

## The principal linguistic types

The following paragraphs (with an accompanying map) resume a theory of linguistic typological affinity and classification advanced by the author in various places in earlier works (for which see the Bibliography at the end of this résumé).

The division into main structural types, as presented in the above works, is based on morphological and historic-comparative considerations. This implies, in the first place, that phonetic, syntactic or lexicological features are disregarded as unessential for this classification, although theoretically they may in some measure play an indirect or accessory part (upon which will not be entered here except in passing). In the second place, it implies that synchronically observable features are not considered as basal (as is often the case in typological classification, in which different phonetic or syntactic systems are used as a basis) <sup>1</sup>.

The reason for this is not that the older the forms obtainable through linguistic reconstruction are the safer they will be considered as a basis for a classification, which would be a rather subjective argument. As a matter of fact, the author is not mainly interested in *old forms*, but rather in *structures* as they reveal themselves in the history of a group of languages, that is to say structural patterns which are found to have held over long periods. Hence, the principles of comparative linguistics—in a wider sense—are adhered to rather than a statistical method applied to observable facts within a certain late period <sup>2</sup>.

As regards a morphologically (rather than syntactically) founded analysis of linguistic structures, as a basis of classification, the former has been chosen by the author on account of its higher degree of concreteness and tangibility. For this reason certain narrowly circumscribed aspects of the morphology are being adopted as suitable criteria, of which an account will

1 The latter, for instance, in Ernst Lewy's fundamental work, *Der Bau der europäischen Sprachen* (Lewy, 1942).

2 This implies that the author holds languages grouped as of the same type as more or less distantly "related"; the notion of a "typological" relationship as different from a "genetic" relationship has been rejected earlier by the author as entirely unrealistic, since types as well as forms or words must of necessity be considered in an equal way "inherited" from previous stages (Holmer, 1965, pp. 37-38).

now be given afresh (cf. Holmer, 1966, pp. 54-56; Holmer, Uesson and Smedberg, 1961, pp. 7-14, especially the Note 7).

The classification is to a large extent based on the placement of *bound* morphemes in relation to a concrete (i.e. noun or verb) stem<sup>3</sup>. As grammatical morphemes under this theory count the following only: (1) *pronominal* morphemes (which are morphological elements expressing the grammatical *person*, such as first, second, third, etc., or analogous elements, whether occurring in the declension or flection of nouns, as in languages using possessive prefixes or suffixes, or in the conjugation or flection of verbs) and (2) *adnominal*<sup>4</sup> morphemes (which are morphological elements expressing case relations and analogous functions, either in nouns or verbs, answering to case suffixes, postpositions, prepositions, certain conjunctions or gerundial forms).

According to the mutual arrangement of these morphemes, the following main types arise: (1) pronominal morphemes are either prefixes alone or prefixes and suffixes combined (often with «prefix vowels»; see Holmer, 1947, pp. 27-31; 1966, p. 83, § 17.1, p. 88, § 17.5), while adnominal morphemes are suffixes (type I); pronominal and adnominal morphemes are all suffixes (Type II); and finally, pronominal morphemes are suffixes, adnominal morphemes are prefixes (Types III and IV; cf. Holmer, 1966, pp. 54-55; Holmer, Uesson and Smedberg, 1961, pp. 7-14). This means that Types III and IV are not to be distinguished in this respect and according to these criteria<sup>5</sup>. As to this, compare further ahead.

Although the above criteria are represented as distinctive, they are evidently not the only ones on which the present classification is built up. Types III and IV are in point of arrangement of the basic morphological elements, and also in many other respects, very similar, while on the other hand some important differences are observable. Among these, the fundamental distinctive feature may be said to be that in type IV the concrete morphemes are still basically nominal, while in Type III an early differentiation of a nominal and verbal inflection may be assumed.

As indicated, the use of the above criteria is fundamental for the typological classification as proposed here. Other characteristics may, however,

3 Since noun and verb stems (or a nominal or verbal inflection) are not always clearly differentiable in all linguistic types, the author refers to the "concrete" stem (whether nominal or verbal in character) by the term *nominal* morpheme.

4 The term "adnominal" (instead of the more conventional "adverbial") is chosen to conform with the use of the term *nominal* (=nominal or verbal; cf. Note 3), under the author's theory of classification.

5 Strangely, there seems to be no general or long established type in which both pronominal and adnominal morphemes are *prefixes*. The author has reckoned with the possibility, however, and made reference to a "type in evolution" (Holmer, 1966, p. 114, with the Note 47).

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be found and partly utilized, falling both within the phonetic structure of the languages and within the structure of the concrete word stems (or nominal morphemes). Thus Types I or II are generally characterized by the lack of a distinction of voiced and voiceless plosives, while in Type I glottalized phonemes are not seldom found. Types III and IV are marked by the absence of glottalized phonemes and by the presence of phonemically distinct voiced plosives<sup>6</sup>. Type I is often characterized by a basic mechanical stress system according to which the second syllable from the beginning of the word, or phonetic unit, tends to be stressed. In Type II, on the other hand, word-initial stress, according to the same kind of mechanical norms, is characteristic (see Holmer, 1963, pp. 55, 61). (This seems to have some connection with the prefix or suffix character of the respective types.) In Types III and IV, a free word accent may appear<sup>7</sup>.

The nominal stem (unprovided with derivative or other affixes) is very often monosyllabic in Type I and characteristically dissyllabic in Type II. In Types III and IV, the triconsonantal system shows a marked tendency to establish itself (cf. Semitic and Austronesian). Here again Types III and IV coincide, while they differ on another point, namely in so far as Type III treats the *first* two consonants as semantically basic, whereas in Type IV this holds for the *last* two consonants. At the same time *ablaut* (or other kinds of vowel alternation) makes an appearance in Types III and IV (in the former often systematized, as in Semitic and Hamitic, in the latter often more irregular, as in Austronesian); in Types I and II vowel alternation is practically unknown.

As for the distribution of the four main types, rough map sketches have previously been published (Holmer, 1963 a, 1966, Holmer, Uesson and Smedberg, 1961). According to these, Europe and Asia are the main strongholds of Type II (originally called the «Palaeo-Eurasian Suffix Type»), while Africa and the Near East are the center of Type III (the «Semitic-African Type»). Type IV (the «Austroasiatic Type») prevails in southeast Asia and Oceania (Holmer, 1963 b). As for the American continents, Type I (the «Palaeo-Eurasian-American Prefix Type») dominates, while Type II appears more exceptionally (chiefly in the western parts or in those geographically adjacent to northeast Asia; see Holmer, 1956, pp. 14-16; 1958, p. 13, with Note 5, on p. 24). In Australia the situation is reversed: Type II prevails, while Type I is sparingly represented in the north (or the parts

<sup>6</sup> It seems that in the general evolution of the languages of the world a tendency prevails to give up glottalization and to evolve a system characterized by a phonemic opposition of voiced and unvoiced plosives (cf. Holmer, 1949, pp. 1 sqq. *et passim*).

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Brockelmann, *Semitische Sprachwissenschaft* (Samml. Göschen 291), p. 60 (§ 49.1). In Austronesian, this system survives in the Philippine languages (and, as it seems, in some others in Micronesia).

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nearest to Timor and New Guinea; Holmer, 1963 a, pp. 46-50 and 51-55). Type I is otherwise typically marginal, occurring interruptedly from the Iberian Peninsula in Europe, via residual language groups in the Caucasus, the Himalayas and central Asia, to small areas in northeast and southeast Asia (Sternberg, 1906; Capell, 1944, 1951-52; Ono, 1957, pp. 38-39, 50; Tailleur, 1960, p. 113, 1966; Holmer, 1953, 1969, the latter with references to Tailleur), sparsely in western Africa (Holmer, 1953, p. 166, Note 27) and Oceania (for instance, New Guinea and Timor). Types III and IV have a relatively limited extensión, in so far as they have never reached either America or Australia (until the time of European colonization).

On the appended map, the different linguistic types are represented in different colors (see the legend); fields left in blank mark areas not investigated or of undetermined type). In the case where parallel zones of different color are marked, an assumed mixed type is indicated, to be interpreted in such a way that according to the author's theory a type of a lower number (e.g. I or II) has become gradually influenced by a type of a higher number (e.g. III or IV)<sup>8</sup>. Thus blue and golden zones mark a type (or subtype) in the process of passing from Type II to Type III (in practice the Indo-European languages). The marking of transitional types has, however, not been done systematically, for obvious reasons (cf. Note 8), and it is to be understood also that, as in all classification, overlapping, transition and blending of types make a strict adherence to objective norms a serious problem on all levels.

Finally, the map is historical in the sense that linguistic facts are represented according to the earliest known data, whence certain chronological inconsistencies necessarily arise, especially between the Old and the New World or Oceania.

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Nils M. Holmer establece una división en cuatro tipos estructurales, basada en datos morfológicos e histórico-comparativos. Los rasgos fonéticos, sintácticos o lexicológicos no son esenciales, bajo este punto de vista, aunque

<sup>8</sup> For technical reasons this method has been applied only in the case of blue and golden zones (in Europe and the Near East). In other parts, however, blue, red or green patches within a larger coherent field of a *different* color sometimes-in the case of green patches in India, always-mark mixed types (that is types basically "red" tending toward "blue" or basically "blue" tending toward "green").

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puedan ofrecer una cierta ayuda, ni son esenciales tampoco los rasgos que se pueden advertir sincrónicamente —como ocurre en una clasificación tipológica—.

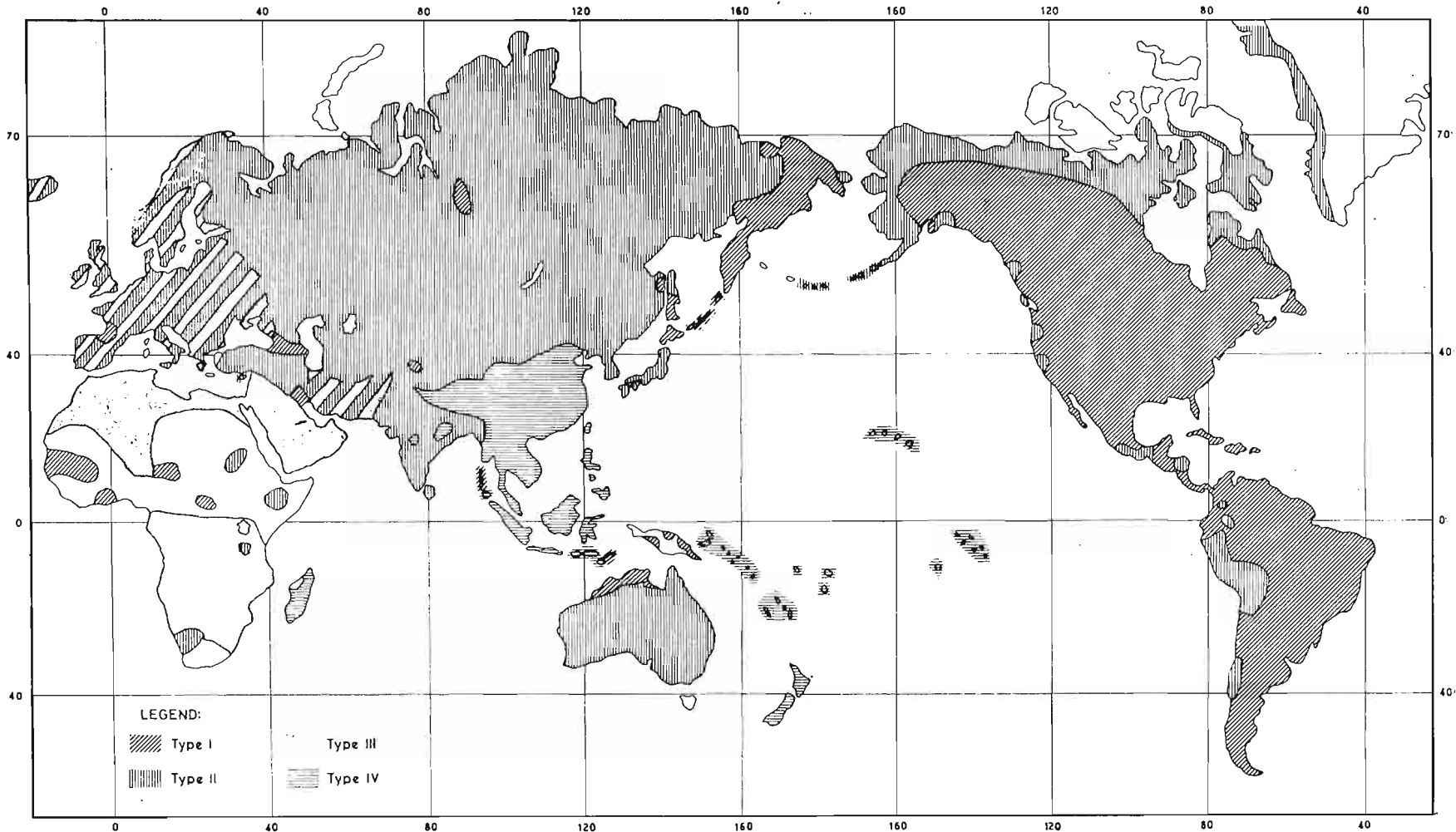
La clasificación desarrolla la situación de los morfemas-límite respecto a una raíz, sea sustantivo o verbo. Es decir, sólo cuentan los morfemas pronominales y los adnominales. Los pronominales son elementos morfológicos que expresan la persona gramatical; los adnominales, relaciones casuales y otras análogas.

Los cuatro tipos lingüísticos son:

- 1) los morfemas pronominales son prefijos o prefijos y sufijos; los adnominales, sufijos;
- 2) ambos son sufijos;
- 3) y 4) los pronominales son sufijos y los adnominales, prefijos. Pero ambos tipos se distinguen en que mientras en el 3) cabe establecer diferencias entre las inflexiones nominales y verbales, en el 4) los morfemas son básicamente nominales.

Finalmente, el autor concreta las características fonéticas y señala las fuentes que le han servido para la fijación geográfica de los tipos lingüísticos propuestos.

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