Friedrich Schiller University Jena
Department of English and American Studies
Winter term 2018/19

Dr. Karsten Schmidtke-Bode
Office hours: Wednesday 13-14 h (EAP 8, room 609)
E-mail: karsten.schmidtkebode@uni-jena.de

Linguistic typology and language universals

Type of course: MA.AA.SW04 (**first part** of the module only)
Time: Monday 12–2 p.m. (12:15–13:45)
Venue: Carl-Zeiss-Str. 3, SR 306
Workload: **5 ECTS** (For teaching-training candidates, this is a self-contained class, while M.A. students need to combine this class with the second part of the module (Tue 4–6 p.m.) to obtain 10 ECTS.

Course description

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, revealing recurrent patterns of linguistic organisation in their sound systems, morphology and sentence structure. In this course we will identify and study some of these patterns of variation and consider the English language from a cross-linguistic point of view. In each domain of investigation, we will also explore possible reasons for the existence of language types and linguistic universals, asking ourselves why and how completely unrelated languages may converge on similar structural solutions to similar communicative problems. The course thus also aims at a deeper understanding of language structure in general, which can benefit M.A. students and advanced teacher training candidates alike.

Requirements and marking system

- regular **attendance**, active **participation** and thorough weekly **preparation** (see below)
- **short presentation** of an assignment
- **term paper** (due date: **29 March 2019**, in both printed and electronic form)

The final mark for the course will be based exclusively on the term paper, while the fulfilment of the other requirements is a precondition for writing the paper ('**Vorleistung**'). Note that M.A. students can decide in which of the two classes of the module they wish to write their paper.

Weekly preparation and term paper

An essential requirement of the course is your in-depth preparation of each session at home. This usually comes in the form of **preparatory texts** and accompanying **homework**. The course will provide you with the unique opportunity to work with (an accessible description of) a small, completely **unfamiliar language**, and the homework assignments will often ask you to look at specific aspects of the grammar of that language. The **term paper**, in turn, will consist of three take-home assignments that involve working on 'your' language as well.

The course management system

The course management system of our department, called WORDWISE (**www.wordwise.uni-jena.de**), will be the online platform of this class. All class materials (including PPT presentations, in-class worksheets, follow-up handouts, references, etc.) will be made available there. In addition, important organisational information (e.g. announcements etc.) will also be distributed via WORDWISE (to your email address). Therefore, please make sure your email address on WORDWISE is valid and that you check it regularly!

Office hours

Please take advantage of the office hours on **Wednesdays (1-2 p.m.)**. This is the place to talk about your progress in the course and any difficulties you may experience, as well as to receive individual feedback on assignments.

Course programme

	Date	Topic	P (Preview) and R (Review) Tasks
		I. Conceptual and methodological foundations of cross-linguistic comparison	
1	15.10.18	**Introduction to the course.** Goals, organisation and requirements. Introduction to linguistic typology: Aims, data sources, glossing of data.	Choose a language (and its reference grammar) to work with this term.
2	22.10.18	**Genealogical, areal** and **universal** reasons for linguistic similarities; representative **sampling.** Survey of the world's major language families and linguistic areas.	P: Whaley 1997: 7–16 & McGregor 2009: 1–17; Velupillai 2012: Ch. 13.2 (optional) P: Geographic and demographic information on one's language
3	29.10.18	**Cross-linguistic comparability**, **types of typological generalizations** and types of **explanations** for typological patterns.	R: Genealogical and areal information on one's language P: Whaley 1997: Ch. 3 (30–53)
		II. Elementary building blocks	
4	05.11.18	**Sounds and sound systems**: Phonological typology.	P: Velupillai 2012: Ch. 4 (61–87) P: Phoneme inventory of one's language
5	12.11.18	**The structure of words**: Morphological typology.	P: Whaley 1997: 111–120 & 127–139 P: Problem set on morphology
6	19.11.18	**Lexical and grammatical categories:** Word classes and grammatical features in cross-linguistic perspective.	R: Morphological typology of one's language P: Genetti 2014: Ch. 5 (100–114); Haspelmath 2001 (optional)
		III. Clause structure in simple sentences	
7	26.11.18	**Constituent order typology (I):** Basic ordering patterns in clauses and phrases.	P: Velupillai 2012: 281–295 P: Basic ordering patterns in one's language
8	03.12.18	**Constituent order typology (II):** Word-order correlations and their explanations.	P: Velupillai 2012: 295–304 P: Correlational structure of one's language
9	10.12.18	**Argument structure and role marking (I)**: Basic alignment types.	P: Course script (inspired by Song 2018 & Payne 1997)
10	17.12.18	**Argument structure and role marking (II)**: Inconsistent systems: Split intransitivity and split transitivity (split-A and split-P marking).	R: Basic alignment patterns of one's language P: Course script (based on Song 2018 & Payne 1997)
11	07.01.19	**Argument structure and role marking (III)**: Analytical practice and outlook (ditransitive constructions, detransitivisation).	R: Describing inconsistencies in one's language P: Problem sets
12	14.01.19	**Argument structure and role marking (IV):** Explanatory approaches.	R: Detransitivisation in one's language P: Course script (based on Song 2018 & Payne 1997)
		IV. Clause structure in complex sentences	
13	21.01.19	**Clause combinations (I)**: Typological aspects of relative-clause formation.	P: Payne 1997: 325–336 P: Problem set (English)
14	28.01.19	**Clause combinations (II)**: Other types of complex sentence.	R: Relativisation in one's language P: Velupillai 2012: Ch. 13.2 (331–339)
		V. Wrapping up	
15	04.02.19	**Review and conclusion**: English from a cross-linguistic perspective.	P: Swan 2006; Siemund 2003 (optional)

Course bibliography

In the following thematic list, publications printed in blue are part of the course programme above (as original texts; course scripts for individual sessions incorporate ideas from many of the sources below).

Introductions to the languages of the world

McGregor, William (2009). *Linguistics: An Introduction*. London, New York: Continuum. [Ch. 13 and online supplementary materials]
Pereltsvaig, Asya (2018). *Languages of the World: An Introduction*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Introductions to linguistic typology

Comrie, Bernard (1989). *Language Universals and Linguistic Typology*. 2nd ed. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
Croft, William (2003). *Typology and Universals*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Moravcsik, Edith A. (2013). *Introducing Language Typology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Payne, Thomas E. (1997). *Describing Morphosyntax: A Guide for Field Linguists.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Song, Jae Jung (2001). *Linguistic Typology: Morphology and Syntax*. Harlow: Longman.
Song, Jae Jung (2018). *Linguistic Typology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Velupillai, Viveka (2012). *An Introduction to Linguistic Typology*. Amsterdam, Philadelphia: John Benjamins.
Whaley, Lindsay J. (1997). *Introduction to Typology: The Unity and Diversity of Language.* Thousand Oaks etc.: Sage Publications.

Concise surveys of the characteristics of English from a comparative perspective

Siemund, Peter (2003). English. In: *Variationstypologie: Ein sprachtypologisches Handbuch der europäischen Sprachen.* Eds. Thorsten Roelcke. Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter. 1–29.
Swan, Michael (2006). English in the Present Day. In: *Concise Encyclopedia of the Languages of the World.* Eds. Keith Brown and Sarah Oglivie. Amsterdam etc.: Elsevier. 327–334.

Anthological overviews of typological research

Shopen, Timothy (ed.) (2007). *Language Typology and Syntactic Description*. 3 vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Song, Jae Jung (ed.) (2011). *The Oxford Handbook of Linguistic Typology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Introductory overview articles on specific phenomena

Genetti, Carol (2007). Word classes: evidence from grammatical behavior. In: *How Languages Work: An Introduction to Language and Linguistics.* Ed. Carol Genetti. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 100–117.
Haspelmath, Martin (2001). Word classes and parts of speech. In: *International Encyclopedia of the Social and Behavioral Sciences.* Eds. Paul B. Baltes and Neil J. Smelser. Amsterdam: Pergamon. 16538–16545.