

Typology (LING 5350) Syllabus

Alexander Smith (instructor)

BASICS

Email: smith.alexander.david@gmail.com
Office: Language building 409L (hours to be determined)
Room: NTDP D212
Date and Time: Monday, 6:30 – 9:20
Website (syllabus updates) *austronesianist.com/teaching*

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Typology is one of the broadest, and most important sub-disciplines in linguistics. At its most basic, typology is concerned with organizing languages into types, based on their specific properties. Typology is also concerned with all aspects of linguistics; we can talk about phonological typology (what types of phonological systems are there, and how are they grouped into various categories), morphological typology (what types of morphology are there, and how are they grouped into various categories), and syntactic typology (concerned with a wide range of linguistic phenomena: word order, case marking, question words, various marked constructions). Understanding linguistic typology is essential for a career in linguistics, as there are a limited number of linguistic types, and recognizing a language's linguistic type, and implications thereof, will make linguistic fieldwork, documentation, description, and theory much more accessible. Students will complete weekly(ish) homework assignments in the form of typological problem sets, with data from real languages. Where possible, I will try to include first-hand linguistic data. There will be a midterm, final paper on the typology of any language with an in-class presentation, and a take-home final. I may assign readings throughout the semester, and will provide copies.

GRADING

Participation	15
Homework	15
Midterm	30
Presentation	20
Final	20
<hr/> Total	<hr/> 100

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is very important for this class. This is where we will discuss the readings and other class materials. We will introduce new ideas in the lecture and answer any questions students may have. If a student misses a class, it is the student's responsibility to catch up with what was missed by asking classmates and/or the instructor. The student's efforts in coming to class on time will be duly recognized.

LINGUISTICS COLLOQUIA

As part of the attendance requirement, students are also required to attend the various linguistics colloquia, to be held throughout the semester. Let me know if you are unable to attend any of the colloquia. I also encourage you to attend the three scheduled *Discovery Series* talks. The first is scheduled for February 1st, 1:00 pm, Willis Library room 340.

PARTICIPATION

To be successful in this class, students must attend class sessions with proper preparation. Assigned readings must be completed before corresponding lectures. Lectures are not simply a review of the material in the textbook; they presuppose and expand upon that material. To make the lectures more meaningful and understanding, please be prepared to share your questions and comments on assigned readings in class. Students are responsible for all of the information presented in this course, and students' active participation in class and proper preparation for class are also expected. Asking questions is very important and will affect grades. Office hours (to be determined) and email are also good ways to get credit for participation.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic dishonesty includes plagiarism and cheating. Students who violate the University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course. There is no need to leave information that is taken directly from an outside source uncited, and there is no need to avoid using information from outside sources out of fear of being accused of plagiarism. If you need any help referencing and citing your information, just let me know.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

WEEK	TOPIC
Jan 22	Introduction. What is typology?
Jan 29	Phonological typology
Feb 5	Morphological typology
Feb 12	Role relations and marking systems
Feb 19	Word order

Feb 26	Marked constructions
Mar 5	Mid-Term
Mar 12	SPRING BREAK
Mar 19	Marked constructions
Mar 26	Relative clauses
Apr 2	Comparison
Apr 9	Negatives, speech act typology
Apr 16	Questions
Apr 23	Clause combining, Dexis
Apr 30	Presentations

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda>. You may also contact them by phone at 940-565-4323.

Texts (optional)

Comrie, B. (1989). *Language universals and linguistic typology*. Oxford: Blackwell.