

On Binary Oppositions and Distributions in the Russian Stress System

Oppositional Properties of Russian Accentual Paradigms

I. Main goal: Provide lexemes with the markings AA, BB, CC, BC, CB (total of 5 regular types).

The double letter designation indicates the stress type in the two subparadigms that constitute a full paradigm (e.g. singular and plural for nouns, non-past and past for verbs).

By definition, type A only occurs across two subparadigms and does not normally combine with other types. (E.g. *крокодѐл*, *ста́вить*.)

1. Type A stress (i.e. lexically marked stress) remains on the same stem syllable throughout the paradigm.

2. In the case of stress types B and C, the morphophonemic environment determines the stress of the given lexeme and each type can occur either in both subparadigms (BB and CC) or in only one of the two subparadigms (BC and CB).

Type B admits either pre-desinential stress or stress on the first desinential syllable in both subparadigms of the noun and verb. I.e. stress occurs immediately adjacent to the stem-desinence boundary (marked plus (+) on the diagram to follow).

Type C admits word-initial stress or stress on the first desinential syllable in both subparadigms of the noun and verb. I.e. stress occurs on the first syllable of either the stem or the ending.

Invariants of the distinctive Russian stress types (applies to distinctive environments)

Type A: #_____+...#

Type B: #....._+...#

Type C: #_.....+...#

_____ = stress can occur

..... = stress cannot
occur

= word boundary

+ = stem-desinence
boundary

Basic Stress Rules for Russian Nouns

Each type (A, B, C) has its own particular rules about how stress is determined.

Type A: lexical and fixed. Simply marked on any stem syllable. This rule applies to nouns and other parts-of-speech and is the most numerous type:

e.g. крокодѐйл, желѹдок, ко́мната

Type B: based on the phonetic shape of genitive case endings.

1. Genitive non-zero option = end-stress in the subparadigm.

**стол/столá, столы́/столо́в, колбасá/колбасы́,
колесó/колесá**

2. Genitive zero option = stem-final stress in the subparadigm.

колбáсы/колбáсами, колёса/колёсами

Type C: based on the phonetic shape of direct and locative case endings.

**1. If at least one Direct case or Locative is a +high vowel.
+high option = mobility of +high form.**

(Direct has initial stress; Locative has end-stress.)

го́лову/голова́, го́ловы/головáми, берегú/бéрега

2. If Direct cases and Locative are all –high:

A. Direct +low option = end-stress

зеркала́/зеркала́ми, колокола́/колокола́ми

B. Direct –low option = initial stress

зе́рало/зе́ркала, ко́локол/ко́локола

Sample Set of Nouns with Stress Types

I. Zero-Declension Nouns

AA желу́док,
параллэ́ль

BB язы́к, пу́ть

CC ле́бедь,
о́бласть, го́род

BC гво́здь

CB са́д

II. a-Declension Nouns

AA коро́ва

BB колбаса́

CC голова́

BC губа́

CB вода́

III. o-Declension Nouns

AA пра́вило,
я́блоко

BB число́

CC зéркало

BC существо́, очко́

CB о́зеро

Noun Stress

Type B (Predesinential/Desinential)

If the genitive case in the subparadigm is non-zero:

Result is: Desinential stress in the subparadigm.

If the genitive case in the subparadigm is zero:

Result is: Predesinential stress in the subparadigm.

колбасá, колбасы́

сто́л, столá

столы́, столóв

окно́, окна́

колба́сы, колба́с, колба́сами

веретёна, веретён, веретёнами

Type C (Initial/Desinential)

Mobility with a single deviating form in the subparadigm.

Direct or Locative case has a high vowel desinence *-i/u-*.

Direct case in *-i/u-*.

Direct case has initial stress and all others have desinential stress.

Locative in *-i/u-*.

Locative has desinential stress and all others have initial stress.

Immobility if the subparadigm lacks a direct or locative case with a high vowel *-i/u-*.

Nominative case desinence has low vowel.

Desinential stress throughout subparadigm.

Nominative desinence has non-low vowel.

Initial stress throughout subparadigm.

Examples:

го́лову, голова́ (sg.)

берегу́, бе́рег, бе́рега (sg.)

зерка́ла, зерка́лам (pl.)

зе́рало, зе́ркалом (sg.)

во́лки, волко́в (pl.)

оси́, о́сью (sg.)

города́, города́м (pl.)

го́род, го́рода (sg.)

(1) Russian Noun Stress

Lexically Based (A)

E.g. ко́мната, желу́док, крокоди́л
Same syllable is stressed throughout paradigm:
Singular and Plural.

(2) Grammatically Based (B/C)

(3) Boundary-Contiguous (B)

Genitive = -∅

E.g. стола́, сто́лов
падежа́, падеже́й
колбасы́
зубка́
веретенá
End (desinential) stress in a subparadigm with non-zero genitive stress.

Genitive = +∅

E.g. колба́с, колба́сы
зубо́к, зубки́
веретён, веретёна
Stem-final (predesinential) stress in a subparadigm with zero genitive stress.

(4) Boundary-Initial (C)

(5) Mobile: Direct/Loc=+high

Direct (N/A) = +high
E.g. го́ловы
~головáм;
го́лову~головá
во́лки~во́лкам

Locative = +high
бе́регу́
~бе́рег;
снегу́~сне́га

Initial~end stress in subparadigm.

(6) Immobile: Direct/Loc=-high

Direct=+low
зеркала́, зеркала́м
берега́. берега́м

Direct=-low
ко́локол
зе́ркало, зе́ркала
во́лк, во́лка

End-stress (desinential) in subparadigm.

Initial stress in subparadigm.

Inventory of the Basic 5 Stress Types in Different Morphological Classes

<u>AA</u>	<u>BB</u>	<u>CC</u>	<u>BC</u>	<u>CB</u>
<p>жа́воронок архі́в ресто́ран</p>	<p>паде́ж враг каба́н шашлы́к лиша́й</p> <p>сапожо́к (Gpl сапо́жек) глазо́к зубо́к рожо́к</p>	<p>волк зуб лебе́дь го́лубь о́кунь</p> <p>хо́лод (Npl холода́) го́род бе́рег про́пуск дом глаз во́лос</p>	<p>гвоздь ко́нь червь груздь</p>	<p>сад нос след суп сыр вал ряд шаг</p>
<p>-----</p> <p>болото́ кору́то пра́вило</p>	<p>-----</p> <p>веретенó воло́кно долото́ ремесло́ письмо́ число́</p>	<p>-----</p> <p>зе́ркало о́блако сло́во</p>	<p>-----</p> <p>торжество́ существо́</p>	<p>-----</p> <p>озеро</p>
<p>-----</p> <p>иво́лга свобо́да гипо́теза пирами́да</p>	<p>-----</p> <p>звезда́ колбаса́ стрекоза́</p>	<p>-----</p> <p>голо́ва полоса́ сторонá гора́ нога́ рука́ щека́</p>	<p>-----</p> <p>губа́ слеза́ свеча́ волна́</p>	<p>-----</p> <p>вода́ душа́ зима́ спина́</p>
<p>-----</p> <p>пече́нь модель магистра́ль</p>		<p>вѐдомость дверь ло́шадь ось</p>		

A book on Russian stress by Robert Lagerberg contained an interesting criticism of my system, which I will illustrate and explain. Lagerberg raised the following question:

Why do I consider forms such as *во́лк, во́лка* to have initial stress, but forms such as *о́кна, о́кнами* to have predesinential, when they look the same?

These forms have the same stress on the surface, but they all have monosyllabic stems, and such stems are accentually ambiguous, since you cannot distinguish initial, medial, or predesinential position.

But, if you look at the equivalent polysyllabic **morphological** type in each given subparadigm, you can draw conclusions about the ambiguous monosyllabic types.

I.e., *ко́локол* is analogous to *во́лк* and called type C; likewise, the plural stress of *веретёна* is analogous to *о́кна*, and is assigned to type B.

Generally, an ambiguous environment never should be used as evidence without a supporting unambiguous environment.

Grammatical Correlations of Russian Noun Stress

Type A: Unchanging paradigmatic stress means that stress is assigned by the lexeme itself, marked on any stem vowel and unchanging.

Types B and C: Stress in a given subparadigm (singular or plural) is correlated to a specific case form. This can be better seen terms of Jakobson's listing of the basic cases:

N A G L vs. D I

The first four listed cases all play a role, but the last two, dative, and instrumental, do not. The following features are concomitant properties of stress types B and C:

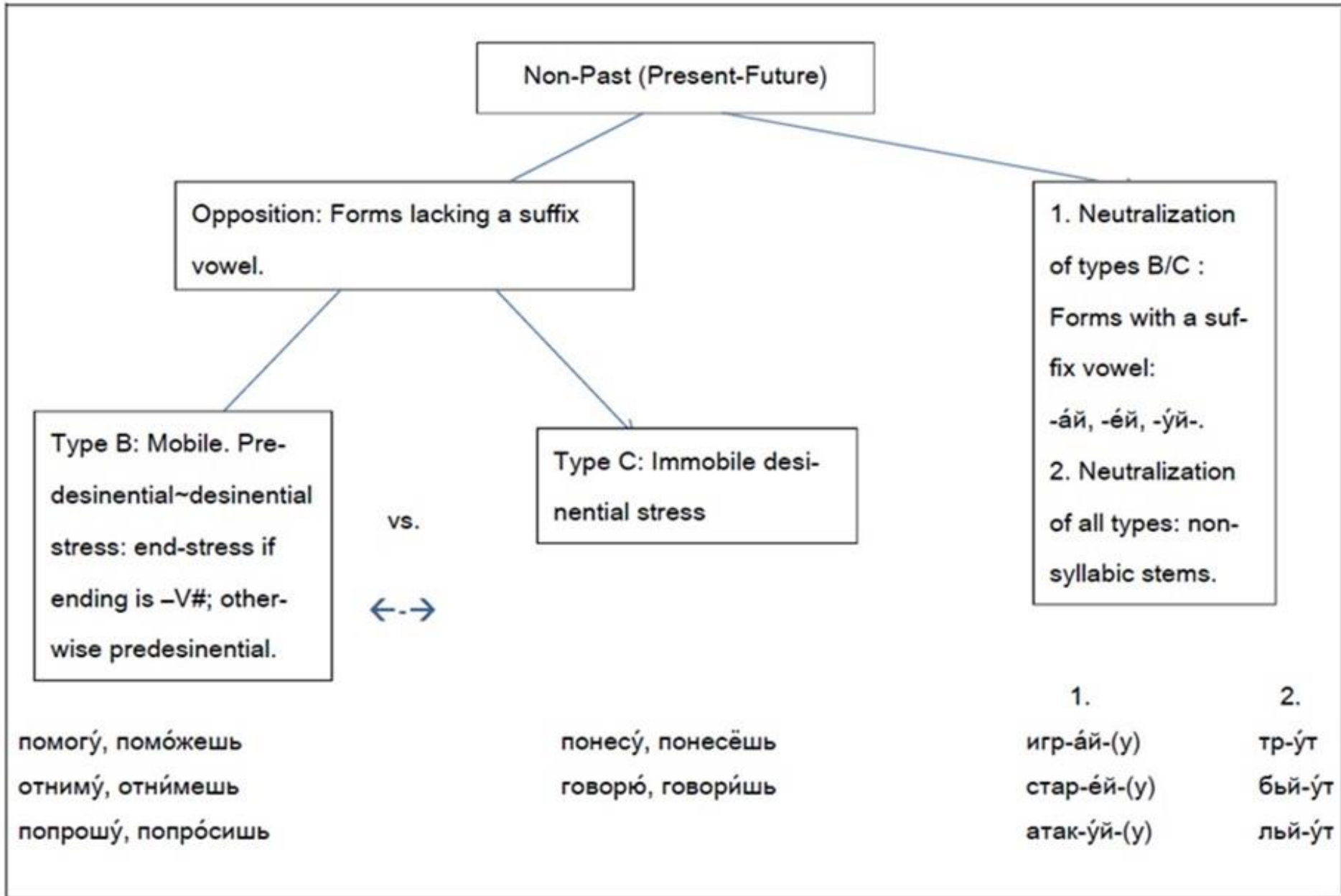
- a. The zero/non-zero genitive is correlated with type B.
- b. The high/non-high vowel direct cases (nominative and accusative) and locative are correlated with two opposite types of C mobility.
- c. The low/non-low vowel direct cases (nominative and accusative) are correlated with two opposite types of C subparadigmatic immobility (initial and end-stress).

All of the feature correlates of stress types are inherent sonority features of desinences, zero-desinences and vowel heights. Other vowel features play no role.

Some major differences between Russian noun and verb stress.

1. The Russian noun is divided into singular and plural subparadigms. The verb has the two basic subparadigms of **non-past** and **past**, but is more complex, with other forms that can be derived from the basic subparadigms (past passive participle, other participial forms, imperative infinitive).
2. As shown above, type B and C Russian **noun stress is correlated to the phonological shape of grammatical endings (desinences)**. (E.g. genitive zero/non-zero, nominative low/non-low.)
3. **Verb stress is predicted on the basis of three possible criteria:** the phonological shape of endings, as in the noun; the phonological shape of the verb stem; and the presence or absence of a vocalic verbalizing suffix. The following flow charts and examples will show how this works in both the non-past (present-future) and past subparadigms.
4. One of the most important rules is **that the presence of a verbal suffix in the form prevents the B vs. C opposition**; it doesn't matter if the suffix was never there or was "deleted" in the Jakobsonian system.

Model of Russian Verb Stress



Past Tense

Opposition of Type B vs. C:
Stem lacks a syllabic suffix.

Immobility: Un-
suffixed obstru-
ent stems.

Mobility: Un-
suffixed sonorant
stems.

Type B:
Predesinen-
tial stress.

Type C:
Desinential
stress.

Type B:
Predesinential
~ desinential
mobility (-á)

Type C:
Initial ~
desinential
mobility (-á)

гры́зло
стри́гло

←-→

несло́
гребло́

заплы́ло
~заплыла́
запи́ли
~запила́

←-→

за́жило
~зажила́
за́пили
~запила́

Neutralization of B-C opposition: Syl-
labic suffix exists; merged stress follows
type B (predesinential immobile or mo-
bile.)

Immobility: syl-
labic root and suf-
fix: CVC-V-
Predesinential
stress.

Mobility:
Non-syllabic root
and syllabic suf-
fix: C/C-V Pre-
desinential ~ des-
inential (-á) mo-
bility.

проси́ла, -ло
говори́ла, ло

жда́ло
~ждала́
собра́ло
~собрала́

Past Passive Participle

If no syllabic suffix in form:
opposition of type B vs. C:

Immobility: Unsuffixed
obstruent stems and
i-stems

Mobility:
Unsuffixed sonorant
stems.

Type B: Pre-
desinential
stress.

Type C:
Desinential
stress.

Type B:
Predesinential
~ desinential
mobility (-á)

Type C:
Initial ~
desinential
mobility (-á)

Neutralization of B-C opposition: Syl-
labic suffix exists; merged stress the
syllable preceding predesinential.

(на-)пíс-а+н-(о); (о-)смéй-а+н-(о)
(пере-)смóтр-е+н-(о); (пере-)сíж-е+н-(о)
(зá-)стл-а+н-(о); (перé-)бр-а+н-(о)
(за-)тя́-ну+т-(о); (с-)то́лк-ну+т-(о)
организ-óва+н-(о); (с-)кóв-а+н-(о)

(по-)стри́ж+он-(о)

(при-)нес'тон-(ó)

(за-)ча́+т-о

(на́-)ча+т-(о)

(за-)горо́ж+он-(о)

(при-)говор'тон-(ó)

~(за-)ча+т-á

~(на-)ча+т-(á)

Thanks for your
attention!