

SYLLABUS

Time	TR 12:00-1:50 (may be changed) <i>No class on Thursday, October 10</i>
Place	Bunche 3161
Web	TBA
Course ID	251A: 653382200 (4.0 units, letter grading) 251B: 653383200 (2.0 units, S/U grading)
Instructor	Kie Zuraw
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Description and approximate outline

When cultures come into contact, along with food, music, clothing, and religious ideas, words are exchanged. Because of the diversity of the world's phonologies, foreign words typically contain sounds, sound sequences, and prosody that must undergo 'repair' if they are to be usable in the receiving language. Because these foreign sound structures were likely absent from the data speakers encountered during acquisition of their native language, adapting loanwords requires speakers to apply their implicit phonological knowledge to novel situations, revealing aspects of the grammar that are underdetermined by the native-language learning data and are presumably the residue of the grammar's initial (pre-learning) state and of learning strategies. The treatment of loanwords should therefore tell us something about universal grammar that is not evident from looking at the native phonology alone.

Theories of loan adaptations

When a foreign word violates native-language phonotactics, how is a 'repair' chosen? Is a rule chosen from a universal repertoire (and somehow evaluated against other rules that would also do the job)? Does the ranking of previously irrelevant constraints come into play (and if so, where does that ranking come from)? Is the foreign pronunciation compared to candidate repaired versions to find the closest perceptual match? Is some form of analogy to native words and existing loans used? We will examine the evidence for and against (versions of) these proposals, all of which hold implications for the grammar that go beyond loan phonology.

Loanword participation in alternations and morphology

Beyond deciding how to repair a foreign word so that it may be pronounced in isolation, speakers must decide whether a loan should participate in various alternations, and how it should be treated by phonologically intrusive morphology such as reduplication and infixation.

Assignment of loans to an inflectional class

In order to receive inflection, a foreign word often must be assigned to an inflectional class. How does similarity to existing words affect the choice of inflectional class? Do loans have a greater tendency than non-loans to join the 'default' inflectional class?

Etymological layers (core & periphery)

Both in isolation and with respect to alternations, loans often violate phonotactics more freely than native words do. How is it possible for different words in the same lexicon to be treated differently by the grammar?

Loanwords as filtered through the speech community

Established loans are not the result of one individual's seat-of-the-pants decision about how to pronounce a word, but rather are filtered through the speech community. We'll discuss the evidence from loans bearing on a model of how interactions between speakers and hearers shape individuals' lexicons.

Phonological selection of loans

Research in first-language acquisition finds that children's early vocabularies are often biased towards words with certain phonological properties. Preliminary data on loanword vocabularies suggests something similar in adults' selection of words to import (or in the speech community's selection of words to retain). We will scrutinize this finding and attempt to explain it.

Not all the questions raised above will be answered, but I hope to make some progress.

Prerequisite

Linguistics 200A or permission of instructor

Requirements

251B (2 units)

- Read and reflect on readings before class
- Contribute to discussions
- Present one article to the class

251A (4 units)

- Read and reflect on readings before class
- Contribute to discussions
- Present two articles to the class
- Write a short paper analyzing a set of loanword data and discussing its theoretical implications

Readings

Required readings will be made available in a form to be announced (probably a bound reader at a local copy shop).

You may choose your article(s) to present in class from a list that I will circulate, or you may find an article that's not on the list.