

**Articulatory evidence for transfer and inhibition
of phonetic processes in L2 speech**

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Phonological acquisition of a second language (L2) is not limited to learning higher-level phonological structure (phonemic contrasts, phonotactics, etc.), but also involves learning how to produce or inhibit allophonic/coarticulatory patterns that differ between L2 and the native language (L1). In this talk I will present results of two studies examining whether and how L2 speakers adapt their speech when producing gestural combinations that are systematically different from L1. The studies make use of electropalatography (EPG) an articulatory method that tracks the contact between the tongue and the palate using an artificial palate with built-in electrodes. The first study investigates the production of nasal + rhotic sequences (as well as nasal and rhotic contrasts) by learners of English, who are native speakers of French, Japanese, and Spanish. The second study examines the production of coronal + /i/ sequences by Korean learners of English. The results of the first study show that learners tend to transfer their L1-specific patterns of nasal assimilation/coarticulation to L2, even though they have acquired relevant phonemic contrasts. The results of the second study show that learners can successfully inhibit their L1-specific allophonic processes (such as palatalization), and thus are capable of producing L2 consonant-vowel sequences in a native-like fashion. Differences between the two case studies point to the complexity of L2 phonetic acquisition, which is modulated by various factors, including the relative similarity of L1/L2 inter-gestural patterns and the categorical or gradient status of processes.