

SYLLABUS

Time	TR 11:00-12:50
Place	Haines A76
ID number	653-382-200 (A), 653-383-300 (B)
Teacher	Kie Zuraw ['k ^h aɪ 'zɜːɹ̩]
Office	Campbell 2101S
Mailbox	in Campbell 3125
Phone	310-710-0401
Office hours	T 9-11 and by appointment
E-mail	kie@ucla.edu
Web	www.linguistics.ucla.edu/people/zuraw

Presumed background

Something like LING 200A and 201.

Description*Introduction*

When we describe prosody, phonological alternations, or phonotactic restrictions, we must specify the domain of application of the rules or constraints involved. For example, saying that a nasal assimilates in place to a following obstruent is insufficient: do the nasal and obstruent have to be in the same word? if they're in adjacent words, does the syntactic relation between the two matter? does it matter whether a pause intervenes?

This question of domains has been approached in a variety of ways. Most common these days is to use a prosodic hierarchy (Selkirk 1980, ...). The grammar assigns to an utterance a prosodic tree, with nodes such as intonational phrase, phonological phrase, p-word, foot, and syllable; rules or constraints are sensitive to this prosodic structure.

Current literature tends to draw freely on prosodic structure, without explicit comparison to other approaches. The purpose of this proseminar is to examine the evidence for one level of prosodic structure, the p-word (short for "prosodic word" or "phonological word").

Why the p-word?

The p-word is roughly a syntactic word, but with language-specific modifications: a function word may be combined with an adjacent content word, prefixes (and, less often, suffixes) may be excluded from their stem's p-word, and a compound may include more than one p-word.

The p-word has been proposed to do a variety of jobs:

- minimal domain for stress assignment
- domain for certain segmental rules/constraints
- (less commonly) domain for certain phonotactic restrictions
- unit of prosodic morphology

I've chosen to examine the p-word, rather than some other level of structure, for several reasons:

- Unlike the syllable and the foot, the p-word hasn't been subjected to much critical examination.
- More than the syllable or the foot, the p-word is dependent on morphological/syntactic structure.
- Unlike utterances, intonational phrases, or (possibly) phonological phrases, p-words lack an intonational signature.
- More than utterances, intonational phrases, or phonological phrases, p-words are likely to be precompiled (because they are small enough that many are frequent), which raises some psycholinguistic questions.
- I'm interested in what determines whether a morphologically complex word is treated as complex or simple by the phonology. Explanations based on assignment of p-word boundaries seem to cover some of the same ground as processing explanations (e.g., decomposed vs. direct lexical access). Do we really need both?
- Cross-linguistic asymmetries concerning left vs. right edge of stems, or prefixes vs. suffixes, are psycholinguistically tantalizing.
- Because a p-word is roughly the amount of material that is often supposed to be generated in the lexicon, it's natural to compare the prosodic approach to competing views of the relationship between phonology and morphology (lexical phonology, intra-paradigm correspondence).

Course plan

In the proseminar, we will examine...

- reasons researchers have espoused the p-word (domain for certain segmental rules, domain for stress assignment, unit in prosodic morphology, cliticization facts)
- how well the different purposes of the p-word line up: within a language, can a single algorithm for p-word construction account for the domains of multiple segmental and prosodic rules?
- competing explanations: boundary types, erasure of morphological boundaries (whether by rule or for psycholinguistic reasons), interleaving of phonology and morphology (i.e., Lexical Phonology), paradigm uniformity...
- the typology of p-words (what tends to constitute a p-word, and what phenomena tend to take the p-word as their domain): what is the typology, and is it better explained by the prosodic approach or by competing approaches?

After a few sessions of lecture-and-discussion to set the stage, we'll move to student-led discussions of readings, with occasional lectures. I want to try something new (to me): two students will be responsible for each paper, with one student presenting the paper's analysis (say, a p-word analysis of various segmental phenomena in Irish), and the other devising and presenting an alternative (say, a counteranalysis using boundary symbols). You can prepare your twin presentations in collaboration or not, as you prefer. Note "presenting", not "arguing for": unlike in debate club, you don't have to pretend to agree with the side you're responsible for. Adjustments will be made to this format depending on the type of paper.

Requirements

For 2 units (251B), participate in the discussions, including taking turns to present.

For 4 units (251A), do the above plus write a final paper related to the course topic.

Suggested paper topics—you can propose others:

- Survey a set of roughly word-level phenomena within a language. Can a consistent p-word structure be proposed for all of them?
- Take on a case (perhaps one encountered in class) where different diagnostics of the p-word are known to disagree. What account can you propose?
- Compare a p-word-based explanation to a p-word-free explanation of some phenomenon (perhaps one that's already been analyzed one way in the literature).

Readings

Whenever possible, I'll e-mail an electronic copy (or a link to it). Otherwise, a paper copy will be placed in the reading room (Campbell 2125) for you to copy and return.

Course web page

The course web page will be on my own page (see above), under 'Teaching'. I'll post handouts, links to readings, and other materials there. E-mail me your presentation handouts (or post them on your own webpage and send me the URL) if you're willing to have them included.