

THE PROSODY OF GRAMMAR AND THE GRAMMAR OF PROSODY¹

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The 'Prosody of Grammar'

"Grammar" when used to mean "Syntax" is primarily prosody. The fallacy of "paper syntax", the utter untenability of vociferous but scientifically unfounded pronouncements concerning the "grammaticality" or "ungrammaticality" of ridiculous strings of written slovoforms is demonstrated by referring the reader to an unusually convincing piece of linguistic material (Young et al., 1970, 306) and one of the more recent reports of a relevant investigation (Lehiste, 1977).

The 'Grammar of Prosody'

"Grammar" can also be used to mean "general facts" (as against "special" ones, Henry Sweet). In this sense the "Grammar" of prosody pervades the whole of language. The less generally known aspect of this enormous field is "lexicological phonetics" - a new branch of phonetics whose aim is to prove the objective existence of words as units of language, analyze and explain the expression plane of lexical categories.

References

- R.E. Young, A.L. Becker, and K.L. Pike (1970): Rhetoric: Discovery and Change, New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc.
- Lehiste, I. (1977): "Isochrony reconsidered", JPh 5, 253-263.

(1) We have taken the liberty to adopt the "paradox-pattern" which was so successfully introduced by professor Roman Jakobson.