

Optimality Theory Reading List

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1 Reader's guide

The following reading list is an idiosyncratically assembled list with some obvious biases. It has been collected as the starting point for a graduate seminar in OT.

Remarks for students: This is obviously a superset of the papers to be read in a 15-week course, but it is intended to be a helpful guide in selecting topic for research papers. The things to read first are the annotated items in Section 2. The remarks propose an order.

In the general bibliography that follows, papers annotated *Blackboard* will be made available for students on Blackboard; a number of papers are annotated "Available on the Rutgers Optimality Archive". This large repository of OT papers is at <http://roa.rutgers.edu>.

2 Background

- Prince and Smolensky (1997)

Read this general-interest historically important intro for fun.
It discusses the connections to Connectionism.

- Kager (1999)

Read this second, especially Chapters 1-4, Chapter 9!

- Prince and Smolensky (2004)

Read this third, especially Parts I and II!

- McCarthy (2008)

Read this first, especially chapters 1 and 2!

- ROA (1997)

3 Historical

- Trubetskoy (1939 1969)
- Markedness: Waugh and Halle (1962)
- Conspiracies:
 - Kisseberth (1970)
 - Kiparsky (1973)
 - Cassimjee and Kisseberth (1999)
- Autosegmental Phonology: Goldsmith (1976)
- Metrical Phonology
 - Liberman and Prince (1977)
 - Prince (1983)
- Constraints
 - Ross (1967)
 - Chomsky and Lasnik (1977)
- Harmonic grammar and connectionism: (Legendre et al. 1990)

4 Basic

- Good early intro: Archangeli and Langendoen (1997)
- Good outline of important ideas: McCarthy (2002)
- Syntax intro: Legendre (2001)
- Richness of base: Smolensky (1996)
- Efficiency: Chomsky (1998)
- Linguistic Function: Bresnan and Aissen (2002)
- Arguments in OT: Prince (2002)
- Local constraint conjunction: Moreton and Smolensky (2002)
- Foundational issues: Prince and Smolensky (2004:232–257) Part III, Section 10;

5 Learning

5.1 Learning constraint rankings

- Tesar and Smolensky (1998)
- Boersma and Hayes (2001)
- Riggle (2002)
- Goldwater and Johnson (2003)
- Jarosz (2006)

5.2 General Learning

- Phonotactics: Prince and Tesar (2004)
- Underlying forms: Tesar and Prince (2007)
- Exceptional processes: Pater (2005)

- Tesar and Smolensky (2000)

6 Computational

- Finite state models
 - Hammond (1997)
 - Ellison (1994)
 - Karttunen (1998)
 - Gerdemann and van Noord (2000)
- Eisner (1997)
- Frank and Satta (1998)
- Hayes (1996)
- Boersma and Hayes (2001)
- Kuhn (2001)b
- Kuhn (2001)a
- Riggle (2009)

7 Phonology

- Syllabification: Kager (1999:91–141); Prince and Smolensky (2004:10–38) Part I, Sections 2 & 3; Prince and Smolensky (2004:103–202) Part II; Kenstowicz (1994), Merchant (1996)
- Opacity: Kager (1999:372–400), Archangeli and Suzuki (1997), McCarthy (1998)■
- Contrastiveness: Kirchner (1995), Hayes (1998)
- Positional faithfulness: Lombardi (1995), Beckman (1998)
- Lexical Exceptions: Pater (2000), Pater (2004), Inkelas paper in Roca (1997)

8 Syntax

- Books
 - Barbosa et al. (1998)
 - Sells (2001)b
 - Legendre et al. (2001)
 - Dekkers et al. (2002)
- OT Syntax: Intro
 - McCarthy (2008:2.9, 95–103)
 - Introductory intro (Legendre 2001)
 - Lexicon in OT Bresnan ?
 - OT syntax Johnson ?
- Wh-movement
 - Grimshaw (1997)
 - Legendre et al. (1998)
 - Legendre (2001)

- Anaphora
 - Unmarked pronouns (Bresnan 2001), (Wilson 2001)
 - Null pronouns (Speas 2001)
- Clitics
 - Romance clitics (Grimshaw 2001)
 - Second Position (Stephen Anderson 2002)
 - Bulgarian clitics (Geraldine Legendre 2002)
- Case/voice
 - Subject marking/voice (Aissen 1999)
 - Typology Legendre et al. (1993)
 - Case patterns (Woolford 2001)
 - Form function voice (Sells 2001a)
 - Object marking (Aissen 2003)

9 Concepts and Questions

- Constraints
 - Markedness
 - * COMPLEX, ONSET, NO-CODA
 - SUBJECT, OPSPEC
 - Alignment (ALIGN-L, ALIGN-R, ALIGNNEW, ALIGNNOTEWORTHY)
 - Faithfulness (STAY, FAITHC, FAITHV, MAX-IO, DEP-IO)
 - Economy
- Architecture of an OT grammar
 - INP: The set of inputs (the base)
 - GEN: Component generating a set of candidate structures for each input.
 - CON: The set of constraints: Universal
 - EVAL: Strict language-particular ranking of constraints assigning an optimal structural description to each input.
- Does OT need derivations?
- Should constraints be strictly ranked? [a total ordering of constraints]
- Ganging up? [Should lower ranked constraints be allowed to gang up to overrule higher-ranked constraints?] (Legendre et al. 1990, Smolensky and Legendre 2006, Jesney and Tessier 2008)
- Why does communicative function (topic, Bresnan; prominence, Sells; newness, Legendre) need to play a role in OT syntax?

10 Selected topics

1. Formal issues
 - (a) Absolute ungrammaticality (Peter Ackema and Ad Neeleman 2002)
 - (b) Gradient well-formedness (Bruce P. Hayes 2002, Albright 2009) Albright in on BB under Learnability
 - (c) Optionality ineffability (Bakovic and Keer 2001) [On BB under syntax]
2. Learnability
3. Computation

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