

LIN1224H1S Advanced Phonology IV: Novel Feature Theories

Winter 2017 Syllabus

Instructor	Peter Jurgec [ˈjúrɡɛts] (please, call me Peter)
Office hours	after class or by appointment
Office	suppressed
Telephone	suppressed
Email	suppressed
Seminar	Wednesday 2–4 (Sidney Smith Hall SS 1078)

Course Description and Goals

The observation that segments exhibit class behaviour has been one of the key findings of phonological theory in the 20th century. Class behaviour is the main evidence for the theory of phonological features. In most cases, segments pattern with phonetically similar segments, which suggests that feature theory is (or should be) based on phonetic properties of sounds. In recent decades, however, it has become clear that classical theories of features both over- and underpredict. On the one hand, some languages exhibit unnatural classes that cannot be captured with standard feature theories. The connection between vocalic and consonantal place features, for instance, is not clearly phonetic, but such interactions are cross-linguistically quite common. On the other hand, no language offers evidence for (or requires a learner to posit) all features; languages instead exhibit alternations that involve a much smaller set of features.

This course will look at novel feature theories, with a particular focus on the Toronto and Tromsø schools. We will examine what principles underlie feature assignment and in what way these principles could differ from classical SPE-style feature systems. The key questions include: To what extent are phonological features universal? What is the relationship between features and their phonetic content? How many natural classes can a language have, and how many features are needed to capture these classes?

We will test the predictions of the theories by looking at individual languages. Each student will focus on one language, find all natural classes required to capture the sound patterns in the language, and ask whether these classes are consistent with the feature theories under examination. The whole class will produce a single collaborative paper.

Students are required to read one or two papers (or less than 50 pages) per week and contribute to the discussion in class. Other requirements include: short weekly assignments related to the reading material and presentation at the course workshop. Auditors are welcome.

This course is suitable for students that have completed LIN322H/LIN1121H Phonological Theory or equivalent.

Expectations

You can expect the following from the instructor:

- occasional lectures, complemented by slides and supplemental material
- a supportive, inclusive, and collaborative learning environment for all students
- clear expectations about all course work components
- prompt marking of course work, with detailed feedback (within reason)
- email replies within the scope of the Email policy (see below)
- availability throughout the term
- extensive help with the presentation and term project

The instructor expects from all students:

- attendance without lateness
- positive attitude to the course content, other students, and the instructor
- use of electronic devices limited to course content
- timely submission of all course work
- always doing the weekly reading
- reasonable expectations about email (see Email policy below)
- active participation in the seminar

The instructor expects from auditors:

- attendance without lateness
- positive attitude to the course content, other students, and the instructor
- use of electronic devices limited to course content
- timely submission of all course work
- always doing the weekly reading
- active participation in the seminar
- agreement with the conditions of the *Department of Linguistics Auditing Policy*

Course Website

The course website is available on *Blackboard* (<http://portal.utoronto.ca>). If you are not enrolled, you will need to send me your UTORid to access the site.

Course Requirements

Participation (10%)

You are required to attend the seminar, and ask questions. Participation will count 10% towards the final grade.

Reading Assignments (24%)

You are required to do the readings in advance. Eight short assignments will be given in relation to the reading (e.g. 3-2-1 tasks, summary, discussion points, review). To receive full credit, you should submit all these assignments **by Tuesday 10 pm** before the class the reading is for. The assignments will be graded satisfactory (full credit) or unsatisfactory (no credit).

All readings are available at suppressed

Presentation (15%)

We will organize a Feature Workshop™ within the course. Every student will present their term projects at the workshop. You are required to make handouts or slides (but not both!).

, Your presentation will be graded based on the following criteria:

- Have you had enough time to prepare?
- How is your presentation structured?
- Is the argumentation clear?
- Is the presentation easy to follow?
- Is the presenter communicating with the audience efficiently (rather than just reading)?
- Are the slides/handouts well-organized, pleasing to the eye, and without typos?
- How well did you respond to questions?

Term Project (51%)

Each student will study a particular language, catalogue a set of all segment classes and check whether they are consistent with the feature theories at hand.

Select a language (1%)

You should select a language for your case study before January 25.

First one hundred segment classes (10%)

In the following three weeks, students are required to catalogue the first 100 segment classes in a spreadsheet. This work is based on existing descriptions of the language. Detailed instructions and templates will be provided. The spreadsheet is due on February 15.

All other segment classes (10%)

In the next two weeks, students are required to catalogue the remaining segment classes in a spreadsheet. The spreadsheet is due on March 1.

Analysis (15%)

The students should model the collected data using a particular feature theory and write a short report (up to 6 pages). The analysis is due on March 19.

Integration into the final paper (15%)

Students' topics will be related and the final paper will be a collaborative enterprise. Students will be responsible for specific parts of the final paper (introduction, conclusion, and/or core sections). The final paper is due on the last day of classes (April 5).

Your paper will be graded based on the following criteria:

- Is the paper and well-organized and clearly written?
- Did the paper accurately summarize previous research?
- Is the argumentation solid?
- Is the theoretical account original, clearly motivated and well-suited?
- Did the students integrate each other's parts successfully?

Evaluation: Summary

Participation		10%	weekly
Reading assignments		24%	weekly
Presentation		15%	3/26
Paper	Language choice	1%	1/25
	Data collection 1	10%	2/15
	Data collection 2	10%	3/1
	Analysis	15%	3/19
	Final paper	15%	4/5

Lateness Policy

No late work is accepted for reading assignments. Beyond that, each student has a free, no-questions-asked 3-day extension that can be used in whole for one of the deadlines, split into two extensions (one 1-day and one 2-day extension), or split into three 1-day extensions; no penalties will be given in these cases. Beyond these three days, please, try to submit your work before the deadlines. Lateness may result in your work not being graded in time for the next assignment which may delay everyone's progress.

Class Schedule (Tentative)

Note: Additional readings may be assigned during the term depending on the overall progress and students' interests.

Date	Topic	Deadlines
1/11	Introduction. Feature theories and their challenges	
1/18	Feature geometries. Unified feature theory* Reading: ?	
1/25	Emergent features and large-scale data analysis* Reading: ?;§1,6	1/25 Language choice due
2/1	Parallel structures: How it works* Reading: ?	
2/8	Parallel structures: Case study* Reading: ? (add'l ?)	
2/15	Radically substance-free features* Reading: ?;§1	2/15 Data 1 due
2/22	Reading week. No seminar	
3/1	Constrastive hierachy: How it works* Reading: ?;§2,3.5–3.7 (or ?)	3/1 Data 2 due
3/8	Constrastive hierachy: Case study* Reading: ? (or ?;§7)	
3/15	Individual consultations. No seminar	3/19 Analysis due
3/22	Constrastive hierachy: Criticism* Reading: ?	
3/29	Feature workshop (students' presentations)	
4/5	Conclusions	4/5 Final paper due

* (star) marks short homework assignments (due Tuesday 10 pm).

All readings are available at suppressed

Miscellaneous Course Policies

- This course requires constant, weekly output. Plan your reading assignments well in advance and make sure you have enough time to complete the task.
- Deadlines can be a challenge in graduate seminars. There can be no extensions on the weekly reading assignments, so please, make sure to do them in advance. If you think you cannot meet a non-homework-related deadline because of personal or religious reasons, or because of a health or family emergency, make sure to let me know **as soon as possible** or when the situation presents itself—but certainly well before the deadline. I will do my best to accommodate your needs. Note that as a general rule, extensions will not be allowed if requested after the deadline has passed. See also “Lateness Policy” above.

- All work is to be submitted via email. Please add “[LIN1224 YourSurname]” at the beginning of the subject line. Please, submit your work in the Portable Document Format (.pdf), and make sure that any special fonts are included in the file.
- It is the university policy that students use their UofT addresses for all communication related to their coursework.
- Please, do not be late to class. In the case of absence, no credit can be given for assignments that require in-class participation or presentation.
- Auditors are welcome. If you would like to access online content, please, email me your UTORid. By auditing this course, you agree to the conditions of the *Department of Linguistics Auditing Policy* at <https://goo.gl/hv5fOc>