

NOMINAL ACCENTUATION IN CONTEMPORARY STANDARD RUSSIAN

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1. It has become customary to derive the accentuation of a word form from inherent accent-generating properties of its constituent morphemes. Though this seems to be a suitable technique in the case of languages with inherent tonal features, such as African languages or Common Slavic, one may wonder if it is equally appropriate for a language like Russian, where accent is a configurational feature. In the words *му́ка* 'torment' and *му́ка* 'flour', the stress on the first vowel conditions the absence of stress on the second, and vice versa: there is no opposition with two or zero accents. Thus, stressed and unstressed *u* are not different phonemes because they are not found in one and the same position; phonemic stress is a property of the sequence. It is by no means clear that the descriptive technique which assigns inherent accentual properties to the separate morphemes and eliminates the resulting overspecification by rule should yield an adequate description of the facts, not to mention its explanatory power. As Zaliznjak points out in his recent book on the history of Russian accentuation (1985: 37),

в современном русском языке при одном и том же наборе окончаний могут противопоставляться до семи разных схем ударения, например: *вѐра* -- схема *a*, *че́ртá* -- *b*, *беда́* -- *d*, *гу́ба* -- *f*, *спи́на* -- *d'*, *ногá* -- *f'* (ср. еще единичное *до́ля* -- схема *e*). Чтобы отобразить эти различия с помощью маркировок, нужно в идеале ввести семь различных маркировок корня. Если допустить некоторое количество индивидуальных исключений, инвентарь маркировок можно сократить; однако попытка обойтись менее чем четырьмя маркировками уже приводит к непомерно длинным спискам исключений или к иным модификациям техники маркировок, которые в сущности компрометируют саму эту технику

and this is why its theoretical premises should be reconsidered.

2. The primary function of stress in contemporary standard Russian is a contrastive one. Since the noun is inflected for number and case, the stress may or may not differentiate

(1) a stem from other stems,

(2) the plural from the singular,

(3) a plural case form from the other plural case forms,

(4) a singular case form from the other singular case forms,

or any combination of these. The plural case with a distinct stress is either the nominative, where the stress is retracted, or the genitive, where it is shifted to the desinence.¹ The singular case with a distinct stress is the accusative, which is in a few instances identical with the nominative; the stress is retracted here.² As a consequence, one can predict the accentual paradigm of any Russian noun (except the five words mentioned in footnote 1) on the basis of the four criteria listed here, without specifying the flexion class of the individual words, and without assigning accentual properties to the separate case endings.³

3. The large majority of Russian nouns have fixed stress on the stem. If we regard this as the normal type and mark the presence and absence of a stress shift according to the four criteria listed above with the signs - and +, respectively, we arrive at the following classification.

++++: fixed stress on the stem.

-+++ : fixed stress on the desinence.

+--- : e.g., ма́стер, сад, гла́з, госпо́дин, ме́сто, мбе́.

--++ : e.g., ви́нб, перб, днб, сук, кислота́, тягота́.

-+-- : e.g., конь, гвоздь, крыльцо́, губа́, коздря́.

+--+ : e.g., волк, вблос, у́хо, дере́вня, ночь.

---- : 11 nouns, e.g., овца́, семья́, судья́, кольцо́.

-+-- : 19 nouns, e.g., гора́, рука́, борода́, уго́ль.⁴

-+-- : у́гол, у́горь, у́зел.⁵

+++ : заём, наём.

--+ : 10 nouns, e.g., вода́, зима́, цена́.

---- : земля́.

+--+ : господа́, перёд.

Only three of the sixteen logical possibilities are not attested (+++, +--, +---). The accent of a word form can be derived from the product of the relevant markings: if this is +, the stress is on the stem; if it is -, the stress is on the ending.

4. If we want to apply the method advanced here to the adjective, we are faced with the fact that approximately 90 words have accentual variants. The stress of an adjective may or may not differentiate

- (1) the stem from other stems,
- (2) the short plural from the long form,
- (3) the feminine from the neuter short singular form,

or a combination of these. The feminine short singular form has final stress in all mobile types, while the corresponding masculine form is stressed on the stem.⁶ If beside + and - we use the sign o to mark an optional stress shift, we arrive at the following classification.

+++: e.g., лука́вый, лука́в, лука́ва, лука́во, лука́вы.

--+: e.g., сме́шной, сме́шон, сме́шна, сме́шно, сме́шны.

+--: e.g., горя́чий, горя́ч, горя́ча, горя́чо, горя́чи.

+-: e.g., то́нкий, то́нок, то́нка, то́нко, то́нки.

---: e.g., молодóй, мло́д, молодá, мло́до, мло́ды.

++o: e.g., вла́стный, вла́стен, вла́сна, вла́стно, вла́стны.

+oo: e.g., пол́ный, полон, полна́, полно́, полны́.

+o+: e.g., лёгкий, лёгко́, легка́, легко́, лёгки́.

+o-: e.g., ся́льный, ся́лен, ся́лна, ся́льно, ся́льны́.

-o-: e.g., протóй, протó, протá, протóто, протóты́.

The accent of the neuter short singular form can be derived either from the corresponding feminine or from the plural, whichever is not marked by o.

5. Pronominal forms are stressed on the ending.⁷ In the verb, the stress may or may not differentiate

- (1) a stem from other stems,
- (2) the past from the present tense,
- (3) the 1st sg. from the other present tense forms,
- (4) the fem. sg. from the other past tense forms,

or certain combinations of these.⁸ Examples:

- ++++: лѣзу, лѣзешь, лѣзла, лѣзли.
 -+++: блюду́, блюдёшь, блюла́, блюли́.
 +-++: лягу́, ляжешь, легла́, легли́.
 --++: грызу́, грызёшь, грѣзла, грѣзли.
 +---: могу́, можешь, могла́, могли́.
 +++-: бѹду, бѹдешь, была́, бѹли.
 ---+ : пойму́, поймёшь, поняла́, поняли.
 +-+-: приму́, примешь, приняла́, приняли.

6. The development of the Russian accentual system since Common Slavic times is characterized by a shift from a system where the accent of a word form can be derived from inherent properties of its constituent morphemes to a system where it is determined by the presence or absence of stress shifts in specific categories. This development can be viewed as a corollary of the loss of distinctive tone, which was an inherent feature in Common Slavic times, and the consequent rise of configurational stress as the only prosodic feature of a Russian word form. A similar development is attested in Russian word-formation, where the change is characterized by Zaliznjak as follows (1985: 382):

это, в терминах В.А. Дыбо, "переход от парадигматического акцента к категориальному", т.е. переход от системы, где ударение производного слова зависит от акцентной парадигмы производящего, к системе, где ударение производного определяется только его принадлежностью к некоторой морфологической категории слов

so that I propose to treat accentuation in flexion and derivation along similar lines. This is only possible if we start from a theory which takes into account the specific characteristics of the language described.

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NOTES

- ¹ There are five words, belonging to four different accent classes, where the stress is retracted in the genitive plural, viz. дѣньги, судия, сѣжень (variant with mobile stress), кружево, масло, cf. Kortlandt 1974: 62.
- ² There are four words, belonging to two accent classes, where the stress is shifted to the desinence in the nom.-acc. sg., viz. заем, наем, госпѣдь, перед, cf. Kortlandt 1974: 62f.
- ³ The following description does not account for accentual mobility within the stem, cf. class II sub 3-6 of Kortlandt 1974: 62. Here belong six words which take the plural stem formative $-\emptyset j-$, eight words which take the singular stem formative $-in-$, and the words знѣмя, озеро, бесенок, черенок. In accordance with the approach of Kortlandt 1974: 60f. I would assume a plural stem formative $-\emptyset-$ before the ending in these four words.
- ⁴ Only the last word (variant with mobile stress) does not belong to the α -flexion.
- ⁵ Here belong the numerals восемь, дѣвять, дѣсять, двадцать, тридцать and сорок.
- ⁶ On the masc. short sg. form cf. Kortlandt 1974: 66.
- ⁷ Cf. Kortlandt 1974: 66f.
- ⁸ Cf. Kortlandt 1974: 68f.

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