The Linked-Attractor Model for child phonology is a developmental exemplar model for phonological representation. It's the offspring of two older models: my old 'two-lexicon' model, which stores both input and output representations for words in order to deal with the slow, partly lexical spread of new input-to-output mappings as the child's phonology develops, and Vihman's template model, which represents a given child's output patterns as attractors in an articulatory space and recognizes the continuity between late babble and early speech. In the Linked-Attractor model, both input and output representations are attractors in a large articulatory-acoustic space, and – new idea due to my student Brent Nicholas - the mappings from input to output are also attractors.

Update: The Linked-Attractor Model is deliberately eclectic and redundant, responding both to the descriptive value of multiple formal devices (constraints, rules, and templates), and also to the limitations of each of these descriptive devices that we see when we look at the variety and the lumpiness of the ways that children organize their early vocabulary. The talk will focus on data supporting these assertions.

The model needs elaboration (how would the representations of segments and suprasegmental units interact?) and testing against sufficiently detailed corpora; anybody who wants to work with it is welcome to join the fun.