

Linguistics 321, Phonology

Wednesday 1:30-2:20, Friday 12:30-2:20

Contact information

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Prerequisite: LING 221
Webpage: www.anderei.net (go to Teaching, 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 consonants and vowels into well-formed syllables. 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
- Scientific writing: to develop scientific writing skills for linguistic analysis, including clear and explicit characterizations of linguistic patterns, hypotheses, and argumentation

Required readings

- Zsiga, Elizabeth C. 2013. *The sounds of language. An introduction to phonetics and phonology*. Wiley-Blackwell. Available at the bookstore (there may be a more recent edition, which is fine.)
- Selected articles available on Canvas. **N.b.: these are not supplemental readings; they replace textbook coverage on these topics. They can't be skipped.**
- Instructor's problem set for the course (handed out on first day, and on Canvas). **Bring these problem sets to all classes—they are important for following discussion.**

Readings for article summaries (on Canvas):

- Duanmu, San. 2007. Chapter 4 ‘The syllable’ of *The phonology of Standard Chinese* (Oxford University Press).
- Pulleyblank, Edwin. 1997. The Cantonese vowel system in historical perspective. In Wang Jialing and Norval Smith (eds.), pp. 185-217, *Studies in Chinese Phonology*, Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Weighting of course assignments

- Homeworks, seven, see Schedule 10%
- Mini-tests, **Mark calendars: June 1, June 29, July 27** 70%
- Article summaries, two, due: **July 6, Aug. 3** 20% **** Project Participation Opportunity**

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.
 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 or the readings. 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: there are no make-up exams or quizzes. If you have to miss an exam (midterm or quiz) because of medical reasons, you are required to contact me prior to the exam via email. By the following week, I will need a Certificate of Illness from your regular medical doctor specifying the date of your absence, the reason, and justification for missing the exam or quiz. You must use the Certificate of Illness form from the SFU Student Services Forms website to document your illness and it must be signed by your regular doctor. I will call the doctor to confirm the note, so the doctor or medical facility must be reachable to confirm the details of the certificate. Following departmental policy, make-ups for exams or quizzes will not be given. If you have a Certificate of Illness for the date of one of the exams, the weight of that exam will be added to the weight of the other exams. 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 website:
<http://www.sfu.ca/linguistics/undergraduate/student-resources/department-standards.html>
- 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. 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.
 7. Project participation: students may receive 'bonus points' for participating in a sanctioned research projects in the Department of Linguistics (see link below for sanctioned projects). In particular, a student may enroll in a project one time, and upon completion, s/he will receive a 5% grade increase on one analytical summary grade. For example, if original grade = 80, then increased to 85%.
http://www.sfu.ca/linguistics/research/Research_Participation_System.html.

Coursework

Exams

- 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.

- See course expectations above on the departmental policy on missing exams.
- Note: There will be NO final examination.

Article summaries: *two summaries, due July 6 and Aug 3 (see Schedule)*

- Article summaries involve summarizing a linguistics article (see the Schedule for specific articles and weblinks for accessing them). 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 examples of model summaries on the course website to get a sense of how to do this assignment.

Homeworks:

- Homeworks are focused problems designed to develop skills in the content areas of the class. The student is obliged to download each homework from the course website, print out and solve the problems, and bring it to class on the day it is due.
- Homeworks are graded on a “check, plus, minus” system, i.e., “check” (85%) means that it is completed and all answers are addressed, “plus” (95%) = completed and answers are addressed with thoughtfulness and care, or “minus” (75%) = incomplete in some way; there are no late homework assignments, so a homework not turned in receives zero credit.
- Homeworks are extremely useful for test preparation because homeworks are literally old exams. If you can master the homework problems, you will probably do well on the exams.

Tips for success

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

- Attend all classes.
- Do all assigned readings prior to the lectures based on these readings
- Review class notes regularly (e.g., once a week).
- Do all assignments and exercises on time. Go over the exercises.
- Ask questions in class or during office hours. Try to ask at least one question per week.
- Try to identify any technical or conceptual problems that are ‘nagging’ you, or preventing you from fully understanding the material. Ask questions about these things.
- 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. SOL = ‘The sounds of language’, the class textbook, and the lecture notes and homework assignments are weblinked on the ‘Schedule of lectures’ portion of the Ling 321 teaching page on the website.

May 11, Syllabus, Course Introduction

May 13, First Phonology Toolbox

Reading (review): SOL: 203-211 (phonemes and allophones), SOL: 257-267 (features), SOL: 279-284 (SPE rules)

May 18, Phonology Toolbox cont’d

Homework 1 due, problems in SOL p. 219 #11, p. 272 #6 #7, p. 301 # 8, SPE rules cont’d,

May 20, The feature tree

Reading: SOL 289-298, McCarthy 1988 (on Canvas)

May 25, The feature tree cont’d

Homework 2 due: English coronal assimilation (see class problem set)

May 27, Complex segments
Reading: Gussenhoven & Jacobs 'Complex segments' (on Canvas)

June 1, Exam 1 (entire class)

June 3, Autosegmental tone
Reading: SOL 375-392

June 8, Tone cont'd
Homework 3 due: Palaun nouns (see problem set)

June 10, Tone in Chinese languages
Reading: excerpt from Kenstowicz 1994 'Tone in Asian languages' (on Canvas)

June 15, Chinese tone cont'd
Homework 4 due: Siane tone (see problem set)

June 17, Syllables
Reading: SOL 331-338

June 22, Syllables cont'd
Homework 5 due: Sanskrit reduplication (see problem set)

June 24, Preparation for the exam, mid-semester course review

June 29, Exam 2 (entire class)

July 1, not class

July 6, Discussion of Duanmu 2007 'The syllable' in Mandarin (on Canvas)
Due: analytical summary of Duanmu 2007

July 8, The CV tier

July 13, The CV tier cont'd
Homework 6 due: Mori Bawah clusters (see problem set)

July 15, The mora, Stress feet
Reading: SOL 333-341, 354-368

July 20, Stress feet cont'd
Homework 7 due: Fijian stress (see problem set)

July 22, Stress feet cont'd, preparation for exam

July 27, Exam 3 (entire class)

July 29, Prosodic morphology

Aug 3, Discussion of Pulleyblank 1997 'The Cantonese vowel system in historical perspective' (on Canvas)
Due: article summary of Pulleyblank 1997

Aug 5, Introduction to Optimality Theory

Reading: SOL 305-322