Friday, March 7th, 11.30am ET (4.30pm UTC)
Presentation in Zoom, accessible via the C-STAR website:
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Syntactic processing in bilingual aphasia

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Roughly half of the global population is bilingual in that they speak (or sign) two or more of the world's 7000+ languages. Mainstream psycholinguistic models of bilingualism propose a single language system with grammars that interact across languages. Following this theory, bilingual people with aphasia (bPWA) should have equivalent deficits for grammatical structures that overlap between their languages. Some research, however, has shown bPWA to exhibit differential grammatical deficits in each language. Relatedly, the complex syntactic structures known to be more difficult to process for people with aphasia (PWA) are those acquired later by people learning a second language. In this talk, I will present the state of evidence regarding syntactic processing in bilingual aphasia, as well as an innovative framework that my lab has launched for examining syntactic impacts in bilingual aphasia, and some of our preliminary results. To preview, in a systematic review, we find that the evidence regarding parallel grammatical deficits (within an individual) in bPWA remains inconclusive. The same is true when asking whether bPWA and monolingual PWA (mPWA) present with equivalent deficits. Our work addresses the major methodological and theoretical gaps in the extant literature by matching mPWA as controls for bPWA, and examining syntactic deficits by degree of featural overlap. We examine fully-, partially- and non-overlapping structures in word order, morphosyntax, and lexical syntax across 5 tasks. Although the results are preliminary, our data suggest that fully-overlapping structures are comparatively stronger than partially-overlapping structures for bPWA. I will discuss the implications of these data for psycholinguistic and neural models of bilingualism, aphasia, and the language system as a whole.

The online lecture can be followed online from your computer, tablet or smartphone, in Zoom. The zoom link is accessible via the C-STAR website: http://cstar.sc.edu/lecture-series/

The watch party for the lecture will be in Discovery, room #140 (915 Greene Street, Columbia, SC)

For more information, or to be added to the C-STAR mailing list, contact Dirk den Ouden: denouden@sc.edu