

Spring 2010

Linguistics 321, Phonology

Tues 10:30-11:20, Thurs 9:30-11:20 AQ5030

Contact information

Instructor: Dr. John D. Alderete
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Office hours: Tues 12-1, Thurs 2-1, or by appointment
Prerequisite: LING 221 or LING 310
Webpage: www.sfu.ca/~alderete (go to Teaching Page, scroll down to Linguistics 321)

Course description and content

This course will explore some foundations of phonological theory with a focus on ‘non-linear’ phonological structure, or structure above and below the segment. The first part of the course focuses on feature geometry, which is a kind of tree structure below the phonological segment. The second part deals with the prosodic hierarchy, or tree structure above the segment, like the use of syllables to group consonants and vowels. An over-arching theme in the course is that phonological representations have rich hierarchical structure, and an explicit understanding of this structure can lead to better explanations in phonology.

Course goals

- Non-linear phonology: to establish background in the content areas discussed above
- Problem solving: to hone skills in organizing linguistic data and finding patterns, as well as applying the analytical techniques of non-linear phonology to this data
- Linguistic argumentation: to develop skills in arguing for one analysis over another, or the advancement of one scientific hypothesis over others
- Cogent written expression: to develop scientific writing skills for linguistic analysis, including clear and explicit characterizations of linguistic patterns, hypotheses, and argumentation

Required readings (available at the Bookstore or from the library's ejournal web interface)

- Carlos Gussenhoven and Haïke Jacobs. *Understanding Phonology*. London: Arnold Publishing Ltd, 1998. ISBN: 0-340-69218-9.
- Padgett, Jaye. 2008. Glides, vowels and features. *Lingua* 118, issue 12, pp. 1937-1955.
- Kapatsinski, Vsevolod. 2009. Testing theories of linguistic constituency with configurational learning: The case of the English syllable. *Language* 85, pp. 248-277.

Weighting of course assignments

- | | |
|-------------------------|-----|
| • Participation | 10% |
| • First exam (Feb. 4) | 15% |
| • Homeworks (several) | 40% |
| • Article summary (one) | 10% |
| • Second exam (Apr. 1) | 25% |

Course policies and expectations

1. Attendance and participation: students are expected to attend all classes and be active participants. This involves arriving to class on time, being engaged in lectures, and taking careful notes. Active listening is also key to participating, and it can be demonstrated by asking pertinent questions and incorporating discussion points in written assignments. Attendance will be taken in the first five minutes of class, and, together with overall participation, it will be a factor in the grade (see course weightings).

2. Readings and lecture notes: Students are expected to have read all assigned readings before class. Lecture notes based on the reading and the class lecture will also be provided as an aid to understanding the textbook and readings. The lecture notes are just a skeletal treatment of the lecture, however, and are not a substitute for the class lecture. Because many students will be learning about a new field of study in this class, some of the materials and concepts may seem fairly complex. In such cases, students should read assigned readings and go over the lecture notes multiple times. A good principle is to go over all the lecture notes once a week, as they accumulate. Students are expected to bring the assigned textbook to all class sessions and assigned readings on the days that they are discussed.

4. Exams: If you have to miss an exam because of illness, you are required to contact me prior to the exam. You may notify me by e-mail. When you return to class, I will need a note from your medical doctor specifying the date of your absence and the reason. I will call the doctor to confirm the note. Following departmental policy, make-ups for exams will not be given. If you have a doctor's note for the date of the first or second exam, the weight of that exam will be added to the other exam and to other assignments. Unexcused absence from an exam will result in a grade of 0 for it. Further, under no circumstances will students be allowed to write exams early. If you have travel or work plans during the semester, you are responsible for ensuring that they do not conflict with the examination schedule.

5. Academic dishonesty: Academic dishonesty in all forms violates the basic principles of integrity and thus impedes learning. More specifically, academic dishonesty is a form of misconduct that is subject to disciplinary action and includes the following: cheating, fabrication, fraud, facilitating academic dishonesty, and plagiarism. For more information on academic honesty and student conduct, please visit the following websites:

http://www.reg.sfu.ca/calendar/General_Regs.html#897900

<http://www.sfu.ca/policies/teaching/index.htm>

If a student is found guilty of plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty on a class paper, an assignment, or an exam, an academic dishonesty report will be written for that student. This report is filed in the department. The student receives a grade of zero for the paper, assignment, or exam. If more than one academic dishonesty report has been filed for a student, the case can be presented to the University Board on Student Discipline.

6. Work in groups: Students are allowed to work in groups of up to four persons for completing the homework assignments, provided the following rules are adhered to. The members of a group must register with the instructor before the submission of the first assignment. This must be done in writing, either by email or by giving the instructor a written statement of the group members. If a member of a group wishes to change from one group to another, or a student wants to join a group, this action must also be documented in writing prior to submission of a new homework. The members of any given group cannot communicate with students outside of their group on any assignment. Each group member is responsible for the entire content of the written assignment, and therefore the grade given to a group will be recorded for each member.

7. Email: I enjoy getting thoughtful questions over email, so students are encouraged to submit questions and comments to me via e-mail. Indeed, this is another way you can participate actively in the class. Because of the large number of e-mail messages that I receive, however, it may be a couple of days before I am able to reply to your message. As a courtesy, please: proof-read your email, provide an informative subject header containing the course number and important keywords, and obey the rules of polite email exchanges.

Coursework

Homework assignments

- There will be several problem-solving homework assignments. They will include problems that require you to account for various phonological phenomena from different languages. They will have a substantial writing component, often asking for answers in the form of short paragraphs. This work will be evaluated based on the correctness and coherence of your analysis using cogent writing.
- Homeworks must be submitted on the days that they are due. No late homeworks will be accepted. If you cannot submit a homework due to illness, the weight of the grade will fall on the remaining homeworks, provided advanced notice and proper documentation of illness is given (exactly as with the exam policy).
- See above policy on working in groups.

Exams

- There will be two in-class exams that are weighted more than an homework (see course weightings). All exams will be closed-book and will include essay questions and analysis of linguistic data, though portions of the dataset may be made available in advance.
- The exams will be evaluated based on the correctness of your answers/analysis and coherence of your argumentation in proper English. Prior to each exam, formats will be explained and a review provided.
- Because of the importance of writing in the course, the instructor will alert the student to any problems in language proficiency or writing that may be an obstacle to success in the class. The results of the first exam will be available prior to the add/drop period to enable students to withdraw from the class if that is in their best interest.
- See course expectations above on the departmental policy on missing exams.
- Note: There will be NO final examination.

Article summary: Padgett 2008

- One assignment will involve summarizing a linguistics article (named above). It will involve reading the article carefully to fully understand the argument, creating an outline, and writing a cogent summary of the main points.
- Students may discuss the article together, but may not submit an article as a group. Instead, each student should write original summary independently.
- See the guidelines for writing analytical summaries and the example model summary on the course website to get a sense of how to do this assignment.

Grades

The following table provides a rough estimate of grade breakdowns for the final grade. Due attention will be given to the verbal descriptions listed below. Note that there is no university-wide standard scale. An instructor adopts a grade scale appropriate to the level and content of the course.

97-100%	A+	85-88%	B+	73-76%	C+	57-64%	D
93-96%	A	81-84%	B	69-72%	C	< 56%	F
89-92%	A-	77-80%	B-	65-68%	C-		

A – extraordinary (A+) or excellent performance (A, A-): a thorough, critical, insightful understanding and application of concepts.

B – good performance: a thorough understanding and application of concepts.

C – satisfactory performance: some understanding and application of concepts, but also some inaccurate recall, recognition, or application of concepts.

D – minimally satisfactory performance: a very limited understanding and application of concepts; considerable inaccuracies in the recall, recognition, or application of concepts.

F – unsatisfactory performance (fail): insufficient understanding of concepts, incomplete assignments, and/or academic dishonesty.

Grade appeals. If a student wishes to contest the marking of an exam or assignment, the instructor can agree to remark his/her entire exam at the instructor's convenience and not in front of the student. A grade reconsideration may raise the grade, lower the grade, or leave the grade unchanged, as stated in Policy T20.01, clause IV.2. The only reason a grade change will be made is if there is an arithmetic error or if it has been determined that the exam deserves a lower grade or a higher grade after it has been remarked.

Tips for success

In general, students who do well in this course follow these principles:

- Attend all classes.
- Review class notes regularly (i.e., before and after each class).
- Do all assignments and exercises on time.
- Ask questions in class or during office hours. At least one question a week.
- Maintain a positive attitude.

Course schedule

Please be advised that the schedule may change if we need to spend more or less time on certain topics. Chapters are listed from the textbook under Readings and lecture note numbers and titles are listed under Lectures. Homework assignments will be announced over email and in class.

Dates	Lecture	Readings
Jan. 5, 7	1. Introduction, 2. Tone	9
12, 14	3. Feature geometry, 4. Harmony I	11
19, 21	5. Harmony II, review	12.1, 12.2
26, 28	6. Delinking, 7. Root restrictions	
Feb. 2, 4	First exam [Feb. 4] , 8. Complex segments	12.3, 12.4
9, 11	Analytical summary due [Feb. 11] , 9. CV tier	Padgett 2008
<i>Olympics break</i>		
Mar. 2, 4	10. Syllables, 11. Moras	10
Mar. 9, 11	12. Stress feet	13
16, 18	12. continued, 13. Prosodic morphology	
23, 25	14. Prosodic words, review for exam	15
30, Apr. 1	Second exam, [Apr. 1]	
Apr. 6, 8	Second article reading	Kapatsinski 2009
13, 15	15. Optimality Theory	3.4, 3.5