

TERM PAPER

The term paper is intended to be a first exposure to doing phonology on your own making use of first-hand data (from a native speaker). It should not be done exclusively from reference sources. The description and requirements for the paper are based on the requirements of Bruce Hayes and Russell Schuh, for this same course. Sample papers and topic ideas are posted on Bruce Hayes' and Russell Schuh's 120a websites:

<http://www.linguistics.ucla.edu/people/hayes/120a>

<http://www.linguistics.ucla.edu/people/schuh/lx120A/paper.html>

Paper:

- 30% of your course grade will be based on a term paper.
- 8-10 pages, 12 point, double-spaced, submitted in paper form
- **due Monday, June 12th, at final exam or by email** (late work will only be accepted in case of a documented medical/family emergency)
- Prospectus **due on or before May 17th** (2% of paper grade): You prospectus must be approved by me. It should be a **one paragraph outline (with bibliography – at least one reference source)** that clearly states what your paper will be about. You will get the 2% points when I approve your topic. Your references must come from **published books or academic journals**, not online sources (e.g. Wikipedia) unless approved by me.
- If you choose to email me your work it must be in .pdf format.

Purpose

- Learn to define a phonological issue, organize a data set, and present an analysis in the style of a research article
- Learn to collect data from a native speaker

Choice of Speaker

- The language can be any language, including English
- The consultant can be any native speaker of the target language (but not yourself)
- If you have recently done a Ling 103 paper you can use the same consultant, but remember this is a phonology paper, not a phonetics paper.

Fonts

- Use IPA symbols. IPA fonts compatible with both Windows and Macintosh can be downloaded from <http://www.sil.org/computing/fonts/>

Possible Paper Topics

Replication

Find a native speaker of a language, a published description/analysis of some aspect of the phonology of the language, and see if the description can be replicated with the data from your speaker. There are two possibilities: (a) Your speaker may behave exactly as predicted in your reference source. In this case, concentrate on preparing a clear demonstration that the facts and analysis of your reference source are correct (you must still provide new data). (b) Your speaker will be different in some ways from what your reference source describes. Prove a revised or entirely new analysis that fits your speaker. Bruce Hayes gives some possible “replicatory” topics and reference sources on his Ling 120a webpage. Go to <http://www.linguistics.ucla.edu/people/hayes/120a> and download ReplicatoryTermPaperTopics.doc (or .pdf).

Study of Taped Data Corpus

Same as above, but in addition to some elicited data use a recorded sample of spontaneous speech. This is helpful in getting free variation (you can compare your reference source, elicited data and spontaneous data).

Toddlers

The speech of small children differs from adult speech in some systematic ways. Find a child that is intelligible, but with obvious predictable differences from adult speech, and analyze and write the rules that govern his/her pronunciation. The assumption of this paper is that adult speech is the target realization (adult form = underlying representation) and the toddler is attempting to produce the adult form in a systematic way (child form = surface representation) [this assumption may or may not be true]. You are essentially writing rules that relate the toddler forms to the adult speech. Give plenty of examples and derivations to justify your rules. Data collection for this project will be time consuming so you will need to start early. You may try the following techniques:

- 1) Videotape/record someone (or yourself) playing with the child and transcribe the child's speech.
- 2) Play with the child and take notes
- 3) Directly elicit data from the child: "Please say _____"
- 4) Create a game in order to get the child to say the target words.

Transfer

Find a non-native speaker of some language (like English) who speaks that language with an accent. Record some natural speech from your speaker, or elicit individual words (or both). Determine the ways in which the pronunciation of your subject is different from native speech in the target language, and where possible relate the difference to the phonology of the native language of your subject. This topic requires a solid understanding of **the phonology of the two languages**: the speaker's native language and the target language.

"Wug" testing

Find a speaker of a language that has substantial alternations in paradigms which have been subjected to a published phonological analysis. Think up new nonsense words to test the validity of the analysis, and to see how speakers come up with underlying forms when not all crucial information is present. Read Chapter 9 of the text for more information on wug testing. You can look at the following paper on Bruce Hayes' website for an example of wug testing: *Segmental Environments of Spanish Diphthongization*, by Adam Albright, Argelia Andrade, and Bruce Hayes:

<http://www.linguistics.ucla.edu/people/hayes/Segenvspandiph/index.htm>

Paper outline: The exact form of the paper will vary depending on content, but all papers should have at least the following sections and contain the following information:

1. Introduction

- location and basic genetic affiliation of the language (e.g. "Danish is a Germanic language and is the national language of Denmark") and, if relevant, information on the dialect you are studying
- succinct statement of the issues you will be discussing
- sources of data: since you will collect data directly from speakers give basic biographical information (e.g. "a 25 year-old speaker of Tagalog who was born in Manila and immigrated to the United States when she was 19"); cite published data sources in the text using the format (Name data), e.g. (Bright 1957, Hayes 1989), then give a list of all the sources you cite with full bibliographic information at the end of the paper. **DO NOT USE FOOTNOTES FOR SIMPLE CITATION OF REFERENCES.**
- other relevant background information: aspects of the phonemic inventory, the language has contrastive tone, the language has vowel harmony, the language has predictable stress, the language has/does not have a standard writing system (with a remark or two on the way it relates to the phonology, if relevant)

2. Analysis

Systematic analysis of the phonological data you are exploring; you will be graded on (at least) the following points:

- **definition of the problem:** Does the problem focus on a well-defined aspect of the phonology of the language, neither omitting crucial considerations nor bringing in irrelevant ones?
- **choice and exposition of data:** Is the data laid out in a clear fashion and does the selection of data illustrate all the relevant aspects of the problem? Data that would be useful may be missing from your data set because your sources did not provide it or you were unable to elicit it. If this is the case, say so.
- **formalization:** A major purpose of this paper is to find out how accurately you can state phonological generalizations, formalize the generalizations (using the formalisms taught in 120A) and illustrate them (giving sample derivations): e.g. use of distinctive features to define natural classes of sounds or ways to precisely define the domain of a phonological process. Formulate all rules in your analysis using these formalisms, but **also**, **GIVE A PROSE STATEMENT OF WHAT YOU THINK (!) YOUR RULE DOES!**

3. Conclusion

What is the main generalization that you have discovered? Are there any unresolved issues? What further research would you suggest?

Grading criteria: http://www.geocities.com/kristie_mccrary/ling120atermpapergradingcriteria.pdf