The representation of speech prosody in memory

Amelia Kimball

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The autosegemental-metrical model of the intonation of English (Pierrehumbert & Hirschberg 1990) posits that speech prosody has a discrete, abstract representation in the form of pitch accents, and that these pitch accents are similar to phonemes in generative phonology. However, some experimental work suggests that speech prosody may instead be represented in a more detailed and gradient way. This talk will report on a series of experiments in memory for speech that directly compare phonemes and pitch accents. The experiments show that memory for these two types of proposed abstract categories is markedly different.

Short bio :

Amelia Kimball is a laboratory phonologist with a focus on speech perception, memory for speech, and speech prosody. Having finished her doctorate in Linguistics at the University of Illinois, USA, she is now a postdoc on the ANR funded Geomphon project at the LLF with Ewan Dunbar.