

*Approved by the  
Academic council of the  
Education programme  
'Linguistic Theory and  
Language Description'  
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# Syllabus

## Typology (Year 1/2)

(3 ECTS)

Author: Michael Daniel, [mdaniel@hse.ru](mailto:mdaniel@hse.ru), [https://www.hse.ru/staff/michael\\_daniel](https://www.hse.ru/staff/michael_daniel)  
School of Linguistics, Faculty of Humanities

### 1. Course description

**Course type:** elective (first and second year).

**Pre-requisites:** general knowledge about language structure, some basic knowledge of typology and cross-linguistic variation. Attendance of the (parallel in the first year) adaptation course Introduction to linguistics and Functional Models course.

**Abstract:** The aim of the course is to introduce the students to the study of linguistic diversity by focusing on a specific domain / parameter of variation. Parameters are subject to yearly change and are chosen to be basic enough to be universal and easy to grasp for speakers with various native languages, and students of different background. An example of such universal basic parameter, are lexical and grammatical variation in the domain of basic motion verbs. The course is essentially based on students' readings of scholarly research in the domain, their presentation and classroom discussions and quizzes.

### 2. Learning objectives

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

### 3. Learning outcomes

Intended outcomes include:

- 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

### 4. Course plan.

During the course, a position paper is presented by the instructor. The rest of the course is based on reading, presented by the students and discussed in classes. The course is built on the topics selected for the specific year, from two to four. As an example, the topics for the course on motion verbs are provided:

*Verbs of motion*: studying how languages differ in how they describe motion events.

1. Talmian typology of motion events
2. Caused motion and verbs of transport
3. Filmorian typology of deictic verbs; andative and ventive categories grammaticalized
4. Associated motion: an overview of the category
5. Grammaticalization paths characteristic to verbs of motion

### 5. Reading list

The course only has the following obligatory reading:

Dryer, Matthew S. & Haspelmath, Martin (eds.) 2013. *The World Atlas of Language Structures Online*. Leipzig: Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology.

(Available online at <http://wals.info>)

Velupillai, Viveka. *An introduction to linguistic typology*. Benjamins, 2012. – URL: <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/hselibrary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=988855>

All other reading is provided as thematic articles from the electronic resources of HSE University, each year pre-selected depending on the topic of the course.

#### **6. Grading system**

Grading is based on cumulative grading of quizzes (all students) and is done by the student who presented on the topic. All quizzes are added except the three graded lowest, but not less than five in all (the missing scores then are added as zeros). The final grade is calculated as a rounded average of all grades. No quizzes are to be repassed.

#### **7. Exam type**

There is no final examination. The final grade is cumulative based on the grades the student received for the totality of the quizzes.

#### **8. Methods of Instruction**

The course is delivered as a lecture presenting a position paper and then reading discussion classes, with obligatory slides by presented by a group of students, each time another group.

#### **9. Special equipment and software support**

The course requires regular equipment for presentations (laptop and beamer).