Linguistics 200A: Phonological Theory I   Fall 2025

SYLLABUS

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Time	Tues & Thurs 10:00-11:50	**Professor**	Kie Zuraw [ˈkʰaj ˈzɜˌɔ], pronoun *she*
Place	Bunche 2150	**E-mail**	kie@ucla.edu
		Student drop-in hours	Thursdays 2:00-4:00, Campbell 3122A
			Fridays 3:00-4:30, Campbell 2122 (maybe)
Web page	log in to bruinlearn.ucla.edu and you should see Ling 200A in your list of courses		

Presumed background

- This is a *mixed-background* class
  - If you've never taken a course with 'phonology' in the name, come talk to me
- I try to present each topic so that everyone can get something out of it, and have something to contribute

Description

- We'll look at the relationship between **constraints and processes**, with a focus on **comparing theories' predictions**

Course goals

- The 200A-201A course sequence aims to leave you ready to…
  - understand and evaluate phonology literature
  - do your own research in phonology
  - by seeing why and how previous scholars have proposed changes to phonological theory, feel more confident about proposing your own changes

grade: squib 20%, readings 20%, assignment portfolio 60%
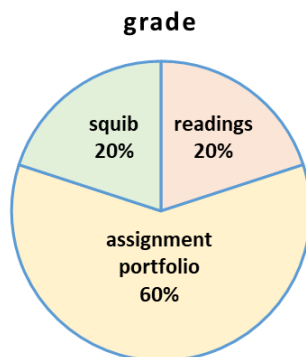
Squib

- A *short* paper due in exam week
- I'll give you a recipe to follow

Readings

- To make reading less lonely and help develop your ability to read research literature, we will use **perusall.com** to collaboratively annotate each reading.
  - Make free account and use code **ZURAW-9XGR7** to sign in to our course
  - Readings are uploaded there, each with annotation instructions
- Annotations should be done by end of Monday, but feel free to keep a discussion going indefinitely.

Assignment portfolio

- Assignments—exercises and longer analysis problems—will be posted on BruinLearn
- You'll have a chance to revise and resubmit the following week
- You can revise again, and submit final versions of them all in exam week

Collaboration

- Do collaborate on readings and assignments, but write up your assignments separately.
- Meeting with your classmates regularly to discuss course material is strongly recommended—you're not meant to go it alone

BruinLearn

- This is our home base: handouts, weekly checklists, assignments, discussion forum…
- If you have a question outside of class, your default should be to post it on **Piazza**
  - You may get a reply faster (from another student)
  - Your question benefits other students

Pace is based on previous years with Covid, strikes, etc. If we go a little faster, I'll add autosegmentalism

Week	Readings *(annotations due end of Monday)*	In class, Tues & Thurs	Written work *(due end of Friday)*
0		Sept 25: **Introduction. Basics of SPE**	
1	• K & K ch 2 • K&K ch 3, pp 45-62		
		Sept 30: **SPE framework, continued**	
		Oct 2: **Expansion conventions**	
			Fri, Oct 3: HW I, rule exercises
2	• K&K ch 9, pp 331-339		
		Oct 7: **Extrinsic rule ordering**	
		Oct 9: **Extrinsic ordering, cont'd**	
			Fri, Oct 10: resubmit HW I
3	• K&K ch 5, pp 154-165 • K&K ch 10, pp 424-436		
		Oct 14: ***How to solve a phonology problem with rules***	
		Oct 16: **Why constraints?**	
			Fri, Oct 17: HW II, rules
4	• Shibatani 1973		
		Oct 21: **Rules+constraints?**	
		Oct 23: **Classic OT**	
			Fri, Oct 24: resubmit HW II
5	• Prince & Smolensky 1993/2004: pp 4-6, 11-21, 107-126, consult 127-135		
		Oct 28: **Classic OT, cont'd**	
		Oct 30: **Classic OT, cont'd**	
			Fri, Oct 31:HW III, OT exercises
6	• Gnanadesikan 1995		
		Nov 4: ***How to solve a phonology problem with constraints***	
		Nov 6: **Process application**	
			Fri, Nov 7: **squib topic** + resubmit HW III
7	• K&K ch 8, pp 318-327 • Piggott 1974, pages 281-288		
		Nov 11: HOLIDAY—NO CLASS	
		Nov 13: **Process interaction**	
			Fri, Nov 14: HW IV, OT
8	• Piggott 1974, pages 288-335		
		Nov 18: **Process interaction, cont'd**	
		Nov 20: **Cycles and levels**	
			Fri, Nov 21: resubmit HW IV
9	(If ahead of schedule, Steriade 2008)	Nov 25: **Cycles and levels continued**	
		NOV 27: HOLIDAY—NO CLASS	
10	• Mohanan 1982, pp 107-148 • Itô & Mester 2001, pp 1-15, 27-28		due **Monday**, Dec 1: HW V, Lexical Phonology
		Dec 2: ***Catch up or extra material***	
		Dec 4: **Synthesis and prospect**	
			Dec 5: **squib update**
exam week		**mini-conference**, day TBD	**squib** and **assignment portfolio** due Fri, Dec 12

Bibliographic info on readings

Why are all these readings so old? People are still working on these questions! But current papers assume that you've already the 20th-century papers—and soon you will have.

Gnanadesikan, Amalia. 1995. Markedness and faithfulness constraints in child phonology. In R. Kager, J. Pater & W. Zonneveld, editors. *Constraints in Phonological Acquisition*. Cambridge UP.

Itô, Junko & Armin Mester. 2000. Structure preservation and stratal opacity in German. In L. Lombardi, ed. *Segmental phonology in Optimality Theory: constraints and representations*. Cambridge UP.

"K&K" = Kenstowicz, Michael & Charles Kisseberth. 1979. *Generative Phonology: Description and Theory*. New York: Academic Press.

Mohanan, K. P. 1982. *Lexical Phonology*. MIT.

Piggott, Glyne L. 1974. *Aspects of Odawa Morphophonemics*. Routledge.

Prince, Alan & Paul Smolensky. 2004. Optimality Theory: Constraint interaction in generative grammar. Malden, Mass., and Oxford, UK: Blackwell.

Shibatani, Masayoshi. 1973. The role of surface phonetic constraints in generative phonology. *Language* 49. 87–106.

Steriade, Donca. 2008. The phonology of perceptibility effects: the P-Map and its consequences for constraint organization. In Hanson & Inkelas (eds.), *The nature of the word: studies in honor of Paul Kiparsky*. MIT.

More about course requirements

20% of grade: readings
- Graded based on completion—i.e., do it and get 100%
- For each reading I'll ask you to make a certain type or minimum number of annotations in Perusall.

20% of grade: squib
- A "squib" is a short paper with limited scope
- I'll give you instructions, a recipe, a week-by-week timeline, and a sample squib next week (is already posted on BruinLearn)
    - In a nutshell, you'll take a purported case of a phenomenon that can help us distinguish between two theories, track the data down to the original source, and determine the theoretical implications
    - If you want to do something different, talk to me
- 8-12 pages
- Graded subjectively by me
- You'll also make a short oral presentation during exam week

60% of grade: assignment portfolio

How it's going to work
- You'll turn in your <u>first attempt</u> by the first deadline, and get feedback from me:
    - **Not submitted (60%)**: I know that typically missing work counts as zero, but it doesn't make sense to me for the difference between a missing assignment and just turning in anything to be bigger than the difference between just turning in anything and the best possible work
    - **Not Yet (75%)**: The analysis doesn't work, or doesn't fully work
    - **Correct (85%)**: The analysis works, and is presented well enough that I can tell it works (e.g., you've illustrated suitable examples), but doesn't meet all the writing specifications ← *it's OK to **aim for here** on your first submission!*
        - **Correct & Well-written (100%)**: Correct analysis of the basic data, plus it meets all the writing specifications
- You can revise your work and resubmit your <u>second attempt</u> by the second deadline, and get feedback again (except for the last assignment—not enough time for second attempt, just first and then final)
- After that, no more resubmissions for written feedback, but come to my drop-in hours to discuss
- End of the quarter: submit a portfolio with the <u>final attempt</u> for every assigment. The grade on these final versions is what will count.

Other policies
- You can discuss with other students, but you have to **write up your own answer**
- No chatbots, obviously
- If you miss a homework **deadline**, you'll miss that chance to get feedback, but can still use the next deadline. Examples:
    - Final portfolio deadline is a hard deadline: I have to have everyone's work by the end of finals week

Assignment portfolio writing specifications

At the beginning of the course, it might not yet be clear what all of these mean (they use terms you may not have learned yet). See the **sample write-up** for examples of how these specifications play out.

1. Make sure your analysis can **stand alone**—a reader wouldn't need to see the assignment instructions
   - Begin with a statement like, "This paper deals with voicing alternations in Russian noun stems"
   - Copy and paste example words (not numbers) to illustrate every point you make
   - Avoid writing things like, "In the next block of data we see…": the reader doesn't have the data or know anything about "blocks"!
2. Avoid over-taxing the reader's **working memory**
   - Give every rule or constraint a name (not a number or abbreviation), and refer to it by name
     - Easy-to-remember abbreviations like "INITSTRESS" for INITIALSTRESS are fine. "IS" is not fine.
   - Don't allow a page break within a derivation or tableau
3. State each rule/constraint in both **notation** and **prose**. This helps the reader (me) recover from notation errors.
4. Present your analysis **piece by piece**
   - *Do*: State one generalization, give some data that illustrate it, give the anlaysis (underlying forms, rules, etc.) of that generalization, and illustrate it with a derivation or tableau. Repeat for the next generalization
   - *Don't*: Give all the underlying forms, then all the rules/constraints, then one giant derivation/tableau
5. **Justify** each element of your analysis—doing this will help you find and fix any errors in your analysis!!
   - If there's more than one reasonable place to put the **morpheme boundaries**, how did you choose?
   - If there are alternations in affixes, how did you choose which allomorph should be the **underlying form of each affix** (i.e., the form added by the morphological rule)?
   - If there are alternations in roots, how did you choose which allomorph should be the **underlying form of each root**?
     - For roots that alternate, show an example of that root that surfaces without changing its underlying form (if that exists in the data) and an example that surfaces with each different allomorph
   - Why do you **need each rule (or markedness constraint)**? Make sure you include an example of a word that undergoes the rule (or changes to conform with the constraint)
   - Why does each **rule/constraint include the restrictions it does** (features of target, elements of environment, opt-in features, morphosyntactic boundaries, bounding domain…)?
     - Include not only an example of a word that meets the requirements and is subject to the rule/constraint, but also an example of a word that fails to meet the requirements and so isn't subject to it
   - Why do the rules need to be **ordered** as they are, or constraints be **ranked** as they are?
6. Avoid **redundancy in your analysis**
   - If you propose a rule or constraint, it needs to apply to at least one word
   - If there are restrictions in a rule or constraint, they should be necessary
7. Be **general in your analysis**
   - Don't add something to your analysis to deal with just one word. Assume that if there's a generalization I want you to find, I've given you ample evidence for it.
8. Avoid **redundancy in your presentation**
   - Each word that you choose to include in a derivation should be needed to show something
9. Data to **disambiguate**
   - Identify ambiguities in your analysis and invent data that would be needed to resolve them. Spell this out all the way, with imaginary data, and show what conclusion you'd reach under different scenarios
10. Meet all **additional specifications in the assignment instructions**