



Department of
Linguistics and Modern Languages
語言學及現代語言系

The Effect of Overnight Consolidation on the Perceptual Learning of Cantonese Level Tones

Prof. Zhen QIN

The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

Date: November 10, 2020 (Tuesday)

Time: 4:30pm - 6:15pm (Hong Kong Time, UTC +8)

***Seminar will be conducted via ZOOM**

Registration Deadline:

12:00nn of 8 November 2020 (Sunday) – Hong Kong Time

The Zoom Meeting details will be provided on 9 November 2020



Prior registration is required

Abstract

Recent research showed that good overnight sleep after learning helps adult second-language (L2) learners consolidate newly learned sounds (segments), that is, an effect of overnight consolidation. Since lexical tone is characterized by high variability across talkers, the overnight consolidation might also facilitate L2 learners' generalization across talkers in their identification of novel tonal categories. Thus, this study examined whether the overnight consolidation facilitated talker-independent learning of Cantonese level tones by Mandarin listeners. Two level-tone training experiments were conducted to investigate research questions as follows: (1) whether the listeners who were perceptually trained in the evening and got their newly learned tones consolidated right after training had an advantage over those who were trained in the morning; (2) whether a high-(talker) variability training, together with a post-training consolidation, facilitated the evening trainees' tone learning compared with a low-variability training. The results of identification changes over time suggest that the overnight consolidation have assisted the evening trainees' learning of tone stimuli produced by the trained and novel talkers, but an exposure to talker variability during training disrupted the consolidation process. The findings have implications for understanding the mechanism of speech learning and human plasticity.

Speaker

Dr. Zhen QIN (Quentin) is an Assistant Professor at the Division of Humanities, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology. He received his MPhil in linguistics at the Chinese University of Hong Kong and his PhD in linguistics at the University of Kansas (the United States). Prior to joining the faculty at HKUST, he worked as Postdoctoral Researcher at the Research Center for Language, Cognition, and Neuroscience, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University. Adopting phonetic and psycholinguistic approaches to second language learning, his research focuses on how Chinese tones are perceived and processed by native speakers and adult second-language learners. He has published in a variety of journals including *Applied Psycholinguistics*, *Journal of Phonetics*, *Journal of the Acoustical Society of America*, *Language and Speech*, *Language Learning*, and *PLOS ONE*. His research has been funded by National Science Foundation and *Language Learning Early Career Research Grant*.

All are Welcome

Enquiries

Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages, CUHK.

Tel: (852)3943 7911/7025 Fax: (852)2603 7755 E-mail: lin@cuhk.edu.hk