

LICENSING LICENSING BY CUE

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MFM20

2 •The overview:

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4 •Licensing-by-Cue (Steriade 1997): Contrastive cues are more
5 likely to be expressed in contexts where they are better-
6 recoverable by the listener.

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8 •Licensing-by-Cue offers a compelling explanation for many
9 cases of long-distance-triggered dissimilative deletion (in
10 Latin, in Sanskrit, in American English, etc.).

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12 •Outline: •The data •Ohala's "hyper-correction" proposal
13 •The "Licensing-by-cue" alternative •Exceptions explained
14 •Gerfen's Challenge •Rejoinder to Gerfen •Conclusion

15 • **The data:**

16 • Ohala 1989:

Examples of dissimilation at a distance.

Languages involved

Example

Indo-European > Sanskrit

*b^hend^h > band^h- 'bind'

Pre-Classical Classical

'hair'

Greek > Greek

*t^hrik^hos > trik^hos

Latin > Italian

quīnque > cinque 'five'

Ancient

Chinese > Cantonese

*pjam > pin 'diminish'

Proto-

Quichean > Tzutujil

*k'aq > k'^haq 'flea'

Proto-

Quechumaran > Quechua

*t'ant'a > t'anta 'bread'

•Hall 2009 on American English rhotic distal dissimilation:

<i>adve(r)sary</i>	<i>'ædvə,seri</i>		
<i>afte(r)ward(s)</i>	<i>'æftə,wəˌdz</i>		
<i>ape(r)ture</i>	<i>'æpətʃə</i>	<i>cereb(r)al palsy</i>	<i>,serəbəl 'palzi</i>
<i>approp(r)iate</i>	<i>ə'propɪət</i>	<i>checke(r)board</i>	<i>'tʃekə,bɔrd</i>
<i>A(r)thur</i>	<i>'ɑθə</i>	<i>ci(r)cumference</i>	<i>sə'kʌmfrəns</i>
<i>barbitu(r)ate</i>	<i>,bɑr'bitʃuət</i>	<i>comfo(r)ter</i>	<i>'kʌmfərə</i>
<i>(St.) Be(r)nard</i>	<i>bə'nɑrd</i>	<i>cont(r)oversy</i>	<i>'kɒntə,vəsi</i>
<i>(San) Berna(r)dino</i>	<i>,bə'nə'dino</i>	<i>co(r)morant</i>	<i>'kɒməənt</i>
<i>be(r)serk</i>	<i>bə'zək</i>	<i>co(r)ner</i>	<i>,kɒnə</i>
<i>bomba(r)dier</i>	<i>,bɒmbə'dɪr</i>	<i>co(r)poration</i>	<i>,kɒpə'reɪʃən</i>
<i>cam(ar)aderie</i>	<i>,kə'mədə'i</i>	<i>crib(r)iform</i>	<i>'krɪbəfɔrm</i>
<i>Cante(r)bury</i>	<i>'kæn(t)ə,bəri</i>	<i>defib(r)illator</i>	<i>dɪ'fɪbjəleɪtə</i>
<i>cate(r)cornered</i>	<i>'kæɹə,kɒnəˌd</i>	<i>do(r)mitory</i>	<i>'domə,tori</i>
<i>cate(r)pillar</i>	<i>'kæɹə,pɪlə</i>	<i>easte(r)ner</i>	<i>'ɪstənə</i>
<i>celeb(r)atory</i>	<i>'seləbə,tori</i>		

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- **Hypercorrection (Ohala):** Listeners may misinterpret a

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context-independent property as a *context-dependent* one.

Aspiration's intended segmental affiliations are actualized as a span:	Listener's assign the span to the "wrong" segment:
Speakers intend: / ^h t ^h rik ^h os/	
Speakers produce: [^h t ^h rik ^h os]	Listeners hear:] ^h t ^h rik ^h os[
	Listeners guess: \trik ^h os\

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Rhoticity's intended segmental affiliations are actualized as a span:	Listener's assign the span to the "wrong" segment:
Speakers intend: /k ^h ɔ̃ɹ̥ɪnɹ̥/	
Speakers produce: [k ^h ɔ̃ɹ̥ɪnɹ̥]	Listeners hear:]k ^h ɔ̃ɹ̥ɪnɹ̥[
	Listeners guess: \k ^h ɔ̃nɹ̥\

25 • **The problems for “hyper-correction”:**

26 • Over-reliance on theoretical constructs:

27 • Ohala relies on the traditional **segment**, in the sense that
28 listeners are formulating hypotheses about the *intended*
29 *segmental affiliation* of particular acoustic cues.

30 • Ohala relies on **underlying representations**, in that he
31 assumes listeners “undo”, “factor out” or “correct”
32 supposed “distortions” in the speech signal. Such
33 distortions may be characterized as such only if we assume
34 the existence of an idealized “undistorted” (underlying,
35 phonemic) state. Such an assumption is characteristic of
36 structuralist, and especially generativist phonology.

38 •Incorrect predictions:

39 •Ohala's account does not predict that long-distance
40 dissimilations typically involve deletion at the *beginning*-edge
41 of the span, not the *final*-edge of the span (labial dissimilation,
42 Grassman's Law, rhotic dissimilation in American English, etc.).

43
44 •Ohala's account overpredicts cases of dissimilation:

45 •Why does nasal place never dissimilate from following
46 stops?

47 •Why do stop-stop sequences almost never dissimilate
48 their manner properties?

49

50 •Most significantly, Ohala proposes a highly dubious
51 ***conjectural mismatch*** between ***speaker intent*** and ***listeners'***
52 ***conclusions about speaker intent.***

53 •How can linguists know that aspects of speakers' speech is
54 unintended?

55 •How can listeners know this?

56

57 • **The Licensing-by-Cue alternative (exemplified by Latin labial**
58 **dissimilation:**

59 • Listeners may indeed hear a span of labiality from the first
60 velar-vocoid sequence through the second velar-vocoid
61 sequence: [k^wink^we]

62 • The first glide-vowel sequence possesses meager F2
63 transitions, due to the pervasive labiality during the early
64 portion of the span: [k^win...]

65 • The second glide-vowel sequence possesses robust F2
66 transitions, due to the change in lip posture from rounded to
67 unrounded: [...k^we]

68 • The result is a span of labiality with its cues most prominent
69 during the second glide-vowel sequence.

70 •Due to the acoustic robustness of these particular transitions,
71 listeners may attend to—and come to rely most heavily
72 upon—this particular acoustic component of the span.

73 •In time, the cues that precede this latter velar-vocoid
74 sequence may become less important, thus precipitating their
75 diachronic demise.

76 •Rhotic and aspiration dissimilation (etc.) may be accounted
77 for in comparable terms.

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79 • **Exceptions explained:**

80 • Ejectives (Quechumaran ***t'ant'a** → Quechua **t'anta**) are
81 arguably most salient after the first pop, for aerodynamic
82 reasons: subglottal pressure is likely to be high early in the
83 utterance, lower later in the utterance.

84 • English Rhoticity spans ending in labial-**ɹ** clusters (**sɛɹəbɹɪ** →
85 **sɛɹəbɹɪ**) are arguably more salient at the beginning of the span,
86 due to low F3 interference.

88 • **Gerfen's challenge: Eastern Andalusian Spanish**

89 • Historic **s** has become **h** both word-finally, and, when a
90 consonant immediately follows, word-internally as well
91 (accompanied by post-**h** consonant gemination).

92 **ganas** → **gana^h** “desire”

93 **bos^ske** → **boh^hke** “forest”

94 **esla^sbo** → **ehl^ha^sbo** “Slavic”

96 •Gerfen:

- 97 •There is little *phonetic* motivation for an **s**-to-**h** change in
98 word-internal contexts in particular, since **s** does not rely on
99 its context for the salient expression of its cues.
- 100 •Rather, **s** possesses salient “internal” cues that should not
101 be subject to loss, regardless of its context
- 102 •Gerfen’s conclusion: **s**→**h**/___]_σ (i.e., licensing by cue fails)
- 103
- 104

105 • **Rejoinder to Gerfen:**

106 • Diachronically speaking, first, **s**→**h**: in utterance-final position,
107 oral airflow may weaken and/or overall energy may diminish.

108 • This establishes an **h** - **s** alternation: in the relevant words, we
109 find word-final **h** utterance-finally, whereas we find word-final
110 **s** utterance-internally.

111 • The pattern may readily generalize toward **h** in *all* word-final
112 contexts, even when not utterance final.

113

114 •Concomitantly, since word-final **s** is increasingly headed
115 toward **h**, and this **h** is typically followed by a (word-initial)
116 consonant, the pattern may generalize to include comparable
117 word-internal phonotactic contexts: we end up finding **h**—and
118 increasingly rarely find **s**—when this value is lexically non-
119 prevocalic: **sC** → **hC**

120 •This is the pattern found in Andalusian today.

121 •No reference to syllable structure. Instead, a sound change
122 that has its origins in phonetic naturalness—that of **s-to-h** in
123 utterance-final position—may sow the seeds for its own
124 expansion into contexts that are not necessarily phonetically
125 natural, but nonetheless are phonotactically analogous.

126 • **Implications:**

127 • The licensing-by-cue account of the dissimilatory changes:

128 • Offers a compelling explanation for the *final*-edge
129 robustness observed in these patterns,

130 • Offers a compelling explanation for exceptions to this
131 generalization

132 • No segments • No derivations • No underlying
133 representations

134 • ***No “guessing games” about speaker intent by linguists***
135 ***and listeners***

136 • ...Just **LICENSING BY CUE**

137 *Thanks to Rory Turnbull and Marc Garellek.*