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978-0-521-58156-1 - Language Typology and Syntactic Description: Clause Structure,
Second Edition - Volume I

Edited by Timothy Shopen

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Language Typology and Syntactic Description

Second edition

Volume I: Clause Structure

This unique three-volume survey brings together a team of leading scholars to explore the syntactic and morphological structures of the world's languages. Clearly organized and broad-ranging, it covers topics such as parts of speech, passives, complementation, relative clauses, adverbial clauses, inflectional morphology, tense, aspect, mood, and deixis. The contributors look at the major ways that these notions are realized, and provide informative sketches of them at work in a range of languages. Each volume is accessibly written and clearly explains each new concept introduced. Although the volumes can be read independently, together they provide an indispensable reference work for all linguists and field workers interested in cross-linguistic generalizations. Most of the chapters in the second edition are substantially revised or completely new – some on topics not covered by the first edition. Volume I covers parts-of-speech systems, word order, the noun phrase, clause types, speech act distinctions, the passive, and information packaging in the clause.

Timothy Shopen (1936–2005) was Senior Lecturer in Linguistics at the Australian National University. He had over forty years' experience of teaching and researching a variety of the world's languages, and also held posts at Indiana University and the Center for Applied Linguistics in Arlington, Virginia. In addition to *Language Typology*, he was editor of *Standards and Dialects in English* (1980), *Standards and Variables in English* (1981), *Languages and their Speakers* (1987), and *Languages and their Status* (1987).

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Volume I: Clause Structure

Edited by

Timothy Shopen[†]



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Acknowledgements

Language typology studies what the languages of the world are like. When people ask ‘What is linguistics?’, from my point of view one of the best answers is ‘the study of what the languages of the world are like’. I am honoured to have been joined by some excellent linguists in the achievement of this second edition of *Language Typology and Syntactic Description* for Cambridge University Press.

I am especially grateful to Matthew Dryer for coming in as co-editor when my health began to fail. Many thanks also to Lea Brown, for the invaluable help she gave Matthew in preparing the manuscript.

The Australian National University has always been generous in its support of my work. Except for the two and a half years I lived in Cairns, 2001 to 2003, it has been my base since I moved to Australia in 1975. I recognize the support I received from James Cook University during my time in Cairns.

I came up with the idea used to organize the first edition at a conference on field work questionnaires held at the Center for Applied Linguistics, Washington, DC. I said the best way to prepare for field work is to gain a good idea of what to look for. People thought this was right so I was asked to do the organizing. There have been surveys in the past but, I believe, none with this scope. The first edition has served as a reference manual and a textbook around the world and I have no doubt the second edition will as well. I have been pleased by the number of good linguists who have told me they have referred to our survey while doing field work valuable to us all.

Interest in the question of what the languages of the world are like is a longstanding one, but in the modern era Joseph Greenberg is an outstanding scholar who did important early work himself and was a model for others to do the same.

In an obituary for Joseph Greenberg by Steve Miller the distinction is made between taxonomists who are lumpers and splitters. Steve Miller says:

It is fitting that it was Darwin who first thought of the distinction between lumpers and splitters; the OED gives him the first citation of the words as applied to taxonomists. Lumpers gloss over or explain differences in pursuit of hidden unities; splitters do the opposite, stressing diversity.

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Joseph Greenberg was a linguistic lumper and his dream of recreating the ur-language of humanity must stand as one of the greatest lumping dreams of all time. He dreamed of deep unity, and he spent an extremely long career pursuing evidence for it. He was still publishing highly technical evidence when he died, at age 85.

It is sad that he never published a manifesto, but he was a scientist and his inductive sensibility was not prone to making sweeping statements unsupported by minute attention to evidence. The nearest he came was in his conclusion to the controversial 1987 *Language in the Americas*, a book that grouped all languages in the western hemisphere into three families: 'The ultimate goal is a comprehensive classification of what is very likely a single language family. The implications of such a classification for the origin and history of our species would, of course, be very great.' Very great, as in, language was invented once and we might even have some ideas about what that language sounded like.

I was with Joseph Greenberg at Stanford University when he was doing his work, scouring through the part of the library that had grammars, making his counts: if you find construction *x* in a language you will always find, or you will be likely to find, construction *y*. This kind of commonality intrigued him. More from Steve Miller:

The splitters of linguistics have this problem: they're just not as interesting as the lumpers. The splitters' story is that the origins of language are irretrievable, so we should value every language for its expressive ability, but not for its place in the grand drama of linguistic diffusion. Greenberg, and the Nostraticists, and others who have tried to talk about language as a unity, dreamed something that may never be provable, but will continue to inspire us as a story that unites the human race as part of an ongoing story.

We give aid to both the lumpers and the splitters but, I believe, most of all to the lumpers. Languages differ from each other but only to a certain degree. Humankind is united in its use of language. This is an important message for us all as we go about our pursuits and combine with others to deal with the world.

Canberra, Australia
September 2004

TIMOTHY SHOPEN

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Abbreviations and symbols

The following are abbreviations for grammatical terms used frequently in the glosses for examples. Other abbreviations are explained as they are presented.

A	subject of transitive clause
ABL	ablative
ABS	absolutive
ACC	accusative
ACT	actor
ADESS	adessive
ADJ	adjective
ADV	adverb
AFFIRM	affirmative
AG	agent
ALL	allative
ANIM	animate
ANT	anterior
ANTIPASS	antipassive
AOR	aurist
AP	actor pivot
APPLIC	applicative
ART	article
ASP	aspect
AUX	auxiliary
BEN	benefactive
BP	benefactive pivot
CAUS	causative
CF	counterfactual conjunction
CLSFR	classifier
COMP	complementizer
COMPAR	comparative
COMPLET	completive
CONCUR	concurrent

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CONJ	conjunction
CONTIN	continuous
COP	copula
DAT	dative
DEBIT	debitive
DECL	declarative
DEF	definite
DEM	demonstrative
DEP	dependent
DET	determiner
DIR	directional
DIST	distal
DL	dual
DO	direct object
DP	directional pivot
DS	different subject
DU	dual
DUR	durative
EMPH	emphatic
ERG	ergative
ESS	essive
EXCL	exclusive
EXIST	existential
EXIST(NEG)	existential negator
EZ	ezafe
F, FEM	feminine
FUT	future
GEN	genitive
HABIT	habitual
HORT	hortative
IMPER	imperative
IMPERF	imperfect(ive)
IMPRS	impersonal
INAN	inanimate
INCEP	inceptive
INCL	inclusive
INCOMP	incompletive
INDEF	indefinite
INDIC	indicative
INFER	inferential
INFIN	infinitive
INSTR	instrumental

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xviii Abbreviations and symbols

INT	interrogative
INTENS	intensifier
INTRANS	intransitive
INV	inverse
INVOL	involuntary
IO	indirect object
IRR	irrealis
LD	locative-directional
LINK	linker
LOC	locative
M MASC	masculine
MED	medial (intermediate between proximal and distal)
MID	middle
MOM	momentary
MONIT	monitory
MOT	motion
NC	noun class
NEAR	time close to now
NEG	negative
NEUT	neuter
NFN	non-finite
NOM	nominative
NOMIN	nominalization
NONLOCUT	nonlocutor
NONSPEC	nonspecific
NP	noun phrase
NUM	numeral
OBJ	object
OBLIQ	oblique
OBV	obviative
OM	object marker
OP	object pivot
OPT	optative
ORD	ordinal
P	object of transitive clause
PAR	partitive
PASS	passive
PAST	past tense
PC	paucal
PERF	perfect/perfective
PFX	prefix
PIV	pivot

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PL	plural
PN	proper name / proper noun
POSS	possessive
POSSD	possessed
POTENT	potential
PP	prepositional phrase
PRED	predicative
predP	predicate phrase
PREFL	possessive reflexive
PREP	preposition
PRES	present
PRET	preterite
PRO.ADJ	pro-adjective
PROG	progressive
PROHIB	prohibitive
PROL	prolative
PRT	particle
PTCL	particle
PTCPL	participle
PTV	primary transitive verb
PUNCT	punctual
PURP	purposive
Q	question marker
QUOT	quotative
REAL	realis
REC.PAST	recent past
RECIP	reciprocal
REFL	reflexive
REL	relative clause marker
REM	remote
REM.PAST	remote past
S	subject of intransitive clause
SEQ	sequential marker
SG	singular
SJNCT	subjunctive
S.O.	someone
SS	same subject
STAT	stative
SUBJ	subject
SUBORD SUFF	subordinative suffix
SUFF	suffix
SUPEREL	superrelative

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xx	Abbreviations and symbols
TNS	tense
TOP	topic
TR	transitive
TRANS	transitive
UNSPEC.OBJ	unspecified object
LONSPEC.SUBJ	unspecified subject
V	verb
VOL	volitional
VP	verb phrase
V.INTR	intransitive verb
V.DTR	ditransitive verb
V.TR	transitive verb
1	first person
2	second person
3	third person
1SG	first person singular (etc.)
3PL	third person plural (etc.)
∅	zero marking
-	affix boundary
=	clitic boundary
< >	infix
*	ungrammatical phrase or sentence
/	high tone
	low tone
^	rise – fall tone or falling tone
??	only marginally grammatical
\	falling into nation contour [chapter 5]
/	rising into nation contour [chapter 5]

Unless otherwise indicated in a chapter, Roman numerals are used for noun classes.

‘NC’ with a subscript number ‘x’ means ‘Noun class x’.