

NOTES ON MELODIC HOMONYMY IN STANDARD RUSSIAN

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Unlike the type of homonymy discussed by Romportl (1973), which means a coincidence of all manifestations of two different melodemes, many types of homotony observed in Russian seem to be rather a result of overlapping of some manifestations of one melodeme with some manifestations of another melodeme. Analysis shows that, although this overlapping often produces a total melodic identity of two distinct utterances, the underlying melodemes are not neutralized for they preserve their specific features and structures.

The paper discusses certain cases of melodic figures whose interpretation within the framework of Bryzgunova's intonation structures (1963 et al.) causes difficulties, and suggests a re-interpretation to account for their formal and functional properties in a more satisfactory manner.

Conclusions

1. There seems to be a regular correspondence between the melodeme and the physical parameters of its allomels. In Russian, e.g., melodeme is responsible, among other things, for tone properties of the relevant points as well as for their local distribution over the given segment.
2. Homonymy of allomels in Russian is made possible by the fact that relevant points in segments realizing different melodemes may have different locations (e.g., ictic or final); consequently, a stretch of melody which is less relevant for one melodeme may vary in such a way as to coincide with a highly relevant stretch of a different melodeme.
3. Homonymy (homotony) of those allomels which realize different melodemes does not, unlike neutralization, mean a suppression of semantic distinctions between utterances.

References

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