DEPARTMENT SEMINAR SERIES
Date & Time: Monday 14 December 2020, 4:30p.m.
Link to Seminar:
https://hkbu.zoom.us/j/92193864922?pwd=NVlxUW9GbUtM2grUWFJVmNzTDE1QT09
The Seminar will be conducted via ZOOM

The Effects of Tonal Experience on the Categorization of Cantonese Lexical Tones into Japanese Native Pitch Accent Categories

Dr. Janice Wong

Abstract
This study examined the effects of prosodic experience in the first and second language on the perception of non-native lexical tones. Japanese naïve listeners (Group JN) and Japanese learners of Mandarin (Group J1M2) were instructed to categorize the six Cantonese lexical tones into their native pitch accent categories. Results showed that both groups could only categorize two tones into their native pitch accent categories, and their categorization patterns were different: Group JN only assimilated two rising tones, T2 and T5, into the final-accented LH* while Group J1M2 assimilated high-rising T2 into LH* and low-falling T4 into initial-accented H*L. These preliminary results are only partly compatible with the assumptions of Perceptual Assimilation Model for Suprasegmentals (PAM-S) stating that non-native tonal categories will be assimilated to native prosodic categories, but provide more evidence that learning a more complicated system with lexical F0 variations at the phonetic level (i.e. Mandarin) does influence the perceptual assimilation of non-native tones.

This work was completed in collaboration with Prof. Takayuki Arai at the Department of Information and Communication Sciences, Sophia University, Tokyo. It was also supported by STEC Sophia Lecturing – Research Grant 2019 from Sophia University and Faculty Research Grant (FRG1/17-18/025) from Hong Kong Baptist University. Some results have already been presented at Speech Prosody 2020.

About the Speaker:
Dr. Janice W. S. Wong is Lecturer at the Department of English Language and Literature, Hong Kong Baptist University. Her research focuses on cross-linguistic speech perception and production, speech training and intervention, and gender and speech. At present, she is working on projects relating to the perception of lexical tones in a third language and the interplay between musical tunes and lexical tones.