I. Explanations for emergence of dispersion

There have been several attempts to explain dispersion in phonological inventories as an emergent phenomenon, rather than one controlled by “grammar”, and moreover many of these avoid any reference to the desirability of maintaining perceptual distinctiveness. We will survey and evaluate these accounts. This relates to experimental work I am doing with Grant McGuire, Scott Seyfarth, and Tommy Denby, which I will discuss.

II. Status of phonetic naturalness in phonology

Though many phonological phenomena seem phonetically natural (in the sense of having documented phonetic “precursors”), there are well known phenomena that seem unnatural. Further, Ohala, Blevins, and others have claimed that we can explain naturalness without assuming a “UG” that cares about naturalness. The advent of artificial grammar experiments, as well as “underphonologization” studies like those of Moreton, offer hope of treating debates arising from these issues as empirical. What is the state of this recent research? What do artificial language experiments tell us about naturalness and “UG”? How convincing is work on “underphonologization”?

III. Experimental evidence for derivational opacity

Discussions of derivational opacity are another beaten path that might use the fresh air of experimental evaluation, but there isn’t much of this on display. How amenable are claims of derivational opacity to behavioral testing, for example?
## Course schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic/Reading</th>
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| 1/7  | Initial discussion of “considerate speaker” and “filtering listener”  
Reading: NYU slides |
| 1/9  | Discuss possible course readings. Emergent approaches to dispersion: Wedel 2004  
Some background on frequency and neighborhood density too |
| 1/14 | Exemplar theory. Testing the filtering listener idea: Tommy Denby presents  
Reading: Goldinger 1996, 2000 |
| 1/16 | Filtering listener (cont)  
Reading: Wedel 2006 |
| 1/21 | **Holiday** |
| 1/23 | Filtering listener (cont)  
Reading: Ettlinger 2007; Baese-Berk & Goldrick 2009 |
| 1/28 | Filtering listener (cont)  
Reading: Scarborough 2010 (available as electronic resource through library); Buz & Jaeger 2012 |
| 1/30 | Functional load; taking stock of everything  
Reading: Wedel et al. 2012 |
| 2/4  | Paradigm effects  
Reading: Bethin 2012 |
| 2/6  | Naturalness in phonology: Artificial phonology learning  
Reading: Moreton and Pater, Parts 1&2 |
| 2/11 | Artificial phonology: complexity biases  
Reading: Cristià et al. 2008, Kuo 2009 |
| 2/13 | Artificial phonology (cont)  
Reading: Myers and Padgett 2013 |
| 2/18 | **Holiday** |
| 2/20 | Artificial phonology: complexity biases (cont)  
Reading: Moreton 2012 |
| 2/25 | Artificial phonology: substantive biases  
Abstracts of final projects due. Reading: Pycha et al. 2003 and Finley & Badecker 2009 |
| 2/27 | Artificial phonology: the latest  
Reading: Moreton & Pertsova 2012; Albright & Do 2013 |
| 3/4  | Experimental opacity  
Reading: Ettlinger 2008, chap 5 (through Experiment 1) |
| 3/6  | (Jaye sick) |
| 3/11 | Experimental opacity (cont)  
Reading: Ettlinger 2008, chap 5 (Experiment 2) |
| 3/13 | **Student presentations** |
| 3/18 | **Student presentations (cont)** |
Albright, Adam & Young Ah Do (2013). Featural overlap facilitates learning of phonological alternations. Handout of talk presented at the LSA.


