

Russian Nominal Accentual Patterns as a Redundant Feature of the Genitive Plural Zero-Ending and the Problem of Feminine and Neuter End-Stress

Russian accentual patterns may look haphazard and infinite to the casual observer, but, upon further inspection, turn out to be systematic and often are linked to specific phonological and morphological features. In the case of the Russian noun, the larger, accentual patterns are closely linked to such factors as the phonological shape of the nominative, accusative and genitive case endings. This paper will attempt to show that even in the case of some of the smaller, irregular patterns, there may be a link to particular phonological, morphological, and semantic features. Thus, even the most minor accentual patterns can serve as a redundant signal for particular features of the stems in that class.

I. Assumptions about the regular system of stress opposition.

As I have argued in several previous papers, a given nominal type has a regular three-way opposition of accent in both the singular and plural. The invariants of the three types—A, B, and C—are given in table 1. Stated briefly, type A stresses a specific stem syllable throughout the paradigm, but never the ending. Type B stresses a syllable adjacent to the stem-desinence boundary (i.e. either predesinential or desinential), but never a syllable that is not on this boundary. Type C always has a stress which immediately follows either the word-boundary or the stem-desinence boundary (i.e. its stress must be word-initial or desinential). The three types of nouns are termed \emptyset , -o, and -a nouns, since the gender labels are not always consistent.

Table 1. Basic stress types A, B, and C.

A. Constant stress through entire paradigm on any stem-vowel.	B. Stress is NOT constant on a stem vowel, but can be on either side of the stem+desinence boundary (predesinential or desinential).		C. Stress is NOT constant on a stem vowel, but can be on the initial syllable of the stem or desinence.	
Sing. & Plur. Ø: крокоди́л -о: ка́чество -а: коро́ва	Sing. сто́л~стола́ верете́но колба́са	Plur. сто́лы верете́на колба́сы	Sing. во́лк, во́лка зе́ркало го́лова~го́лову	Plur. во́лки~во́лкам зе́ркала го́ловы~го́ловам

Note that end-stress in the singular or plural is ambiguous and can belong either to type B or C, but never A. Thus, if a type already has an unambiguous B type, such as plural predesinential stress, its plural end-stress is considered to be the C type. For example, neuters with singular end-stress regularly have predesinential plurals (e.g. верете́но/верете́на, окно́/о́кна, etc.). Therefore, neuter plural end-stress, paired to singular initial stress (e.g. зе́кало/зе́ркала, сло́во/сло́ва, etc.) can be said to represent type C, as in table 1.

I later came to the conclusion that the gender or nominative singular labels are not the most accurate way of characterizing the morphological sets for the purposes of accentual classification, in spite of the fact that virtually all studies use this principle. In order to separate instances such as masculine plurals города́ and каба́ны, one would ideally use a system such as I have shown in table 2, where different morphological patterns are all shown in separate cells and classified by stress:

Table 2. Russian Stress Types Classified by Morphological Paradigm.

	Plural (N-G)			
Singular (N-G)	i-ov/ej	a-ov/ej	i-Ø	a-Ø
Ø-a	A: крокоди́л В: каба́н С: голу́бь В/С: гвоздь С/В: сад	A: В: С: го́род	A: В: зубо́к С:	
Ø-i	A: ладо́нь В: ----- С: сте́пь, о́бласть			
o-a	A: В: озерко́/озерки́ С: у́хо	A: око́нце В: С: дере́вце/дере́вца́	A: я́блоко В: С: В/С: плечо́	A: пра́вило В: веретенó С: зёркало В/С: су́щество С/В: о́зеро
a-i	A: те́тя В: левша́ С: В/С: ноздря́		A: кни́га В: колбаса́ С: голова́ В/С: губа́ С/В: цена́ (Anomalous ? черта́, статья́)	

General principles:

1. The subparadigm (e.g. singular or plural) of any given morphological type, has a maximally 3-way stress opposition of stress.. Examples:

a. Zero-noun of крокодил pattern. Singular has: stem vs. end vs. initial. Plural has stem vs. end vs. mobile (initial~end).

b. o-noun of качество pattern. Singular has stem vs. end vs. initial. Plural has stem vs. predesinential vs. end.

c. a-noun of корова pattern. Singular has stem vs. end vs. mobile (initial~end). Plural has stem vs. predesinential vs. mobile (initial~end).

2. The assumption of a regular 3-way opposition enables us to test which accentual paradigms are regular and which are outside the system.

There is a correlation of type B plural predesinential stress with the genitive plural ending. Type B predesinential stress regularly occurs when there is a zero genitive plural (e.g. сестра́/сёстры/сестёр, жена́/жёны/жён, колбаса́/колбасы/колбас; веретено́/веретёна/веретён, село́/сёла/сёл), while type B end-stress occurs when the genitive plural is not zero: стол/сто́лы/сто́лов/, лещ/лещи́/лещей; западня́/западни́/западней. This means that the plural of a noun such as каланча́ or западня́ is really in a different class than an a-noun which has a genitive plural zero, and that the existence of end-stress here is not a fourth feminine type, but a manifestation of the same situation we see in most masculines, which have a non-zero genitive plural. In other words, the zero or non-zero genitive plural is the key and we should expect to have a maximum of three accentual types with a given genitive plural (either zero or non-zero).

One of the most telling examples is the word пешня́ ‘a type of crowbar’. It can be either type A stem stressed throughout or type B end-stressed. However, when it is stem-stressed, it has a zero-ending: nom. sing. пе́шня, gen. plur. пёшен. When it is end-stressed, it uses the non-zero ending –ей: nom. sing. пешня́, gen. plur. пешне́й.

The point is that a non-zero genitive plural could admit final stress throughout the entire paradigm, while such an accentual paradigm would be irregular with a zero-ending in the genitive plural. Actually, the situation of a-noun plural end-stress has many specific properties, which help us to explain why these specific nouns have avoided a predesinentially stressed plural. The remainder of this paper is devoted to a survey of a-nouns which are usually listed by dictionaries as being end-stressed throughout their full paradigm, including the plural.

II. Types of a-nouns with plural end-stress.

Table 3. Summary of Subtypes of Feminine End-Stressed Paradigms

Classes	Examples
A. Soft/husher type with non-zero genitive plural.	запа́дня, кле́шня, брони́я, голо́вня, долб́ня, кваш́ня, каланча́, пя- терня́, ступня́, сте́зя, левша́, пра́ца
B. zero-ending with a hard cons. preceded by stressed mobile vowel in the genitive plural	киш/ка, киш/о́/к; кабар/га, ка- бар/о́/г; княж/на, княж/о́/н; корч/ма, корч/е́/м; кочер/га, ко- чер/е́/г; кай/ма, каём; мош/на, мош/о́н
C. Mobile vowel stem ends in –ej in gen. pl. Surface equivalence to –ej genitive plural ending.	Mobile vowel type: стате́/я, стате́й; скуфь/я, скуфё́й; скамь/я, скаме́й; туль/я, туле́й; куть/я, куте́й; ладь/я, ладе́й. Without mobile vowels: жнея́, жне́й; ко́лея, ко́ле́й; лития́, лито́й; па́лея, па́ле́й; су́лея, су́ле́й; шлея́, шле́й.
D. Stem ends in –v/-f. Surface equivalence to final –v of –ov genitive plural ending.	булава́, була́в; графа́, гра́ф; ендова́, ендóв; лю́фа, лю́ф
E. Non-existent or unused gen. plural means that a zero-gen. pl. does not actually occur, permitting end-stress in the other plural forms that do occur.	1. Avanesov/Es'kova: “род. мн. не употребляется”: глиста́, дуда́, егоза́, зуда́, киса́, кума́, раба́, сума́, тамада́, фата́, юла́, яга́. 2. Avanesov/Es'kova: “род. мн. несвободно”: зурна́, карга́, киста́, клюка́, плева́, пустельга́, тамга́, тахта́, чалма́
F. Zaliznjak (1967: 166) indicates colloquial predesinential stress in the plural.	кайла́, тура́, графа́, острога́, егоза́, пи́ала, кобура́, конура́.

A. a-nouns with stems ending in soft consonants and hushers regularly use the non-zero genitive plural ending –ей, historically borrowed from the ĭ-stem paradigm. The use of a non-zero genitive plural permits a significant number of such nouns to have paradigmatic end-stress, with a plural manifestation of end-stress, rather than predesinential. Examples:

западна́, клешня́, броня́, голова́, долбня́, квашня́, каланча́, пятерня́, ступня́, стезя́, левша́, праща́. Some such words have alternative genitive plurals in both zero and non-zero (межа́ has меж~меже́й), in which case one type is accentually regular and the other is anomalous.

B. Another significant group of end-stressed a-nouns includes cases of hard consonant stems which use the genitive plural zero-ending, and also have a stressed mobile vowel in the genitive plural (e.g. княжна́/княжо́н). I would claim that this genitive plural has a structural similarity to non-zero, in the sense that the genitive plural form is NOT one syllable smaller than the rest of the paradigm, which is the case when a zero is used in examples such as the стола́ vs. стол pattern. It is as if the inserted vowel functions as a genitive plural infix, in contrast to a zero ending with no vowel alternation. Therefore, type B plural end-stress might be considered as a regular subtype when there is a stressed mobile vowel with a zero ending. Examples: киш/ка, киш/о́к; кабар/га, кабар/о́г; княж/на, княж/о́н; корч/ма, корч/е́м; кочер/га, кочер/е́г; кай/ма, каём; мош/на, мош/о́н.

C. Several instances of end-stressed nouns with mobile vowels also have stems ending in –j. In the genitive plural, such stems end in –/е/й, followed by the zero ending. On the surface, this is identical to the non-zero genitive plural ending for soft stems, even though it should be considered a zero ending. A well-known Russian accentologist (Хазареров 1973:67) actually called it a –ей ending, which helps us to understand that the surface form has influenced its use of plural end-stress, rather than predesinential. Examples: статья́/я, статей; скуфья́/я, скуфе́й; скамья́/я, скаме́й; туля́/я, туле́й; кутья́/я, куте́й; лады́/я, ладе́й. Also, without mobile vowels: жнея́, жне́й; колея́, коле́й; лития́, лити́й; палея́, пале́й; сулея́, суле́й; шлея́, шле́й. It might also be noted that the subset of nouns with genitive plural in –ей generally has only a three-way accentual opposition in the plural. There are virtually no examples of obligatory plural mobile stress in feminine mobile vowel stems; сви́ня and серы́га have been moving towards the

predesinential type from the mobile type, which can be seen if Ushakov's 1930's recommendations are compared to more recent ones. Thus, in this subset, plural B is predesinential (сви́ньи), with the possibility of end-stress (статья́) as the second type, perhaps to be considered a realization of type C. The point is that there are more subsets than those of the three gender classes, and that the principle of a three-way stress opposition should be viewed within each subset, since the various subsets are in complementary distribution, due to the variety of features I have been indicating. In other words, table 2 might be rewritten with a special box for the class of nouns including сви́нья, статья́, etc., and within that box we would see single types for B and C stress.

D. Just as a stem-final in –ей before a zero recalls the genitive plural and seems to permit plural end-stress, a few instances of end-stress occur with stem final –ов or –v/-f, recalling the other major genitive plural ending: булава́, була́в; графа́, гра́ф; ендова́, ендóв; люфа́, лю́ф.

E. Another category of such end-stresses appears in dictionaries, but is said to be impossible or unusable in the Avanesov orthoepic dictionary:

1. Avanesov: “род. мн. не употребляется”:

Examples: глиста́, дуда́, егоза́, зуда́, киса́, кума́, раба́, сума́, тамада́, фата́, юла́, яга́.

2. Avanesov: “род. мн. несвободно”:

Examples: зурна́, карга́, киста́, клюка́, плева́, пустельга́, тамга́, тахта́, чалма

F. Lastly, there is a group for which Zaliznjak (1967: 166) indicates colloquial predesinential stress in the plural, in spite of end-stress, which is listed in dictionaries and which appeared in descriptions of well-known accentologists, such as that of Paul Garde. Examples: кайла́, тура́, графа́, острога́, егоза́, пиала́, кобура́, конура́.

Thus, we are left with a very small list of such cases, including a number of non-assimilated Orientalisms and Church Slavonicisms, plus certain other

exceptional words, such as пеленá, пелён; острога́, остро́г; стопа́, сто́п; черта́, че́рт. Perhaps the end-stress of черта́ occurs to avoid a stress similar to that of че́рти, the plural of че́рт. Also, presence of a stem-final consonant cluster is frequently seen in irregular stems of this type.

III. Neuter o-nouns with plural end-stress.

Let us clarify why this paper considers plural end-stressed a-nouns to be anomalous and unusual, but not o-noun neuter plurals, where such plurals as зеркала́ are considered regular. In the first place, only three stress types occur for the regular neuter plural morphological model. In other words, types A, B, and C can be defined unambiguously, as follows:

1. Neuter A has immobile stem stress, in both singular and plural.
2. Neuter B plural is predesinential (веретёна).
3. Neuter C plural is end-stressed (зеркала́).

Since predesinential is the unambiguous realization of type B, potentially ambiguous neuter end-stress must be considered as being a realization of type C. Note that neuters with plural mobile stress, such as у́ши, о́чи, плéчи, have a different realization of plural type C, but it is not a fourth type, due to the different morphology (i.e. the NA plural in –i, rather than –a.) Thus, the real anomaly of a-noun plural end-stress is not simply that it manifests plural end-stress with a zero genitive plural, but that it does this as the second realization of accentual type B, which should regularly be realized as predesinential in the plural.

Another way of looking at this is to say that Russian places restriction on full end-stressed noun paradigms, in cases where there is a zero genitive plural form. In the feminine, this has been considered in detail. In the neuter, such full end-stressed paradigms do occur, but are rare, since the regular B pattern has end-stress in the singular, but predesinential in the plural (e.g. веретено́), and the C pattern has initial stress in the singular, but end-stress only in the plural (зе́ркало).

Several neuters with full end-stressed paradigms have a non-standard neuter plural morphology, with a non-zero plural, e.g. *остриѐ́, очко́*, with genitive plurals *остриѐв, очко́в*. Others in this class have one of a limited number of derived suffixes, such as *-/-ц-, -ств-*: *слово́, существо́, вещество́*, and are lexically noted as rare or bookish in dictionaries. The same situation applies to the Church Slavonicism *житиѐ́*, which also is anomalous in its stressed *–é* nominative singular ending, rather than *–ó*. In the case of certain neuter derivational suffixes, e.g. *–к-(о)*, the non-zero genitive plural is regular, matching the plural end-stress (e.g. *озерко́, озерко́в*); also with *–ц-(о)*: *дерево́, дерево́в*. In the case of *письмецо́*, Ušakov states that the plural is not used, in spite of its common use in the non-derived form *письмо́*. This recalls the situation with restricted end-stressed plurals in the a-noun class, where many theoretical forms with anomalous stress are avoided in conversational speech.

Thus, the pattern of end-stressed plural a-nouns and o-nouns is rather curious. Such stresses are not totally excluded by the system and, in fact, are quite normal with non-zero genitive plurals and as the accentual C realization of neuters, when paired to an initially stressed singular (*зе́ркали*). However, full end-stressed paradigms, combined with zero genitive plural forms, are barely tolerated, and tend to acquire non-zero genitive plurals or fall out of normal spoken usage, as registered by a variety of dictionaries.

In view of the above restrictions on both feminine and neuter end-stressed paradigms, we have seen a small sample of the fact that stress patterns are highly sensitive to non-prosodic features of stems, including phonological and morphological properties. One might seek the reason in the ability of stress to redundantly signal many of these properties. Thus, an end-stressed plural or full paradigm tells us a lot about the stem, aside from the mere fact that it has end-stress.

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