1 Course description

The topic of this proseminar is categories. Nearly all phonological analyses assume that representations are composed of categories of some sort or another, and that constraints and/or processes refer to those categories, but the nature and origin of these categories is often unexamined.

We begin with the history of two related notions, categorical perception and perceptual invariance, their relation to phonological representations, constraints, and processes, and the challenges that confront these notions. Our focus then turns to the dimensions that define categories, the distribution of categories within the spaces defined by these dimensions, and the division of these spaces into categories. Recurrent branches away from this main line of discussion include how categories are taken up from the stream of speech. Throughout, we attend closely to the methods used to identify categories’ defining dimensions.

Each student enrolled in the course chooses a model paper in consultation with the faculty, and leads a series of 10-15 minute discussions starting with its central idea, next the methods used, and then the results and their interpretation. These presentations also prepare the students for their penultimate short presentation, which is a description of their term project, which consists of the design of an experiment or experiments (inspired by those reported in their model papers) and the collection and analysis of pilot data. The final presentation is a longer report of the results of the term project. Students should consult with the faculty about what they’re considering for term projects no later than the second week of the course. The first result of that consultation will be the selection of the model paper the student presents.
2 Tentative schedule

Check the course website for up-to-date information about reading assignments from week to week.

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3 Readings

The reading list will be updated as the course progresses.

The course readings are divided into three categories, those that present:

1. Essential ideas and results – these are presented by the faculty,
2. Important ramifications and extensions – these are presented either by faculty or students; they are also likely sources of term projects,
3. Useful methods and tools – these are presented either by faculty or students.

Each reading in the list below has one of more of these numbers attached to it to identify which category or categories it belongs to.

To engage everyone attending in the discussion, by Monday sunrise before each Thursday meeting of the seminar, each person posts to the course website questions and/or comments prompted by at least two of the readings for that meeting. The people presenting those readings respond to those questions and comments in their presentations.

3.1 Categorical perception and perceptual invariance

1. Motor theory: (1) A. M. Liberman, Harris, Hoffman, & Griffith (1957); A. M. Liberman, Cooper, Shankweiler, & Studdert-Kennedy (1967), (2,3) A. M. Liberman & Mattingly (1985); A. Liberman & Mattingly (1989);
3. Locus equations: (2) H. M. Sussman, McCaffrey, & Matthews (1991); H. M. Sussman, Fruchter, Hilbert, & Sirosi (1998);
4. Graded structure: (1) Flemming (2001); McMurray, Tanenhaus, & Aslin (2002); McMurray & Aslin (2005), (2-3) McMurray, Aslin, Tanenhaus, Spivey, & Subik (2008); McMurray, Clayards, Tanenhaus, & Aslin (2008); McMurray, Tanenhaus, & Aslin (2009);
5. Tonal concepts: (2) Yip (2001); Hyman (2011); (2) Ladd (1994), Hayes (1994);
6. Allophones: (2) Peperkamp, Pettinato, & Dupoux (2003); Peperkamp, Le Calvez, Nadal, & Dupoux (2006); (2) Dillon, Dunbar, & Idsardi (2013)
3.2 Dimensions, distributions, divisions

3.2.1 Dimensions and spaces

1. Dispersion: (1) Liljencrants & Lindblom (1972); Lindblom (1986), Flemming (2004);

2. Vowel spaces: (2) Schwartz, Boë, Vallée, & Abry (1997a); Schwartz, Boë, Vallée, & Abry (1997b); Johnson, Flemming, & Wright (1993);

3. Emergence: (2) de Boer (2000); Zuidema & De Boer (2009);


5. Methods: (3) Borg & Groenen (2005); Gandour & Harshman (1978)


3.2.2 Uptake


2. Sequential contrast: (2-3) Lotto & Kluender (1998); Holt, Lotto, & Kluender (2000); Holt (2005, 2006a,b); Fowler (2006); Lotto & Holt (2006);


4. Induction/deduction: (1) Berent, Steriade, Lennertz, & Vaknin (2007); Berent, Lennertz, Smoiensty, & Vaknin-Nusbaum (2009); Peperkamp (2007); Daland et al. (2011) (2) Daland & Pierrehumbert (2011);

5. Nasalization: (2) Lahiri & Marslen-Wilson (1991); Beddor & Krakow (1999);

References


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