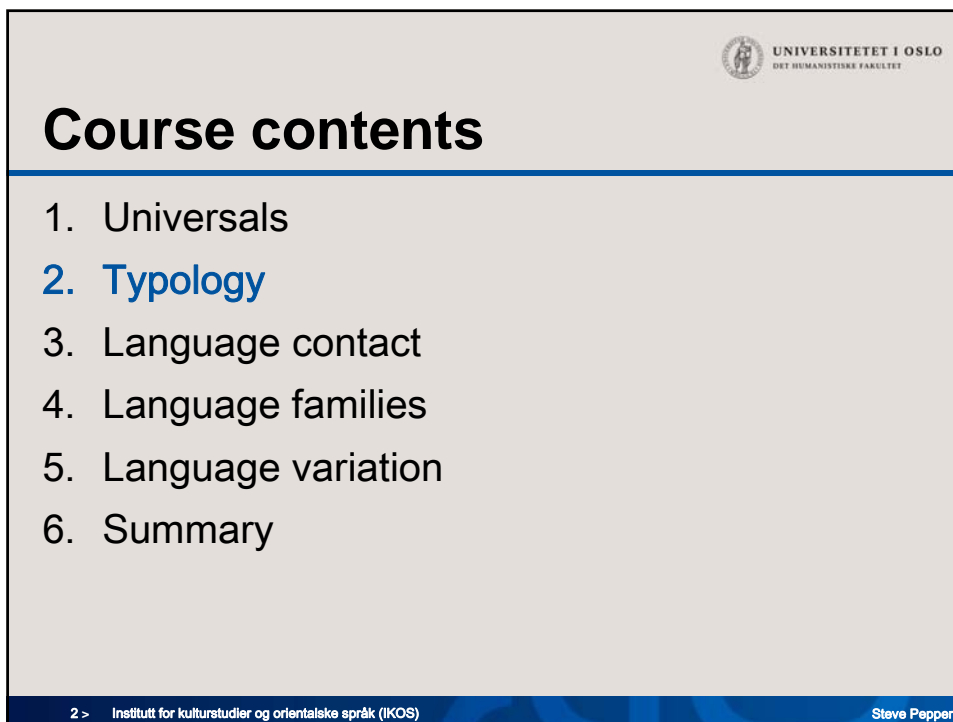


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EXFAC03-AAS v11 Language

□ 2: Language typology

Steve Pepper <pepper.steve@gmail.com>




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Course contents

1. Universals
2. Typology
3. Language contact
4. Language families
5. Language variation
6. Summary

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Language typology

- Topics
 - What is language typology?
 - Why typology? The power of generalization
 - Anthropological vs. typological significance
 - Four kinds of typology
- Morphological typology
 - Analytic vs. synthetic
 - Agglutinating vs. flective
- Syntactic typology
 - Word order
- Semantic typology
 - Motion verbs
- Phonological typology
 - Tone languages vs. stress languages

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What is language typology?

- The study of how languages differ
 - Languages vary, but their variation is not random – it is subject to limitations
 - Understanding these limitations can provide insights into both language and cognition in general
- Example: Basic word order

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Basic word order

- Order of Subject, Verb and Object in the clause
- Three main types
 - **SOV** (Amharic, Hindi, Japanese, Persian, Turkish, etc.)
 - **SVO** (Chinese, English, Fula, etc.)
 - **VSO** (Arabic, Hebrew, Tongan, Welsh, etc.)
- VOS, OVS, OSV exceedingly rare

→ “Subjects tend strongly to precede objects”

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Comparing three languages


- Japanese (SOV)

shiyoonin	ga	uma	ni	mizu	wo	ageta
servant	NOM	horse	DAT	water	ACC	gave
S		x		O		V
- Arabic (VSO)

ʿactʿā	l-khādīmu	l-ḥisʿāna	māʿan
gave	the-servant-NOM	the-horse-ACC	water-ACC
V	S	x	O
- Fula (SVO)

suka	hokkii	puccu	ndiyam
servant	gave	horse	water
S	V	x	O


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Why study typology?

- Early typology (19th century)
 - Belief that language expresses a nation's "spirit"
 - Typological knowledge could provide insight into this "spirit"
 - Still widespread, e.g.
 - relatively strict and complex rules of **German** grammar seen as an expression of German discipline and rule of law
 - comparative lack of strict rules in **Chinese** seen as an expression of Chinese flexibility and pragmatism
 - These ideas not supported by linguists
- Modern typology
 - Not concerned with languages in their entirety, but with specific phenomena


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The power of generalization

- Turkish is SOV – so what?
 - Is this fact any more "interesting" than knowing that 'room' = *oda*?
- Yes, because:
 - It says something about the overall structure of the language
 - It allows nearly all languages to be grouped into just three types
 - This fact often correlates with other structural facts
 - Such facts can tell us something about general cognitive processes
- In linguistic typology, we are primarily looking for linguistic variation with a high power of generalization

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Anthropological vs. typological significance

- ❑ How many **Eskimo** words for 'snow'?
 - The Inuit do not have 20 (or 100 or 200) words for 'snow'
- ❑ But even if they did: so what?
 - Fula has many words for **cattle...**
 - This is of great interest to anthropologists
 - Reflects the central position of cattle in Fula society
 - Herdsmen need specialized terminology
 - But the typological significance is marginal

"Eskimos have separate words for flurries, blizzard, slush, powder, sleet, hail, graupel, drifts, névé, frost, ice, glaciers, ... while we poor benighted English-speakers are stuck with the work-around of sticking modifiers on one word, 'snow', for any solid H₂O from the atmosphere..." (Economist debate "[This house believes that the language we speak shapes how we think](#)")

- ❑ **Kinship terms** are another example
 - Eight words for 'cousin' in Chinese
 - Interesting for anthropologists, but not for typologists


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Cattle in Fula

- ❑ One small dictionary has no less than 82 different words, including
 - **guddiri** 'bull without a tail',
 - **wudde** 'cow without a tail',
 - **jaabuye** 'cow with a large navel',
 - **lelwaaye** 'cattle with eyes like a gazelle',
 - **gerlaaye** 'cattle that is like a bush-fowl',
 - **happuye** 'cow in milk after her calf has died',
 - **mbutuye** 'cow whose calf has been killed so that she may be fattened',

- ❑ Many types are distinguished by their horns
 - **elliinge** 'cattle with upright horns',
 - **gajje** 'cattle with horns twisted back' (also called **mooro**),
 - **hippe** 'cattle with horns drooping forward',
 - **hogole** 'cattle with horns almost meeting',
 - **lettooye** 'cattle with one horn up and the other drooping',
 - **wijaaye** 'cattle with horns drooping towards the ears',
 - **tolle** 'cow with one horn', and
 - **wumale** 'cow without horns'.



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1. Morphological typology

- There are many ways to express grammatical meaning
- For example, to distinguish between singular and plural...

1. None
 - Japanese (JAP) *hito* 'person', *pl. hito*
2. Function word
 - Tagalog (TGL) *bato* 'stone', *pl. mga bato*
3. Affixation
 - Turkish (TUR) *ev* 'house', *pl. ev-ler*
 - Swahili (SWA) *m-toto* 'child', *pl. wa-toto*
4. Sound change
 - English (ENG) *man*, *pl. men*
 - Arabic (ARA) *rajulun* 'man', *pl. rijālun*
5. Reduplication
 - Malay (MAL) *anak* 'child', *pl. anak-anak*

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Analytic vs. synthetic languages

- Analytic** (word = morpheme)
 - (aka isolating)
 - East and SE Asia (e.g. ZHO, VIE)
 - West Africa (YOR)
 - South Africa (!Kung)
 - No inflection, limited word-formation
- Synthetic** (word > morpheme)
 - English mildly synthetic
 - Older Indo-European languages (LAT, GRC, SAN) highly synthetic
 - Plenty of inflection, derivation and compounding

- Polysynthetic** (word = clause)
 - Extremely synthetic, very complex words
 - Eskimo and American Indian languages
 - Siberia, Northern Caucasus, Australia
- Theoretical scale (continuum)
analytic ↔ synthetic ↔ polysynthetic
- But no language purely analytic or purely polysynthetic
 - JPN: analytic re. (no) noun inflection, but highly synthetic re. complex verb inflection

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If you wait for me, I will go with you

- Chinese (ZHO)

Nǐ děng wǒ, wǒ jiù gēn nǐ qù


Nǐ	děng	wǒ,	wǒ	jiù	gēn	nǐ	qù
2SG	wait	1SG,	1SG	then	with	2SG	go
- Eskimo (KAL)*

Utaqqiguvinga, aullaqatiginiaqpagit

Utaqqi-	gu-	vi-	nga,	aulla-	qati-	gi-	niaq-	pa-	git
wait	if	2SG	1SG,	go	partner	have	FUT	ASS	1SG/2SG
- Lack of inflection in **analytic** languages
- Widespread use of inflection in **polysynthetic** languages

* more properly **Inuktitut** (probably **West Greenlandic**)

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Agglutinative vs. flective languages

A subdivision of non-analytic languages

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Agglutinative <li style="margin-left: 20px;">Example: Turkish <li style="margin-left: 40px;">ev- ler- den <li style="margin-left: 40px;">house PL ABL 1. one morpheme, one meaning 2. clear boundary between morphemes 3. grammatical processes expressed through affixes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – form of individual morphemes not affected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Flective (“fusional”) 1. <u>cumulation</u> (one affix = multiple meanings) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – ELL: γράφ-ετε ‘was being written’ 2. <u>fusion</u> (morphemes fuse) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – E.Norw [sva:t] ‘answered’ <li style="margin-left: 40px;">< [sva:r] + [t] – [r] + [t] → [t] 3. <u>introflexion</u> (root modification) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – ENG man, pl men – ARA rajulun ‘man’, pl rijalun
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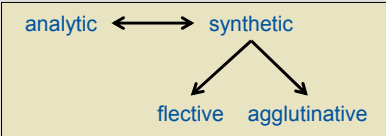
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Analytic > Agglutinative > Fleective

Agglutinative falls between analytic and fleective

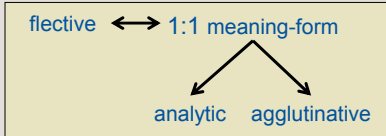
Like fleective

- More than one morpheme per word, i.e. synthetic



Like analytic


- One-to-one meaning-form correspondence



Historical development: **Analytic > Agglutinative > Fleective**

- But also: **Fleective > Analytic** (e.g. English, Norwegian, etc.)

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Typical features of analytic languages

- Predominantly monosyllabic morphemes (and sometimes words)
 - Polysyllabic morphemes/words less efficient in languages with one morpheme per meaning
- Extensive use of tones
 - Helps distinguish otherwise homophonous monosyllabic morphemes
- Extensive use of function words
- Relatively fixed word order
 - Function words and word order take over the grammatical function of inflection
- Less rigid grammatical rules
 - Inflectional paradigms (synthetic languages) create more tightly woven and less flexible grammatical structure

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Grammatical flexibility in Chinese



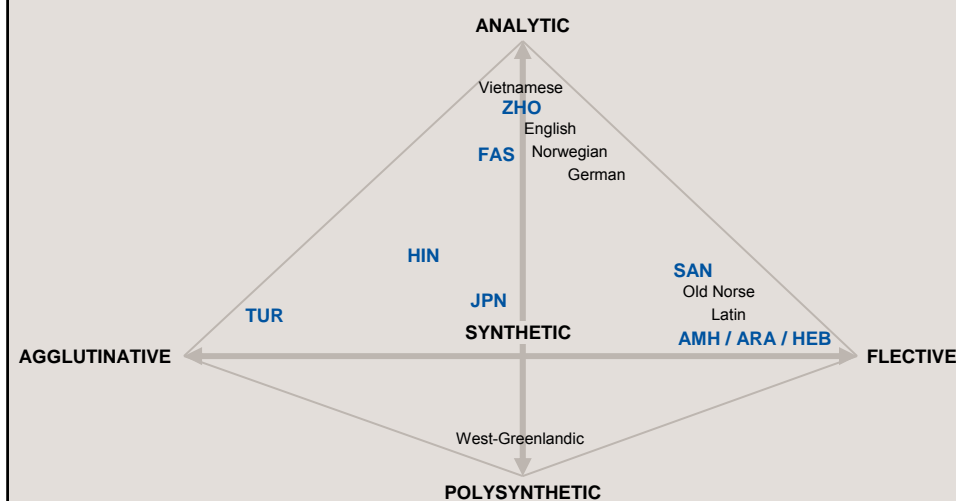
1. It has no inflection
2. Subject and object are often optional
3. Function words are often optional
4. Word boundaries and sentence boundaries are fuzzy
5. Apart from the noun-verb distinction, word class distinctions are fuzzy


Nǐ bù lái, wǒ bú qù.
you not come I not go

At least four different meanings:

- If you don't come, I won't go
- When you don't come, I don't go
- Since you don't come, I won't go
- You won't come, and I won't go

Morphological typology map




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2. Syntactic typology

- ❑ More about word order
 - Order of subject, verb and object
 - OV (object-verb) vs. VO (verb-object)
 - Modifier+head vs. head+modifier
 - Left-branching vs. right-branching

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Order of subject, verb and object

- ❑ English (SVO)

He ate the pudding
S V O
- ❑ Japanese (SOV)


Watashitachi wa Nihongo o hanasu
we TOP Japanese OBJ speak
S O V
'We speak Japanese'
- ❑ Arabic (VSO)

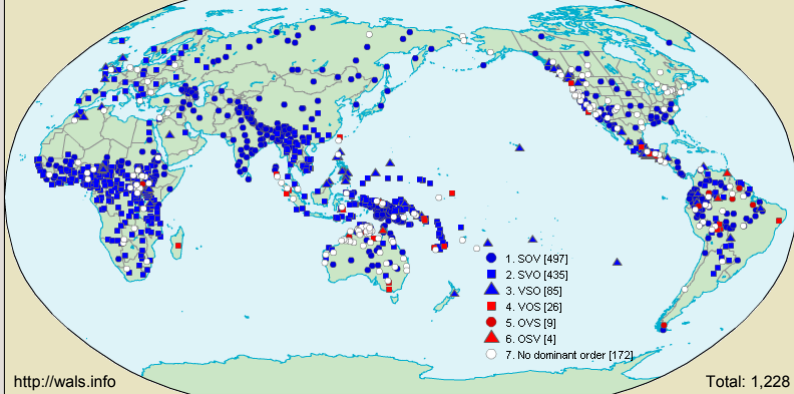
Qatala l- malik-u l- malikat-a
kill DEF king-NOM+DEF DEF queen-ACC
V S O
'The king killed the queen'

- ❑ **Six possible orders**
- ❑ SVO Chinese
- ❑ SOV Amharic, Hindi, Japanese, Persian, Sanskrit*, Turkish
- ❑ VSO Arabic, Hebrew
- ❑ VOS (Malagasy)
- ❑ OVS (Hixkaryana)
- ❑ OSV (Tobati)
- ❑ The first three are very common, the last three rather rare

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Strong tendency for subject to precede object

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The World Atlas of Language Structures Online




http://wals.info Total: 1,228

□ SOV, SVO and VSO
most common (96.3%)

□ VOS, OVS and OSV
rather rare (3.7%)


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Why S before O?

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- Because the prototypical subject is
 - an agent The one who carries out the action and therefore the source of the action
 - (Temporal iconicity: cause precedes effect)
 - human The element which is more animate tends to precede elements which are less animate, and humans rank highest in the animacy hierarchy
 - human < animate < inanimate
 - a discourse theme Thematic elements tend to precede non-thematic elements
 - Elements that are more thematic than the subject, may be placed before the subject, as in *That I don't know.*


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Word order correlations

<p><input type="checkbox"/> SOV languages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • noun + postposition – “Nippon e” • genitive + noun – “inu no namae” • verb + auxiliary • relative clause + noun – “som elsket yngve mannen” • standard of comparison + adjective – “watashi yori mo toshiue” 	<p><input type="checkbox"/> VSO languages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preposition + noun – “to Japan” • noun + genitive – “enw y ci” (name of dog) • auxiliary + verb • noun + relative clause – “mannen som elsket yngve” • adjective + standard of comparison – “older than me”
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What about SVO languages like English?

<p><input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes claimed to be “intermediate”</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> However, English has the following properties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preposition + noun (<u>in</u> the house) • noun + genitive (the house <u>of Tom</u>) or genitive + noun (Tom’s house) • auxiliary + verb (<u>will</u> come) • noun + relative clause (the cat <u>that</u> ate the rat) • adj + standard of comparison (<u>better</u> than Tom) 	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Compare these with a VSO language like Irish (GAI):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → preposition + noun (<u>sa</u> teach) → noun + genitive (sa teach <u>na Tom</u>) ... → auxiliary + verb (<u>beidh</u> teacht) → noun + relative clause (an cat <u>a</u> ith an francach) → adj + standard of comparison (<u>nios fearr</u> ná Tom)
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What about SVO languages like English?


- ❑ Sometimes claimed to be “intermediate”
- ❑ However, English has the following properties:
 - preposition + noun (in the house)
 - noun + genitive (the house of Tom) or **genitive + noun** (Tom's house)
 - auxiliary + verb (will come)
 - noun + relative clause (the cat that ate the rat)
 - adj + standard of comparison (better than Tom)

- ❑ Conclusion: **SVO languages behave mostly like VSO**
 - What distinguishes these two from SOV is the position of the object relative to the verb

SVO > VO VSO > VO	VO vs. OV
SOV — OV	

SVO > SV SOV > SV	(SV vs. VS)
VSO — VS	

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Modifier+head vs. head+modifier

- ❑ How to explain correlations between object-verb order and other word order features?
- ❑ Distinction between head and modifier*

HEAD	MODIFIER
verb	+ object
<u>adposition</u>	+ <u>noun</u>
noun	+ <u>genitive</u>
auxiliary	+ verb
noun	+ relative clause
adjective	+ std of comp
verb	+ adverbial
<u>noun</u>	+ <u>adjective</u>
noun	+ numeral
noun	+ determiner
comp marker	+ adjective


* Original terms: operand and operator

- ❑ Based on such a definition
 - VO languages are head-first
 - OV languages are head-last
- ❑ Investigation of 142 languages

TYPE 1	TYPE 2
verb + object	object + verb
preposition + noun	noun + postposition
noun + genitive	genitive + noun
noun + adjective	adjective + noun

 - Only 68 languages conform (48%)
 - 50 deviate in one feature (35%)
 - 24 deviate in two features (16%)
 - 83% conform in 3 or more features
- ❑ Not an absolute universal, but a very strong tendency

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Left-branching vs. right-branching

- Is there a better explanation?
 - Explain the phenomenon of correlation with fewer exceptions
- Compare the following
 1. an old man
 2. a man as old as the mountains
 3. a man as old as the mountains I knew when I was a child in the country that I later left behind in order to search for the holy grail
- The need to be able to expand plays a role in word order

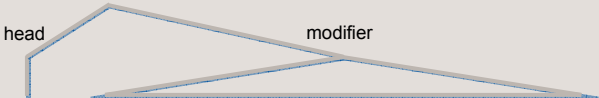
- Branching Direction Theory (Dryer 1992)
 - verb patterners (heads)
 - non-phrasal
 - object patterners (modifiers)
 - phrasal
- Languages tend to have consistent branching direction

The Branching Direction Theory (BDT)
Verb patterners are non-phrasal (non-branching, lexical) categories and **object patterners** are phrasal (branching) categories. That is, a pair of elements X and Y will employ the order XY significantly more often among VO languages than among OV languages if and only if X is a non-phrasal category and Y is a phrasal category.

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Right-branching: English




verb + object	kissed	the girl he met at the party a few days before
preposition + noun	in	the city where the great composer was born
noun + genitive	friends	of the man whose father had left behind a treasure
auxiliary + verb	will	come home to the valley he had left in his childhood
noun + relative clause	children	that have been spoiled by parents who love them
adjective + std. of comp.	prettier	than the women he had seen on TV
noun + adjective	men	so strong they could kill tigers if they wanted to

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Left-branching: Japanese


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object + verb	tegami o letter ACC	kaku write	'to write a letter'
noun + postposition	ie home	kara from	from home
genitive + noun	gakusei no student SUB	hon book	'the student's book'
verb + auxiliary	tabe-te eat-GER	iru PROG	'eating'
rel. clause + noun	gakusei ga yon-da student NOM read-PAST	hon book	'the book that the student read'
std. of comp. + adjective	watashi yori 1SG from	kirei pretty	'prettier than me'
adjective + noun	ii good	kuni country	'a good country'

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3. Semantic typology: Motion verbs

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Satellite-framed languages

- Manner expressed by main verb
- Path expressed by a satellites (e.g. particle)
- Indo-European (+ Romance), Finno-Ugric, Chinese, ...

Chinese

píngzi cóng shāndòng piāo chū lái
bottle from cave float exit come
The bottle floated out of the cave

English

The bottle floated out of the cave

Verb-framed languages

- Path expressed by main verb
- Manner expressed by a complement (e.g. participle)
- Romance, Semitic, Japanese, Korean, Polynesian, Turkish, ...

Japanese

bin ga dookutsu kara nagarate deta
bottle SUB cave from floating exited
The bottle floated out from the cave

Spanish

La botella salió de la cueva flotando
DEF bottle exited from DEF cave floating
The bottle floated out from the cave

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Comparing verb-framed and satellite-framed



- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Spanish
“sale un buho”
[= exits an owl] ❑ Japanese
“fukuroo ga dete-kite”
[= owl come out] ❑ Turkish
“oradan bir baykuş çıkıyor”
[= from there an owl exits] ❑ Hebrew
“yaca mitox haxor yanšuf”
[= exits from-inside the-hole owl] | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ English
“an owl popped out” ❑ German
“weil da eine Eule rausflattert”
[= because there an owl out-flutters] ❑ Russian
“tam vy-skočila sova”
[= there out-jumps owl] ❑ Chinese
“fēi chū yi zhī māotóuyīng”
[= fly exit come one owl] |
|---|--|

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From satellite-framed to verb-framed



“The man ran back down into the cellar” [s-framed language, 1 manner, 3 paths]

- ❑ Hard to translate into a verb-framed language
 - ❑ Satellite-framed
 - Tend to provide more detailed description of paths and specification of manner
 - ❑ Verb-framed
 - Tend to provide more elaborate description of locations and endstates of motion
- | |
|--|
| 1) Encode back (omit down and into)
El hombre volvió al sótano corriendo
DEF man returned to-DEF cellar running
‘The man returned to the cellar running.’ |
| 2) Encode down (omit back and into)
El hombre bajó al sótano corriendo
DEF man descended to-DEF cellar running
‘The man descended to the cellar running.’ |
| 3) Encode into (omit down and back)
El hombre entró al sótano corriendo
DEF man entered to-DEF cellar running
‘The man entered the cellar running.’ |

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4. Phonological typology: Tone vs. stress



Most languages use either tone or stress, but not both*

□ **Tone** used to distinguish between words

- mā 媽 'mother'
- má 麻 'hemp'
- mǎ 馬 'horse'
- mà 罵 'to scold'

• **Level tones**

- Distinguished by pitch: high, mid, low, etc.
- Mostly found in Africa

• **Contour tones**

- Mainly distinguished by shape: rising, falling, rising-falling, etc.
- Mostly found in Asia

□ **Stress** used to accentuate one syllable vis-à-vis others

- lack-a-dai-si-cal

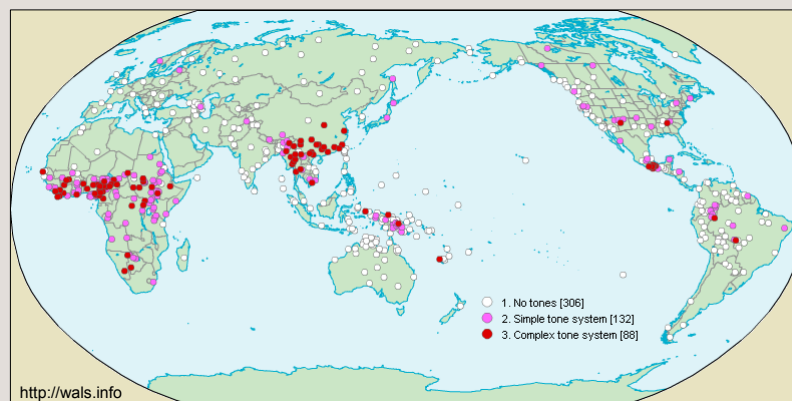
• **Free stress** (unpredictable)

- e.g. Germanic languages
- may distinguish between words: 'permit (n.) ~ per'mit (v.)

• **Fixed stress** (predictable)

- Main stress on
- last syllable (French, Turkish)
- first syllable (Czech, Hungarian, Latvian)
- penultimate syllable (Swahili)

Tone languages across the world



□ No tones: 306 (58%) □ Simple tones: 132 (25%) □ Complex tones: 88 (17%)
Two-way basic contrast More complex set of contrasts

Next week: Language families

□ Further reading on typology

- Croft, William. 2003. *Typology and universals, Second edition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dryer, Matthew. 1992. The Greenbergian word order correlations. *Language*, Vol. 68 No. 1, pp.81–138.
- Haspelmath, Martin et al. 2008. *WALS online*. (Munich: Max Planck Digital Library) <http://wals.info>
- Haspelmath, Martin et al (eds.) 2001. *Language typology and language universals: an international handbook*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter
- Shopen, Timothy (ed.) 2007. *Language typology and syntactic description, 2nd Edition (3 vols.)* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Glossar (3)

affix	affiks	introflexion	intrefleksjon
agent	agens	left-branching	venstreforgrenende
agglutinating	agglutinerende	level tone	nivåtone
analytic	analytisk	manner	måte
clause	hovedsetning, bisetning	modifier	modifikator, adledd
compound	sammensetning	path	bane, sti
contour tone	konturtone	polysynthetic	polysyntetisk
correlation	overensstemmelse	prefix	prefiks
cumulation	kumulasjon, opphoping	reduplication	reduplikasjon
derivation	avledning	right-branching	høyreforgrenende
discourse	diskurs	rising	stigende
falling	fallende	satellite-framed	satellittinnrammet
flective	flekterende	stress	trykk
fusional	fusjonerende	suffix	suffiks
head	hode	synthetic	syntetisk
head-first	hode-først	theme	tema
head-last	hode-sist	tone	tonelag, tonem, tone
inflection	bøyning	verb-framed	verbinrammet