

Syllabus: LING505200 Topics in Optimality Theory

Spatiotemporal: T 10:10 p.m.~ 1:10 p.m., HSS Bldg., C519

Instructor: Feng-fan Hsieh
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Prerequisites: Phonology I, II.

Office hours: By appt.

Class website: <http://lms.nthu.edu.tw>

Course description:

Delve into the cutting edge of formal phonology! This course dives deep into recent advancements in "substance-free"-ish approaches, where the focus lies on the abstract patterns and rules governing sound structure. We'll tackle key issues like:

- Building robust phonological grammars: Discover the latest theoretical frameworks and tools for constructing elegant and explanatory models of sound systems.
- Unraveling phonological opacity: Explore the fascinating phenomenon of how sound changes can sometimes bypass seemingly obvious predictions, and how formal grammars can capture this complexity.
- Formalizing phonological processes: From assimilation and dissimilation to metathesis and reduplication, we'll delve into the formalization of diverse processes that shape sound patterns across languages.
- Beyond the core: If time allows, we'll venture into the realm of representational issues, exploring how different ways of representing sounds and phonological rules can impact our understanding of language.

- Open exploration: This course is not just about pre-set topics. We'll dedicate time to delve into areas that spark your curiosity, driven by your interests and questions.

This course is perfect for:

- Graduate students in linguistics, particularly those interested in formal phonology.
- Advanced undergraduate students with a strong foundation in phonological theory.
- Researchers and professionals seeking to stay at the forefront of phonological research.

Get ready to:

- Expand your theoretical toolkit.
- Sharpen your analytical skills.
- Engage in critical discussions with fellow linguists.
- Deepen your understanding of the fascinating world of sound patterns.

Join us on this exciting journey into the frontiers of formal phonology!

Course requirements:

- a. Assigned readings
- b. Weekly responses (30%)
- c. In-class presentation (20%)
- d. Term project (50%)

Students' use of the AI:

Conditionally open; please specify how generative AI will be used in course output

Schedule of topics (subject to revision)

- Readings are due the day they are listed.

WEEK	TOPIC	READING
Week 1	Orientation	
Week 2	Phonological opacity in OT: an overview	Bokavić (2007), Chap. 2, McCarthy (2007)

Week 3	Candidate chains (OT-CC)	Chap 3, McCarthy (2007), McCarthy et al. (2012)
Week 4	Harmonic Serialism	McCarthy & Pater (2016)
Week 5	Harmonic Grammar (HG) (and weighted constraints)	Pater (2009, 2012, 2016), Flemming (2003)
Week 6	Preliminary report on your term project (and wrap-up)	
Week 7	Stratal OT	T.B.A.
Week 8	Agreement-by-Correspondence	Rose and Walker (2004), McCarthy (2010)
Week 9	Surface Correspondence (and applications thereof)	Bennett (2014), T.B.A.
Week 10	Co-phonology vs. Indexed constraints	Inkelas & Zoll (2003), Pater (2010)
Week 11	Your choice	
Week 12	Your choice	
Week 13	Your choice	
Week 14	Your choice	
Week 15	Your choice	
Week 16	Student presentations on term projects	

Selected references:

- Bennett, William. 2014. Assimilation, Dissimilation, and Surface Correspondence in Sundanese. *NLLT*, DOI 10.1007/s11049-014-9268-2.
- Baković, Eric. 2007. A revised typology of opaque generalisations. *Phonology* 24.2: 217-259.
- McCarthy, John J. 2007. *Hidden Generalizations*. London: Equinox Press.
- Pater, Joe. 2009. Weighted Constraints in Generative Linguistics. *Cognitive Science* 33: 999-1035.
- Rose, Sharon & Rachel Walker. 2004. A Typology of Consonant Agreement as Correspondence. *Language* 80:475-531.