Why do we need two levels of prosodic transcription?: Supporting the IPrA (International Prosodic Alphabet) proposal

Pilar Prieto (ICREA, Dept. of Translation & Lang. Sciences, U. of Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona) and **Sun-Ah Jun** (Dept. of Linguistics, UCLA)

In this presentation we review a set of arguments that point to the need of using two levels of prosodic representation when transcribing intonational and prosodic features, that are categorical, in the Autosegmental-Metrical (AM) framework, namely broad phonetic (IPrA) and phonological levels (ToBI) of prosodic transcription. In essence, we claim that prosodic transcriptions can benefit from the same strategy we use for segmental transcription. The first argument relates to the necessity to represent the correspondence between surface, but categorical, prosodic patterns and underlying prosodic categories. We will present cases of potential ambiguity that can be resolved by having access to two levels of prosodic transcription. This strategy has the potential benefit of increasing the inter-transcriber agreement. Second, the development of a set of cross-linguistically transparent and consistent labels (e.g., an International Prosodic Alphabet (IPrA)) that can be used for broad phonetic transcription allows for more transparent copmarisons across languages. It can also facilitate prosodic labelling in languages for which the phonological repertoire is not yet known. At the same time, having two levels of representation facilitates the study of the development of L2 intonational patterns and also languages in contact, as well as the facilitation of automatic and semi-automatic labelling of large corpora. Finally, we briefly review the tentative inventory proposed for pitch accents and boundary tones.