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SOME PROBLEMS OF ACCENTUAL STRUCTURE IN ENGLISH

In this work I shall treat some problems of accentual structure. The nature of word stress in Russian seems to differ from that in English. The quantitative component plays a greater role in Russian accentual structure than in English word accent.

В этой работе я рассматриваю некоторые проблемы акцентной структуры. Характер словесного ударения в русском языке отличается от ударения в английском языке. Количественный компонент играет большую роль в российской акцентной структуре, чем английского русского языка.

Keywords: *stress, distinctions, qualitative, terminological confusion, dynamic and musical, connected with, syllable.*

Ключевые слова: *ударение, различия, качественные, терминологическая путаница, динамичный и музыкальный, связано с, слог.*

R.I. Avanesov considers the variability in the placement of the Russian word stress an individual sign of every particular word which presents a difficulty for foreign learners and sometimes for the natives. It is interesting to note that Russian word stress may have stylistic distinction and poetic usage, cf. *молодѣц — мѡлодец, дѣвица - дѣвица, шѣлковый — шелкѡвый.*

According to G.Torsuev accentual types and accentual structures are closely connected with the morphological type of words, with the number of syllables, the semantic value of the root and the prefix of the word.

It is common knowledge that sounds of speech have different degrees of sonority. Vowels are more sonorous than consonants. Open vowels are more sonorous than close ones. The quantitative and qualitative components of word stress they are also significant. Certain distinctions of the vowel length and colour are reduced or lacking in unstressed syllables. The fact strengthens the idea that the accentuation is influenced by the vowel length and quality. The vowel of the stressed syllable is perceived as never reduced or obscure and longer than the same vowel in the unstressed syllables. Thus, the word "stress" or "accent" is also defined as qualitative where the vowel colour or quality is a means of stress and quantitative with relatively increased length of the stressed vowel. Compare the quality (colour) and quantity (length) of the same vowel in a word, e.g. *ab'stract, 'car-park; идѣ, ѣли, умѣ.*

Let us turn to some examples. If the words 'import (n) and im'port (v) are said on a level tone and each vowel with its own length, it is rather difficult to distinguish them. The tonic or musical component may be helpful in defining the place of stress in a word as it is observed within the syllable marked by the pitch change, which contributes to the syllable prominence.

'Import. _ Im'port.

The placement of the pitch change marks the seat of the stress. It should be noted here that the very type of pitch change, its direction, does not influence the word stress, e.g.

'Import. ____ 'Import?

The pitch direction is changed but the stress remains unchanged.

On the other hand, a whole idea may be conveyed by uttering, a single word (one-word phrase}. Then we shall deal with the sentence; stress and the musical component of intonation.

There is undoubtedly a close interrelation between word stress and sentence stress.

The nature of word stress, the interrelation of its components is still a problem which is awaiting its solution.

On the acoustic level the counterpart of force is the intensity of the vibrations of the vocal cords of the speaker which is perceived by the listener as loudness.

Thus the greater energy with which the speaker articulates the stressed; syllable in the word is associated by the listener with greater loudness. The acoustic counterparts of voice pitch and length, are frequency and duration, respectively.

The nature of word stress in Russian seems to differ from that in English. The quantitative component plays a greater role in Russian accentual structure than in English word accent.

In the Russian language we never pronounce vowels of full formation and full length in unstressed positions, they are always reduced. Therefore the vowels of full length are unmistakably perceived as stressed. In English the quantitative component of word stress is not of primary importance because of the nonreduced vowels in the unstressed syllables which sometimes occur in English words, e.g. 'architect, 'transport, 'partake.

Russian phoneticians (L.V.Zlatoustova; L.L.Bulanin,) insist on the quantitative character of the Russian word stress as its principal feature, though other components of word stress in Russian are not denied. We would like to dwell on the term prominence here. It seems to cause some ambiguity when related to word stress. The stressed syllables are often said to be the most prominent syllables in the word. According to G.P.Torsuev the notions "stressed" and "prominent" should not be used synonymically. The effect of prominence is created by some phonetic features of sounds which have nothing to do with word or sentence stress. It is common knowledge that sounds of speech have different degrees of sonority. Vowels are more sonorous than consonants. Open vowels are more sonorous than close ones. Sonority is the inner quality of vowels which is not directly connected with the accentual structure of words but with other articulatory characteristics, it contributes to the effect of prominence.

The above-given illustrations show how important it is in teaching practice to make the students realize that the accentual structure of words is conditioned by the semantic interrelation of their elements. The teacher should attract the students' attention to the correlation between the accentual and semantic structures of words which will save the students many mistakes. The regulation of the accentuation in the Russian language is too complicated and is practically unpredictable. The stress may fall on the same morpheme in the derivatives where word-formation is performed by the grammatical means alone, e.g. кожа — кожи — кожей - кожу; год — годы — годом. In another group of words the stress may effect different morphemes of the word participating in the word-formation alongside with the grammatical means, e.g. сад—сады — садами — садом; пар — пары - парами— паром; but: пара — пары — парами — парам:

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Another group of words presenting difficulty for Russian learners is large group of compounds which are marked either by two equal stresses (compound adjectives) or by one stress (compound nouns). The semantic factor in defining the accentual structure of compounds should be most decisive, as it has been illustrated above. One more group of words requires learners' attention, the group which forms accentual oppositions of different parts of speech by way of conversion accompanied by the shifting of stress, e.g. 'combine (n) — com'bine (v), 'insult (n) — in'sult (v).

In case of doubt it is advisable to consult a pronouncing.

The numerous variations of English word stress are systematized in the typology of accentual structure of English words worked out by G.P. Torsuyev. He classifies them according to the number of stressed syllables, their degree or character (the main and the secondary stress). The distribution of stressed syllables within the word accentual types forms accentual structures of words. Accentual types and accentual structures are closely connected with the morphological type of words, with the number of syllables, the semantic value of the root and the prefix of the word.

The accentual types are:

1. ['___]. This accentual type marks both simple and compound words. The accentual structures of this type may include two and more syllables, e.g. 'father, 'possibly, 'mother-in-law, 'gas-pipe.

2. ['_ _]. The accentual type is commonly realized in compound words, most of them are with separable prefixes, e.g. 'radio-'active, 're'write, 'diso'bey.

3. [' _ _ _] and 4. [' _ ' _ ' _]. The accentual types are met in initial compound abbreviations like 'U'S'A, 'U'S'S'R.

5. [_ , ___]. The type is realized both in simple and compound words, very common among compound words, e.g. 'hair-,dresser, 'substructure.

6. [, _ ___]. The accentual type marks a great number of simple words and some compound words as well. In simple words the stresses fall onto:

1. the prefix and the root: maga'zine;
2. the root and the suffix: hospi'tality;
3. the prefix and the suffix: disorganization.

7. [_ , _ _] The type includes rather a small number of simple words with the separable prefixes, e.g. 'mis, repre'sent.

8. [, _ , _ _]. The type is found in a very small number of words, usually simple words with the stresses on the prefix, the root and the suffix, e.g. ,indi,viduali'zation.

9. [' _ , _ _]. The type is met in rare instances of compound words with separable prefixes, e.g. 'un'sea,worthy.

10. [_ _ , _ , _]. The type is represented by rare instances of simple and compound words, e.g. 'soda-,water ,bottle.

11. [, _ ' , _] The type is found in rare instances of compound words consisting of the three components, e.g. ,ginger'beer-,bottle.

The data given above suggest an idea of the great variability in the accentual structure of English words.

The most widely spread among the enumerated accentual types are supposed to be Type 1, Type 2, Type 5 and Type 6. Each type includes varieties of definite accentual structures with different numbers of syllables and marks thousands of words. So the four of them cover the main bulk of most common English words and are therefore most typical for the English vocabulary.

The variability of the word accentual structure is multiplied in connected speech. The accentual structure of words may be altered under the influence of rhythm, e.g. An 'unpolished 'stone but: The 'stone was un'polished.

The tempo of speech may influence the accentual pattern of words. With the quickening of the speed the carefulness of articulation is diminished, the vowels are reduced or elided, the secondary stress may be dropped, e.g. The 'whole organi'zation of the 'meeting was 'faulty.

So in a speech chain the phonetic structure of a word obtains additional characteristics connected with rhythm, melody, and tempo. Though the sentence stress falls on the syllable marked by the word stress it is not realized in the stressed syllable of an isolated word but in a word within speech continuum. Since the spheres of word stress and sentence stress fall apart their functions are

actually different. Sentence stress organizes a sentence into a linguistic unit, helps to form its rhythmic and intonation pattern, performs its distinctive function on the level of a phrase.

In this work I have treated some problems of accentual structure, such as the quantitative and qualitative components of word stress, vowels and consonants.

I have known that vowel of the stressed syllable is perceived as never reduced or obscure and longer than the same vowel in the unstressed syllables. I have said about European languages such as English, German, French, Russian, and that they are believed to possess predominantly dynamic word stress. In Scandinavian languages the word stress is considered to be both dynamic and musical. I have paid attention to the instability of English accentual structure of words and that the English presents much difficulty for Russian learners, because of his multisyllabic words the accentual structure of which is regulated by the rhythmical tendency. I have pointed out that in a speech chain the phonetic structure of a word obtains additional characteristics connected with rhythm, melody, and tempo. Though the sentence stress falls on the syllable marked by the word stress it is not realized in the stressed syllable of an isolated word but in a word within speech continuum. I singled out that the opinions of phoneticians differ as how many degrees of stress are linguistically relevant in a word.

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THE HISTORY OF GRAMMATICAL STUDY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

The English language may now be regarded as the common inheritance of about fifty millions of people; who are at least as highly distinguished for virtue, intelligence, and enterprise, as any other equal portion of the earth's population. All these are more or less interested in the purity, permanency, and right use of that language.

Английский язык в настоящее время можно рассматривать как общий язык около пятидесяти миллионов людей; которые также отличаются силой, интеллектом, как и в