

# Syllabus

## Ling 861

### Explanations of Typology in Phonology Spring 2009

#### Course information

<b>Instructor:</b> Jeff Heinz heinz@udel.edu 310-831-2924 42 E. Delaware, room 102 Office Hours: M 4:30-5:30pm Th 4:00-5:00pm	<b>Course:</b> Linguistics 861 Acoustic Phonetics Lecture: Wednesday 11:00 - 12:30, Ling conf room  and by appointment
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There is a class website with material posted to it. This site is

<http://www.ling.udel.edu/~heinz/classes/2009/861/>

#### What is this course about?

Linguists are interested in patterns in natural language. It is natural to ask whether any logically possible pattern could be a natural language one. In practically every area of linguistics (syntax, semantics, phonology, etc.) the answer is typically No. Hence we have at least two questions:

1. What are the possible patterns?
2. Why are these patterns the possible ones?

In phonology, these questions are old ones, but some recent developments are beginning to make clear various positions. This course investigates the kinds of factors scholars have claimed shape the typology of phonological patterns. Some words that have been used to describe these factors are: phonetics (e.g. articulatory or perceptual ease or similarity), grammar formalisms (i.e. universal grammar), innate biases, learning biases, channel bias, historical change, sound change, misperception, even feedback. The ideas encapsulated in these words are not necessarily in conflict and may be complementary. Other debates are about *how* a factor influences the typology. For example, there is a current debate whether phonetic shaping of the typology is synchronic (part of the grammar) or diachronic (a natural consequence of how languages are passed from one generation to the next).

## Materials

There is no required text but there are many required readings. Please see the attached (current) reading list.

## Grading

Participation	Paper Presentations	30%
	Class Discussions	20%
Research	Presentation	20%
	Paper	30%

Participation comes in two parts.

**Paper Presentations** Every class will focus on 1-2 papers. One student is expected to lead discussion of the paper (we will rotate). When appropriate, two students may lead discussion of one paper. For the first half of the semester these papers are scheduled, though the schedule is subject to change and I welcome your input. After Spring break, students are expected to choose interesting papers to present (relevant to your research project).

Paper presentations should be accompanied by slides or a handout. Try to avoid regurgitating the material in the text, section by section. Instead, begin with an interesting question, present the paper's analysis, consider how data not in the paper could be analyzed, try to find a counter-analysis, etc. I.e find a way to engage the material and to present it.

**Class Discussions** Presentations are not one-way affairs. The presenters are leaders of discussion, and questions and discussion are necessary for us to get the most out of these papers. Every student is expected to study the paper before class and ready to ask questions, answer questions, discuss, raise problematic data, etc.

Each student is expected to develop a research project. I would like to see students investigate some phonological phenomenon cross-linguistically, but am open to other suggestions related to what we cover in this class. This could be static phonology, such as vowel or consonantal inventories (or sub-inventories), consonant clusters, diphthongs, or any of a number of phonological alternations (e.g. metathesis, CV metathesis, CC metathesis, vowel harmony, vowel harmony with blocking, vowel harmony with transparent vowels, palatalization, ablaut, syncope, ...). Your research should state known typological generalizations, and possibly state new ones. Your research may either show why one theory is better than others for explaining (one or more of) these generalizations. It may also propose an experiment capable of distinguishing between two or more competing theories. The research component of the class comes in two parts.

**Presentation** Present your work to the class.

**Paper** Present your work in a paper to me.

## Course Outline

(subject to change)

Week	Dates	Mon	Wed
0	Feb. 10, 12		1
1	Feb. 17, 19	2	3
2	Feb. 24, 26	4	5
3	Mar. 3, 5	6	7
4	Mar. 10, 12	8	9
5	Mar. 17, 19	10	11
6	Mar. 24, 26	12	13
7	Mar. 31, Apr. 2	SPRING BREAK	NO CLASS
8	Apr. 7, 9	14	15
9	Apr. 14, 16	16	17
10	Apr. 21, 23	18	19
11	Apr. 28, 30	20	21
12	May 5, 7	Presentations	Presentations
13	May 12, 14	Presentations	Presentations
14	May 19	Paper due	

## Readings

1. Chapter 1. Blevins (2004)
  2. Hansson (2008), Anderson (2008)
  3. Ohala (1981)
  4. Chapter ?. Blevins (2004)
  5. Fleming (2004). Bradlow (1995)
  6. Gordon (2007)
  7. Kaun (2004)
  8. Wilson (2006)
  9. Moreton (2008)
  10. Chapter ?. Finley (2008)
  11. Becker et al.. Submitted manuscript.
  12. Hayes et al.. Submitted manuscript.
  13. Heinz. Submitted manuscript.
- 14-21 To be determined.

## References

- Anderson, Stephen. 2008. The Logical Structure of Linguistic Theory. *Language* 84(4):795–814.
- Becker, Michael, Andrew Nevins, and Nihan Ketrez. ????. The surfeit of the stimulus: Grammatical biases filter lexical statistics in Turkish voicing deneutralization. Submitted manuscript.
- Blevins, Juliette. 2004. *Evolutionary Phonology*. Cambridge University Press.
- Bradlow, Anne R. 1995. A comparative acoustic study of English and Spanish vowels. *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America* 97(3):1916–1924.
- Finley, Sara. 2008. The formal and cognitive restrictions on vowel harmony. Ph.D. thesis, Johns Hopkins University.
- Fleming, Edward. 2004. Contrast and perceptual distinctiveness. In Hayes et al. (2004), pages 232–276.

- Gordon, Matthew. 2007. Typology in Optimality Theory. *Language and Linguistics Compass*, 1(6):750–769.
- Hansson, Gunnary. 2008. Diachronic Explanations of Sound Patterns. *Language and Linguistics Compass* 2(5):859–893.
- Hayes, Bruce, Robert Kirchner, and Donca Steriade, eds. 2004. *Phonetically-Based Phonology*. Cambridge University Press.
- Hayes, Bruce, Kie Zuraw, Péter Siptár, and Zsuzsa Cziráky Londe. ????. Natural and Unnatural Constraints in Hungarian Vowel Harmony. Submitted manuscript, UCLA.
- Heinz, Jeffrey. ????. Learning Long Distance Phonotactics. Submitted manuscript.
- Kaun, Abigail. 2004. The Typology of Rounding Harmony. In Hayes et al. (2004), pages 87–116.
- Moreton, Elliot. 2008. Analytic bias and phonological typology. *Phonology* 25(1):83–127.
- Ohala, J.J. 1981. The listener as a source of sound change. In *Papers from the parasession on language and behavior: Chicago Linguistics Society*, edited by C.S. Masek, R.A. Hendrik, and M.F. Miller. pages 178–203.
- Wilson, Colin. 2006. Learning Phonology With Substantive Bias: An Experimental and Computational Study of Velar Palatalization. *Cognitive Science* 30(5):945–982.