Workshop on
[±features]: where do we go from here?

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Melodic primes in phonology: ontology, properties, organization, processing

The talk examines how subsegmental representations in phonology work in a perspective that syntacticians can make sense of when discussing syntactic features. Information regarding the historical development and current status of melodic primes is provided, including the following issues:
1. size: features (small) vs. elements (bigger).
2. privative vs. binary primes.
3. presence or absence of a hierarchical organization of primes (feature geometry)
4. hierarchical structure of phonological and syntactic primes is not the same: the former is static (universal or at least language-specific) and stable under processing (the feature geometric tree is not modified), while the latter is the result of computation and variable (there is not just one tree in the language).
5. natural classes: evidence for grouping primes together.
6. including relationships: evidence for hierarchical grouping from phonological processing
7. transforming primes into (tree) structure: GP2.0
8. distinctive vs. non-distinctive primes: relationship between inventories and phonological processing.
9. substance-free phonology: no phonetics in the phonology (phonological primes are only α, β, γ etc.). Phonetic correlates are only introduced by spell-out (to phonetics). Hence phonology does not have any privilege regarding an "easier" access to the content of primes (see the issue of syntactic primes representing non-syntactic or non-linguistic information).
10. primes (syntactic, phonological) are the units that computation is performed on, and always the result of grammaticalization, i.e. categorization of real-world properties for linguistic purposes (labiality, time, person, nasality etc.).
11. acquisition: how melodic primes come into being.