Reading
- Math Development and college level math
- Academic Coaching

The primary emphases are promoting active learning strategies, encouraging student engagement, and providing content support. Academic support is provided to students who are seeking assistance with understanding course concepts and preparing assignments, along with developing an improved learning system for college which includes motivation, academic engagement, brain-based habits for college learning, and learning strategies for note taking, textbook reading, and test taking.

Tutors are graduate and undergraduate students who are carefully selected on the basis of their own academic achievement by faculty and given supervision, training, and support to serve as tutors, mentors, and academic coaches. Additionally, the LSC provides all NEIU students an area for learning groups and an opportunity to learn with other students. Appointments are strongly encouraged, and students are welcome to drop in to discuss their individual academic support needs.

For more information, visit the LSC website at [www.neiu.edu/lsc](http://www.neiu.edu/lsc) or, to schedule an appointment with a tutor, call 773-442-4568.

### 10.2 Center for Academic Writing

The Center for Academic Writing (CAW) provides peer tutoring for students enrolled in officially-designated Writing Intensive Program (WIP) courses. WIP peer tutors, who are recommended by

faculty and hired and trained by CAW, are affiliated with specific WIP courses and provide discipline-specific writing support. WIP peer tutors help students of all abilities become better writers by helping them focus on every step of the writing process - from brainstorming ideas, prewriting, and outlining, to drafting, revising, and editing. Students do not need to have a completed draft to meet with a WIP peer tutor. WIP peer tutors can provide the most effective help if students come early in the assignment process and return throughout the semester.

Students should speak with their WIP course instructor and/or contact CAW for more information about WIP peer tutoring. Information is available on the web at [www.neiu.edu/caw](http://www.neiu.edu/caw). Students can stop by CAW on the fourth floor of the Ronald Williams Library or call 773-442-4492 to make an appointment.