Schwartz – Bilingual speech and phonological representation

Most research into the phonetic properties of the speech of bilinguals and second language learners focuses on non-linguistic factors influencing L1-L2 interaction. These factors, which for the most part boil down to the question of language experience, include variables such as proportion of L1 or L2 use, age of onset of L2 learning, additional languages studied, or age of arrival in the L2-speaking country. Empirical data investigating these factors has formed the foundation of influential models of L2 speech, including the Speech Learning Model (SLM; Flege 1995, Flege & Bohn 2021), and the Perceptual Assimilation Model (PAM/PAM-L2; Best 1995, Best & Tyler 2007). Instead of investigating the factors underlying L1-L2 interaction, an interesting endeavor is to consider bilingual and L2 speech from the perspective of phonological theory. This endeavor has been undertaken less often than one might think, as L2 speech researchers have often taken for granted traditional assumptions about phonological structure. This course will therefore take a fresh look at speech data from cross-language interaction in the speech of bilinguals and L2 learners, considering implications for controversial areas in phonological theory, including the representation of laryngeal contrasts, the role of the segment and the syllable, and the organization of prosodic structure.