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«National Research University Higher School of Economics»

School of Linguistics
Master's programme 'Linguistic Theory and Language Description'

Syllabus for the course "Typology"

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National Research University Higher School of Economics
Syllabus for the course "Typology" for the Master's Programme "Linguistic Theory and Language Description"

Typology 1/2

Michael Daniel

The course is an elective for the students of the MA program *Linguistic theory and language description* (NRU HSE). Prerequisites include general knowledge of typology as a study of language diversity; textbooks like Viveka Velupillai's Introduction to linguistic typology is largely enough.

Abstract. The aim of the course is to introduce the students to the study of linguistic diversity using several domains / parameters of variation. The course content changes every year. Specific parameters are subject to yearly change and tend to be basic enough to be universal and easy to grasp for speakers with various native languages. An example of such universal basic parameter, to be used in 2017, are lexical and grammatical variation in the domain of basic motion verbs. The course is essentially based on students' reading of important typological articles in the domain, their presentation and classroom discussions and quizzes.

The **objectives** of the course is to introduce the students to the methods and practicalities of research of language diversity and language description.

Intended outcomes include, for the students:

- understanding the principles of variation in the domains selected for the course in the current year
- more generally, understanding the principles of the study of cross-linguistic variation and comparison
- training critical academic reading

Course plan. The course comprises several parts respective to the topics selected for the specific year, from two to four. As an example, the topics for 2017 are provided:

Verbs of motion (6+10+41 hours): studying how languages differ in how they describe motion events, including ventive and andative categories and related deictic meanings; caused motion; associated motion; and grammaticalization paths characteristic to verbs of motion.

Inverse morphology (6+10+41 hours): studying how different languages treat unusual mapping of A and P onto the personal hierarchies, especially when reflected in the verb as inverse or portmanteu morphology (Chukotkan, Kartvelian as well as many languages of the Americas).

Reading:
Bickel, B. (1995). "In the vestibule of meaning: transitivity inversion as a morphological phenomenon". *Studies in Language*. 19: 73–127.
Comrie, Bernard (1980). "Inverse verb forms in Siberia: evidence from Chukchee, Koryak, and Kamchadal". *Folia Linguistica Historica*.
Nikitina, Tatiana. Subcategorization pattern and lexical meaning of motion verbs: a study of the source/goal ambiguity. Linguistics 47–5 (2009).
Noonan, Michael. Motion verbs in Chantyal.
Rose, Francoise. Associated motion in Mojeño Trinitario: Some typological considerations. Folia Linguistica 2015; 49(1): 117–158
Slobin, Dan (1996). "Two ways to travel: verbs of motion in English and Spanish" Shibatani, M. and Thompson, S.A. (eds.) Grammatical constructions: their form and meaning. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
Zúñiga, Fernando (2006) *Deixis and Alignment. Inverse systems in indigenous languages of the Americas.* Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Grading system is based on cumulative grading of quizzes (all students) and main discussants (one or two students per paper). The student's success as a discussant is evaluated as 0,33 of the final grade, the other 0,66 attributed to the written quizzes.

1. **current control**: quizes on the read articles / book chapters (every class except the introductory lecture): 0.5, grading based on the number of questions answered in their entirety

2. **intermediate control**: preparing quizes on an article (once): 0.3, grading based on compliance with deadlines of quiz submission, with the nature of the questions (easy to answer by scanning / searching the article or requiring a full understanding of its research topic)
3. **final examination** (optional): 0.2, includes discussion of the articles read and answering the questions of the quizzes, grading based on the number of questions, answered in their entirety

The course is delivered in lectures and classes including discussion of home reading. The course requires regular equipment for presentations.