

Articulatory and Acoustic Uniformity in Phonetic Structure

Special Session at ICPHS 2019

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A fundamental pursuit of phonetic research is to identify constraints on linguistic variation and the organization of linguistic systems. Well-known principles believed to constrain phonetic variation include phonetic dispersion (Liljencrants & Lindblom, 1972; Lindblom, 1986; Flemming, 2004), articulatory ease (Martinet, 1955; Lindblom & Maddieson, 1988; Lindblom, 1990; Flemming, 1995), and quantal effects (Stevens, 1989). In this session, we highlight a less-discussed principle of uniformity, in which speakers implement a phonological primitive (distinctive feature value, gesture, etc.) with maximum similarity across a series of speech sounds sharing that primitive. While theoretically possible for speakers to enhance phonetic dispersion or articulatory ease at the expense of phonetic similarity, uniform implementation of phonological primitives predominates in the world's languages, often reducing dispersion or ease (Ohala, 1979; Lindblom, 1998; Schwartz et al., 2007; Chodroff et al., 2019).

Because of this tendency toward similarity for similarity's sake, the need for uniformity or a similar principle has been posited in work across various subfields of phonetics and phonology. A growing body of research on structured variation of speech production targets, for instance, suggests that individuals' articulatory strategies for a series of sounds are organized to maximize output uniformity in some acoustic or articulatory dimension(s) (Maddieson, 1995; Keating, 2003; Ménard et al., 2008; Chodroff, 2017; Chodroff & Wilson, 2017; Faytak, 2018). Individuals have been observed to prioritize articulatory uniformity over acoustic uniformity (Keating, 2003) or vice-versa (Carignan et al., 2011). Analogues to uniformity also appear to operate during language development (Lindblom, 1998; Schwartz et al., 2007; Ménard et al., 2008; Lindblom et al., 2011). Furthermore, uniformity may constrain linguistic change: phonological categories with shared phonological content are known to undergo sound change in parallel (Fruehwald, 2017), and in sociolinguistics, "linguistic coherence" of socially relevant phonetic variables may emerge from a type of uniformity (Guy & Hinskens, 2016).

This session will consist of a 10-minute introduction, followed by ~~four~~ **six** 15-minute paper presentations, and a 20-minute period for panel discussion.

~~How to submit to this session:~~ Submission deadline has already passed.

When you submit your paper to ICPHS2019, please indicate that you wish to be considered for this special session. Please note that we cannot guarantee acceptance as papers must first pass the regular double-blind review process required by the conference.

Important dates:

~~Sept. 4, 2018:~~ Paper submission opens

~~Dec. 4, 2018:~~ Title and abstract placeholder due

~~Dec. 11, 2018:~~ Full paper submission deadline

Aug. 4-10, 2019: ICPHS

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