**Phonetic cues and phonological constraints in prosodic unit definition: the intermediate phrase in French**

Amandine Michelas* & Mariapiaola D’Imperio*  
*Aix-Marseille I & Laboratoire Parole et Langage, CNRS, Aix-en-Provence, France  
michelas@ip-aix.fr, mariapiaola.dimperio@ip-aix.fr

---

**INTRODUCTION**

As in English, an intermediate phrase is postulated in the French prosodic hierarchy.

---

**HYPOTHESES**

1. ip boundaries are not restricted to specific syntactic patterns but can be found more generally at right edges of major syntactic breaks.
2. Presence of an ip boundary is not necessarily signaled by tonal spreading, but also by a return to the register level before the boundary and partial reset after it.

---

**DISCUSSION**

ip right boundary marking in French is characterized by:
1. Significant degree of lengthening at normal speech rate
2. H- phrase accent which blocks iterative downstep of subsequent LH* within the ip
3. Partial reset after the ip boundary

Interaction between 2 constraints is responsible for ip boundary placement

**REFERENCES**

