

- SULYOMI-SCHULMANN : „Heilpaedagogische Wertung von Schriftuntersuchungen bei Stotterern“ (Berlin, 1933. *Zeitschrift für Kinderforschung*). „Das Sprachheilwesen in Ungarn“ (*Wiener med. Wochenschrift*, 1934). *A beszédhibák elhárítása, különös tekintettel a dadogásra* (Budapest, 1935).
- L. SZONDI : „Konstitutionsanalyse von 100 Stotterern“ (*Wiener med. Wochenschrift*, 1932). *Konstitutionsanalyse psychisch abnormer Kinder* (C. Markhold, Halle, 1933).

DISCUSSION :

Dr. D. WEISS (Antwerp) :

Ausser den Vorhalten, die wir bereits jenerzeit den Untersuchungsergebnissen von Dr. SZONDI machen mussten, nämlich die zu kleine Zahl der untersuchten Stotterer und seine von den übrigen Fachleuten abweichende Art der Beurteilung der Röntgenbilder des Schädels, soll nur noch ein Punkt betont werden, der seither hinzugekommen ist. Seit ich auf die häufige Kombination des Polterns mit dem Stottern hingewiesen habe, u. zw. in den Fällen, die früher gemeinlich immer als Stottern bezeichnet wurden, hat sich bereits eine ganze Literatur (FREUND, PICHON et BOREL-MAISONNY, MOLENAAR-BIJL) an diese Frage geknüpft. Es muss also nunmehr in allen statistischen Arbeiten über das sogen. Stottern dieser Unterschied sorgfältiger berücksichtigt werden als es eben früher der Fall sein konnte.

ANSWER of Dir. SULYOMI-SCHULMANN :

Nicht eine übergrosse Zahl der Fälle, sondern die Identität der Fälle im genügenden Masse sind ausschlaggebend. Es wurde bei der Auswahl der 100 Stotterfälle genau beachtet, dass es alle Entwicklungsstotterfälle seien und nicht etwa auch solche, die einen anderen Hintergrund, wie z. B. Poltern, Nervenchoke, Hysterie u. dgl. haben.

WEDNESDAY, 20 JULY. AFTERNOON

THIRD SESSION FOR GENERAL LINGUISTICS
AND PHONOLOGY

Chairman : Prof. L. HJELMSLEV.

35. Miss CÉCILE VEREECKEN (Ghent) : *Stress-Groups*.

The terms „stress-groups“, „Sprechtakte“, „groupes accentués“, have been often used, though not always with quite the same meaning. According to VIÉTOR, SWEET, SIEVERS, SOAMES, SCHMIDT, NOREEN, ROUDET, GRAMMONT, they denote subdivisions of speech, caused by a maximum of stress.

This maximum depends on rhythm, according to SCHMIDT

and NOREEN, on meaning or syntax according to the other mentioned authors.

However, by stress-groups here are meant not subdivisions of a logical or syntactical, but of a rhythmical kind.

Indeed, Prof. A. W. DE GROOT having discovered the syllable to be the smallest rhythmical unit of speech, the question naturally arose, which was the rhythmical unit immediately following this first one.

In order to find out and to observe those rhythmical units of a second degree, I played a gramophone record of a Dutch text of a literary kind, several times over again, a record presenting the advantage to eliminate all differences which may present themselves with one speaker at different moments. To eliminate as much as possible all individual differences in perception, Prof. E. BLANCQUAERT was so kind to listen to the same record and compare his rhythmical units with mine.

I paid as less attention as possible to the meaning of what was being spoken, but let free course to the sense of rhythm. Rhythm is, as has often been repeated : a kind of pleasure we experience, when producing or perceiving a series of more or less similar movements, characterized by rising and falling energy. Through association the same applies to impressions of sight and hearing, consequently also to language.

In this way I obtained groups of one to three syllables, at the utmost five, one of which was prominent, on account of pitch, or length, or stress as in the biggest part of the cases. I noticed that pitch and duration only affected those syllables that might otherwise have a stress, and I suspect that they were due to the more or less oratorical way in which there was spoken.

I let another person read aloud the same text and indeed, stress took the place of pitch and duration. I conclude therefore, that in Dutch at any rate, rhythmical groups are brought about by stress.

It is necessary and sufficient that a stress should be relatively strong, i. e. a secondary stress may occasion a rhythmical group, when surrounded by unstressed syllables, but is unable of doing so when a principal stress is near by.

Remarkable were some groups I felt to be rhythmical, though the speaker left every syllable unaccented. The explanation of this phenomenon is to be found in a series of articles on rhythm by Prof. A. W. DE GROOT : after having perceived many of those prose-feet, a residue is laid down in the mind, a kind of measure-schema, which is also projected elsewhere.

However, it is doubtful whether rhythmical stress-groups play any part in ordinary speech. Neither speaker nor hearer is conscious of them, and even a person listening with the

deliberate purpose to state them, cannot do so without some exercise and some difficulty now and then. Rhythm, it is said, tends towards perfect alternation of energy — which here is stress. There is no such perfect alternation in ordinary language. Difficulties in stating stress-groups cannot be explained otherwise, nor could there be any individual differences in perceiving them, the sense of rhythm not varying from individual to individual. Stresses are laid, not according to a rhythmical principle, but according to a system laid down by tradition, or meaning, which no rhythm can ever break. If somebody wants to give a rhythmical interpretation of a given text, he can never realise a perfectly regular alternation, because he has to conform himself to this system. A clear example is the following Dutch sentence: „'t is als een groote, machtige stem uit het verleden, die *ēlkēn* | *āvōnd*, | *vōor ēen pōōsjē*, | *plēchtig*, | etc.” where the measure | *vōor ēen pōōsjē* | cannot be changed into: | *vōōr ēēn* | *pōōsjē* |, though rhythmically it would be better, because the meaning „for a little while” would be altered into „not long ago”.

Besides, there seems to be an opposition between meaning and rhythm. Several authors, PASSY, JESPERSEN, SOAMES, SIEVERS, A. W. DE GROOT, HEGEDŪS, have pointed out the same fact. The more attention is paid to rhythm, the less attention is paid to meaning, and inversely. One has only to think too of the mechanizing influence of sing-song in verse. On the contrary, a great variety of pitch, length, intensity, largely contribute to strengthen the meaning, but hamper the coming about of rhythmical groups. As the purpose of ordinary speech is to communicate something, it is clear that rhythm will have little part in it. The best proof to this is, that under special circumstances, stress-groups are actually realized as such.

E. g. what we call „feet” in verse are stress-groups in their optimal form. But, as the place of stresses is fixed, the skill of the poet consists in choosing words and putting them in such an order as to obtain a regular alternation between stressed and unstressed syllables.

A Dutch author, Ary Prins, is said to have a predilection for iambic prose, but to this purpose has to resort to tricks as adding a neutral *e*, or archaic endings, or inverting the usual word-order.

One day I heard little girls, dancing in a rope, chanting: *ik zīt ōp mījnē stōēl*, evidently never thinking of the meaning, whereas the usual stressing of this little sentence is:

The conclusion is, that stress-groups are not non-existent, but that only exceptionally they play an active part.

A certain rhythm may result from a certain way of stressing, but the fixed place of stresses does not result from rhythm.

This statement may be of some importance, because stress-groups are sometimes called on to account for certain linguistic changes. e. g. shifting of stress, as in the Dutch word *goddeloos*; the previous stressing was: *gōdde-lōōs* = god-less, when the two elements were still clear to the linguistic conscience; then it changed into *gōddeloos*, and now there is a tendency to stress *gōddelōōs*. This not probably due to rhythm, e. g. *een gōddēlōōze kērēl* is rhythmically no better than *een gōddēlōōzē kērēl*, on the contrary, and it is the same in other contexts.

R. C. BOER again, tries to explain syncope and gemination in prim. Germanic by means of stress-groups, which according to him are the minimum-distance between two heavy stresses; then suddenly he assumes that in prim. Germ. such a minimum-distance was a long syllable. His theory, though very clever, may not hit the mark, the starting-point not being justified.

It is often said, and it is probably true, that though stress-groups are unequal in pattern and number of syllables, rhythm manifests itself by tending to equal length. Prof. A. W. DE GROOT even thinks of an optimal length of 0,75 sec., with in reality a fluctuation between 2 and 0,5 sec. I think it is impossible to state a tendency towards any absolute duration, because absolute length depends on the tempo in which is spoken, and tempo may vary greatly, even in the course of one sentence.

36. Dr. HERBERT PENZL (Rockford): *Die Bedeutung moderner Dialektaufnahmen für Probleme des Lautwandels*.

I. Unter „Lautwandel” in seiner weitesten Bedeutung wird jede Veränderung der Lautqualität verstanden, wobei es gleichgültig ist, aus welchem Grunde oder auf welche Weise diese erfolgte; alle Assimilationen, Dissimilationen, Monophthongierungen, Diphthongierungen, Palatalisierungen, Umlautungen usw., welche die historische Grammatik der einzelnen Sprachen beschreibt, fallen unter diese Bezeichnung.

Der Lautwandel kann kombinatorisch oder einfach („spontan”), „konvergent” oder „divergent” sein (1), rein phonetisch bedingt sein oder ohne ersichtlichen phonetischen Grund erfolgen, bloß in bestimmter, phonetischer Gruppierung eintreten oder das Phonem im allgemeinen erfassen, er kann vor allem phonemisch bedeutungsvoll sein oder nicht. Im letzteren Falle handelt

(1) Vgl. JESPERSEN, *Growth and Structure of the Engl. Language*, S. 284, 288; FERDINAND DE SAUSSURE, *Grundfragen der allgemeinen Sprachwissenschaft* (1931), S. 172 ff.