ICPhS and INTERSPEECH – August 2023

In August 2023, I attended the International Congress of Phonetic Sciences (ICPhS) in Prague, Czech Republic, and INTERSPEECH in Dublin, Ireland. Two ASSTA Conference Travel Awards supported my travel to both conferences, where I presented an oral presentation (at ICPhS) and a poster (at INTERSPEECH). This was my first time attending either of these conferences, and I would like to thank ASSTA for their financial assistance.

At ICPhS, I presented a talk, *The influence of tone experience and native tone and intonation categories on nonnative tone learning*. In this study, participants from varying native language backgrounds (nontonal English, tonal Mandarin, and tonal Vietnamese) completed five-sessions of tone training on an artificial tone language. Following training, all participants improved in tone identification and tone word learning, with the Mandarin group performing with the highest accuracy overall. Upon further examination, it appears that learning patterns for individual tones are influenced by the existing tone and intonation categories in the learners' native languages. The questions and feedback I received following my talk were of great benefit as I work towards submitting my research to a peer-reviewed journal.

At INTERSPEECH, I presented a poster, *Speech-in-speech recognition is modulated by familiarity to dialect*. In this study, Australian English monolinguals listened to Australian English (AU) and American English (US) target speech in the presence of competing masker speech: AU (native dialect), US (unfamiliar dialect), or Swedish (foreign language). We found that native targets presented alongside an unfamiliar masker (AU-in-US) led to the greatest speech recognition performance, while an unfamiliar target presented alongside a native masker led to poorer speech recognition (US-in-AU). Surprisingly, speech recognition performance in the presence of a Swedish masker fell somewhere in the middle. Once

again, the feedback during the session provided insight on the possible explanations for the current findings, and they were helpful in informing future iterations of this study.

The Keynotes at both conferences were informative, entertaining, and thought-provoking. At ICPhS, we heard about child speech perception and production from Titia Benders, as well from Andrea Ravignani, who discussed the similarities and differences between humans and other animals when it comes to rhythm in music and speech. At INTERSPEECH, there was much discussion on bridging the gap between speech science and technology, with the opening Keynote presented by ISCA Medallist Shrikanth Narayanan. The Panel Discussion outlined the journey ahead for speech scientists and speech technologists alike.

Attending ICPhS and INTERSPEECH also granted me the opportunity to meet researchers from various speech-related fields who are based in locations worldwide. With every person I interacted with after a talk, at a poster session, or during a break or dinner event, I was able to learn more about the recent research being conducted in speech science and speech technology. I was also able to meet and chat with experts in my field: Miriam Broersma, Odette Scharenborg, Martin Cooke, and Ann Bradlow, to name a few. They were all lovely, knowledgeable, and provided invaluable advice for my research project and career. Attending these two conferences in Europe was an enriching and unforgettable experience!