

**LING 480 Language Universals
Fall 2005**

Meeting Time: Mon, Wed 11:30-12:50
Location: MGH 287 (Mon), MGH 284 (Wed)
Instructor: Barbara Citko
Instructor's Office: Padelford A210-D
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What can you expect to learn in this course?

This course is an introduction to universal grammar, language universals, and linguistic typology. In the first part of the course, we will focus on general questions: (i) what counts as a possible (and impossible) human language?, (ii) what is universal and what is subject to crosslinguistic variation?, (iii) how can we explain the lack of certain linguistic patterns or certain language types? In the second part of the course, we will focus on specific linguistic phenomena and examine them from a crosslinguistic perspective.

Textbook:

Comrie, Bernard (1989). *Language universals and linguistic typology: syntax and morphology* (2nd edition). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

In addition to the textbook, we will discuss other readings (book chapters and/or journal articles). The readings marked with an asterisk are optional for undergraduates, required for graduates. Since we will discuss in class the readings assigned for that day, you are expected to read the assigned papers *before* the class in which they will be discussed.

Prerequisites: Introduction to Linguistics (LIN 200 or LING 400) or the equivalent

What do I expect from you?

Active participation, thoughtful completion of reading and homework assignments, short in-class presentation or poster, and a short (5-7 pages) final paper.

Participation, Readings, Short Surveys	10%
4 Homework Assignments	40%
Short in-class presentation or poster	10%
Final Paper	40%

What can you expect from me?

I will teach the class to the best of my abilities I will be available outside class for consultation and advising. I will take your feedback into consideration. I will return homework assignments in a timely manner. I will be fair in grading and explicit about my grading policies.

Course Outline (subject to change)

Week	Date	Topic	Readings	Hw
I	W 9/28	Introduction(s). Various approaches to language universals and language typology	Comrie: Chapter 1 (pp. 1-29)	
II	M 10/3	Epun: an example of an impossible language. (Piraha: an example of a ‘surprising’ language)	Smith, The Mind of the Savant . pp 139-155. * Everett, Dan. Cultural Constraints on Grammar and Cognition in Pirahã: Another Look at the Design Features of Human Language . Linguistic Murder Mystery: part 1	
	W 10/5	Endangered Languages		
III	M 10/10	Library Orientation (we meet in the Allen library auditorium)		
	W 10/12	Genetic Language Classification Determining a Language Sample	Comrie, B., Languages of the World . In the <i>Handbook of Syntactic Theory</i> . Linguistic Murder Mystery: part 2	
IV	M 10/17	Morphological Typology	Comrie: Chapter 2 (pp. 33-54) * Nichols, Johanna. 1986. Head-marking and dependent-marking grammar . <i>Language</i> 62:56-119. Greenberg, Joseph H. (1963). Some universals of grammar with particular reference to the order of meaningful elements (pp. 92-104)	HW 1 due
	W 10/19	A case study in polysynthesis: Mohawk	Baker, M. 2001. Baking a Polysynthetic Language In <i>The Atoms of Language</i> . Linguistic Murder Mystery: part 3	
V	M 10/24	Word Order	Linguistic Murder Mystery: part 4 Comrie, B., Chapter 4 Greenberg, Joseph H. (1963). Some universals of grammar with particular reference to the order of meaningful elements (pp. 73-91)	
	W 10/26	Word Order	Dryer, Mathew S. (1992). The Greenbergian word order correlations . In <i>Language</i> 68:81–138. Linguistic Murder Mystery: part 5	HW 2 due
VI	M 10/31	Word Order in a ‘New’ Language	Sandler, W., I. Meir, C. Padden, and M. Aronoff. The emergence of grammar: systematic structure in a new language	

	W 11/2	Questions	* Cheng, L. 1991. On the Typology of Wh-Questions . Chapters 2 and 3. Linguistic Murder Mystery: part 6	
VII	M 11/7	Questions Continued	* Dayal, Veneeta. 2003. Multiple Wh questions . In the <i>Blackwell Companion to Syntax</i> .	
	W 11/9	Relative Clauses	Comrie, B. Chapter 7. Andrews, Avery. (to appear). Relative Clauses . In <i>Language Typology and Syntactic Description</i> . Linguistic Murder Mystery: part 7	HW 3 Due
VIII	M 11/14	Relative Clauses	* Keenan, E., and B. Comrie. 1977. Noun phrase accessibility and universal grammar, <i>Linguistic Inquiry</i> 8:63-99.	
	W 11/16	More on Relative Clauses and Wh-Questions	Linguistic Murder Mystery: part 8	
IX	M 11/21	Tense, Aspect, Mood	Whaley, L. 1997. <i>Introduction to Typology</i> . Chapters 12 and 13.	
	W 11/23	Case Marking	Comrie, B. Chapters 5&6	
X	M 11/28	Case Marking		
	W 11/30	Animacy	Comrie, B. Chapter 9	HW 4 Due
XI	W 12/5	Presentation Session	No readings	
	W 12/7	Poster Session	No readings	
	W 12/14	FINAL PAPERS DUE		

As a student at the University of Washington, you have agreed to follow the university's rules regarding academic honesty and appropriate conduct. Any academic misconduct will be reported to the academic judiciary.