

Reading guide:**Zsiga (2013: Ch 10), “Abstraction, contrast, predictability”****Background**

This reading provides an overview of some of the most fundamental concepts in phonology, which will form the core of class discussion for the first week of the semester. It is important to master these concepts early, so that we can build on them during the rest of the course. Be sure to review this reading again *after* class discussion if needed.

Points to focus on while reading

- Use these questions to prepare for class discussion. I recommend that you take notes on these points while you work through the reading, so you can refer to your notes in class.
- (1) sec 10.1: What **argument** is Zsiga making in this section?
 - (2) sec 10.2: How do we determine whether two speech sounds belong to two **different phonemes**, or are two **allophones** of the same phoneme?
 - (3) p 209: Zsiga states, “It is simpler to state a generalization when the elsewhere case is chosen as the basic form, and the more restricted variant as the derived form.”
Why?
 - (4) sec 10.3: Understand the importance of the following topics raised in this section.
 - (a) why we can’t always identify a **“basic” allophone**, and ways to think about situations where we can’t
 - (b) the connection between **phonetic similarity** and **complementary distribution**
 - (c) Ex (3), p 217: “Explain how **free variation** and **positional neutralization** contradict a perfectly **predictable mapping** between phoneme and allophone.” This question is slightly confusingly worded. Give the key terms in this question some thought, and try to figure out what Zsiga thinks is important here.
 - (5) Problem-solving practice
 - Ex (9), p 218
 - Ex (10), p 218

Check your understanding of key terms and concepts

- (6) Try these exercises on your own. If you have trouble with any of them, go back and reread the relevant section:
 - Ex (1), p 216
 - Ex (2), p 217
 - Ex (4), p 217