

## CONFÉRENCE

Dans le cadre d'un projet **EPST-Universités de Lorraine-Partenariats académiques** (participants : Anne Bonneau et Vincent Colotte (Loria, équipe Parole), Mathilde Dagnat (Atilf))

et dans le cadre du séminaire TALC (resp. Claire Gardent), nous vous convions à la conférence de :

**D. R. LADD**

University of Edinburgh

### *Segmental analogies for intonational gradience*

Le vendredi 30 avril 2010

de 10h à 12h

Salle 008 (salle de conférences), site du Loria (campus Sciences)

Entrée libre

**LORIA** (Laboratoire Lorrain de Recherche en Informatique et ses Applications)  
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## *Segmental analogies for intonational gradience*

D. R. Ladd, University of Edinburgh

It has long been recognised that certain aspects of intonation involve "gradience" (e.g. increasing pitch range for emphasis), but applying this notion in practice has always been a source of disagreement. There are still many specific cases, such as the difference between H\* and L+H\* in ToBI transcriptions of English, that are analysed by some descriptions as involving two categories and by others as involving a single category that is gradiently variable. Experimental phonetic evidence is usually compatible with either interpretation: proponents of a categorical distinction can argue that an apparent phonetic continuum simply reflects the overlapping phonetic realisation of phonologically distinct categories represented by the continuum's extremes. I propose that we can investigate this question indirectly based on segmental analogues.

Although most segmental distinctions are categorical and clearly distinct, there are cases in which phonetic realisations overlap and perceptual discrimination is difficult. Examples in English include junctural distinctions (e.g. Norman Elson vs Norma Nelson) and morphologically distinct homophones (e.g. band vs banned). Intuitively, the former involves two categories whose phonetic realisations overlap, whereas the latter involves a single phonological form that may exhibit meaningful gradient variation (e.g. of duration). If this intuitive distinction can be put on a firmer basis (e.g. if we could show that the statistical distribution of phonetic variability is different in the two types of cases) we may be able to identify an empirical criterion for distinguishing "gradience" from mere variability that could be applied to intonation as well.