

Introduction to Phonological Analysis

(Preliminary) syllabus for LING 232A/632A

Fall 2013

Details

Meeting: Tuesday and Thursday 2.30–3.45 DOW 112
Instructor: Tamás Biró
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Websites: Classes*v2, and backup: <http://www.biro.hu/courses/2013-Phon/>

Description

This course is the first semester course in phonology, one of the core domains of linguistics, followed by *Phonological Theory* (LING 235b/635b), to be offered in the spring semester. The two courses together prepare the students to read critically and do original work in the field of phonology. This course introduces the most important *phonological phenomena* in the languages of the world, the tools needed to construct *phonological analyses*, and it also surveys *phonological representations* that have been developed across various phonological domains. Additionally, it traces the development of phonological theory, including SPE, Lexical Phonology, Autosegmental Phonology, wrapping up with the development of Optimality Theory (OT). The second semester course focuses on developing a rigorous foundation in current phonological theory, especially on the principles and results of *Optimality Theory*, the dominant theoretical framework nowadays.

Requirements

Reading and participation (10%): There will be a reading assignment for each class, which you should have read carefully and thought about before the class. Lectures will be based on the readings, but we cannot cover all the reading material in class. The assignments will require familiarity with both readings and lectures, and active in-class participation will be part of your grade.

Homework (60% for undergrads, 45% for grads): Your grade will be based in large part on roughly weekly problem sets. You are encouraged to collaborate on the problems, discuss them, and even work through them together. However, you must write up your solutions to the homework on your own. Unless a good reason is provided, the homework must be handed in on paper in class.

Exams (2 × 15%): There will be two take-home exams during the term, each worth 15%. The first will be **due in October**, and the second will be due at the beginning of the final week, **around December 13**. The exams will be extended more in-depth problem sets, which you must work on entirely on your own. Undergrads have the option to replace the second exam with a term paper, see below.

Term paper (15%): Graduate students will also write a short term paper (8-12 pages) on some topic in phonology. The paper will be due at the end of the final week, **around December 18**. A 1-2 page prospectus will be due on **November 14**. I encourage everyone to talk to me about possible topics as early as possible.

Undergraduate students may opt to write a term paper in lieu of the second exam. This should be decided early in the term so an appropriate topic can be chosen and a prospectus completed by **November 14**. The term paper for undergraduates should also be around 8-12 pages.

“Fieldwork”

During the course, you will carry out a pseudo-fieldwork. At the beginning of the semester, you choose a language that is neither your mother tongue, nor English. It can be a language you are familiar with. More challenging would be if you found an “exotic” language that you do not speak, but know a native speaker of. We will make sure every student chooses a different language. You are encouraged to look up descriptive grammars and theoretical articles discussing “your” language.

During the course, we shall cover various topics (segmental phonology, tones, stress, syllable structure, etc.) and discuss numerous frameworks (SPE-rules, autosegmental phonology, lexical phonology, OT, etc.). Each time you will have to consider how these phenomena and frameworks apply to “your” language.

The goal of this course is to learn how to carry out a phonological analysis. Therefore, you will have to report repeatedly during the semester (e.g., homework, midterm, final exam, term paper) what you will have come up with. There will be no “true” and “false” analyses, but careful ones, sophisticated ones, weighing pro and con arguments, (critically) reflecting upon the general theories, etc.

Textbook and other readings

The course is structured primarily around Bruce Hayes’ textbook, *Introducing Phonology* (2009), which is required and available from the bookstore (and referred to as ‘H’ on the schedule).

We will also be doing a significant amount of supplementary readings. These required readings will be provided to you, and a number of them will be drawn from Michael Kenstowicz’s *Phonology in Generative Grammar* (1994, abbreviated as ‘K’) and John A. Goldsmith (ed.)’s *Phonological Theory: The Essential Readings* (1999, referred to as ‘G’).

Academic honesty

Yale does not tolerate plagiarism, and Yale policy will be fully enforced. For more information, refer to <http://yalecollege.yale.edu/content/cheating-plagiarism-and-documentation>. For more help on citing sources, you may also want to check out <http://writing.yalecollege.yale.edu/using-sources>. Please feel free to consult the lecturer in case of doubts.

Tentative course outline (required reading)

Week 1	08/28:	Introduction and course overview (Odden 2005, chapter 1).
Week 2	09/03:	Phonetics and phonetic transcriptions: a review (H 1).
	09/05*:	[Saussure on phonology (Saussure 1916, pp.).]
Week 3	09/10:	Phonemes and allophones (H 2-3).
	09/12:	Phonemic analysis and levels of representation (K 2.5-2.7).
Week 4	09/17:	Distinctive features and underspecification (H 4, K2.0-2.4).
	09/19:	Discussion, problems
Week 5	09/24:	Morpho-phonological Analysis I (H 5-6).
	09/26:	Chomsky and Halle 1968 (G 1)
Week 6	10/01:	Morpho-phonological Analysis II (H 7-8, 12, K 3.0-3.4).
	10/03:	Rule ordering and interactions.
Week 7	10/08:	Lexical phonology (K 5).
	10/10:	Kiparsky 1982 (G 3)
Week 8	10/15:	Productivity and gradience (H 9).
	10/17:	Discussion, problems

Take-home midterm due about here

Week 9	10/22:	Rules vs. analogy (Albright and Hayes 2003).
	10/24:	OCTOBER RECESS
Week 10	10/29:	Nonlinear phonology (Odden 2005, chapter 10)
	10/31:	Goldsmith 1976 (G 8)
Week 11	11/05:	Syllables, syllabification and related processes (H 13)
	11/07:	Discussion, problems
Week 12	11/12:	Stress and stress-based rules (H 14)
	11/14:	Conspiracies and motivations of Optimality Theory (McCarthy 2002, chapter 2)
Week 13	11/19:	Introduction to Optimality Theory (McCarthy 2008, chapter 1)
	11/21:	Typology and acquisition (Levelt and van de Vijver 2004)
		NOVEMBER RECESS
Week 14	12/03:	Learnability (Tesar 2007, Albright and Hayes 2011)
	12/05:	Summary.

Final examination: 12/12/2103, Thursday, 7.00 pm (TBC).

** Please note: There will be no class on Thursday, September 5 (Rosh Hashanah). We may have a make-up class during the Reading Week.*

Preliminary bibliography

- Albright, Adam, and Bruce Hayes (2003). Rules vs. analogy in English past tenses: A computational/experimental study. *Cognition* 90(2):119-161.
- Albright, Adam, and Bruce Hayes (2011). Learning and learnability in phonology. In Goldsmith, John A., Jason Riggle, and C. L. Alan (eds): *The Handbook of Phonological Theory*. Wiley. com, Second Edition: 661-690.
- Levelt Clara and Ruben van de Vijver (2004). Syllable types in cross-linguistic and developmental grammars. In R. Kager, J. Pater, W. Zonneveld (eds.), *Fixing Priorities: Constraints in Phonological Acquisition*. Cambridge University Press.
- McCarthy, John (2002). *A Thematic Guide to Optimality Theory*. Cambridge University Press.
- McCarthy, John (2008). *Doing Optimality Theory: Applying Theory to Data*. Blackwell Publisher.
- Saussure, Ferdinand de (1916). *Course in general linguistics*. (Different editions)
- Tesar, Bruce (2007). Learnability. In Paul de Lacy (ed.): *The Cambridge Handbook of Phonology*, Cambridge University Press, 555-574.