

# THE RUSSIAN HOMOGRAPHS

## S u m m a r y

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The present monograph is devoted to a systemic analysis of Russian accent homographs, i.e. the words and word forms with the same spelling but different pronunciation caused by different word stress, cf. *атлас* – *атлас*, *еду* – *еду*, *здорово* – *здорово*, *ноги* – *ноги*, *выходите* – *выходите* – *выходите* etc. Based on the large lexicographical material, the author makes an attempt to describe all possible homographic phenomena in contemporary Russian, which are an arena of sophisticated and multidirectional relationships between several levels of the language system, that is, the graphic, phonetic, lexical-semantic, morphological, word formation and stylistic ones. The monograph consists of three chapters.

**Chapter I** includes a typology of the Russian accent homographs. Over twenty types of homographs have been specified and described here. As a basis of the classification of homographs, their lexical-grammatical and lexical-semantic features were taken, their membership in the same lexeme or in different lexemes, their word formation structure, their lexical relatedness, the number of components in a homographic row, etc. Among individual types of homographs, the following deserve special attention: intracategorical and intercategory homographs, i.e. those belonging to the same part of speech or to different ones: *попадать* – *попадать* or *бегу* – *бегу*; lexical homographs, i.e. the ones that differ in lexical meaning but have identical grammatical meanings: *замком* – *замком*; lexical-grammatical homographs – the words that differ in lexical and grammatical meanings: *солью* – *солью*; grammatical homographs – the forms of the same lexeme: *носите* – *носите*; intralexemic homographs, i.e. the grammatical ones, and interlexemic, i.e. the lexical and lexical-grammatical ones; derivational and non-derivational homographs, cf. *капельный* (from *капля*) – *капельный* (from *капель*) and *атлас* – *атлас*; etymologically related

or unrelated homographs: *бегу* – *бегу* or *окунь* – *окунь*; full (absolute) or partial homographs – the words homographic in all or only some of their paradigmatic forms, cf. *замок* – *замок* and *нашивать* (only past tense and past active participle forms are possible) – *нашивать*; lemmatic and non-lemmatic homographs – the words with homographic or non-homographic initial (dictionary) forms, cf. *угольный* – *угольный* and *плавную* – *плавную* (the initial forms of which are *плавный* – *плавной*).

**Chapter II** describes the particular lexical-grammatical areas of Russian homographs and shows their number representation. The first part of this chapter deals with intracategorical homographs, while the second discusses the intercategory ones.

The **intracategorical homographs** are most typical of three parts of speech – nouns, adjectives and verbs (taking into account also their attributive forms, the participles), e.g. *мука* – *мука*, *мукой* – *мукой*, *руки* – *руки*, *свежее* (neuter of *свежий*) – *свежее* (comparative of *свежий*), *большая* – *большая*, *просите* – *просите*, *плачу* (1st person sg. of *плакать*) – *плачу* (1st person sg. of *плакать*), *паря* (participle of *парить*) – *паря* (participle of *парить*), *рассоривший* (participle of *рассорить* ‘to cause disagreement’) – *рассоривший* (participle of *рассорить* ‘scatter, spill, strew’), *забронировав* (participle of *забронировать*) – *забронировав* (participle of *забронировать*), *забронирован(ный)* (participle of *забронировать*) – *забронирован(ный)* (participle of *забронировать*). In the sphere of intracategorical homography, lexical and lexical-grammatical homographs apparently dominate. Both of these groups put together are represented by approximately 46,350 oppositions, which exceed 16 times the number of grammatical homographs (totaling around 2,900 oppositions). Taking this into consideration, one may come to the conclusion that word stress is decidedly used more than frequently as a means of differentiation of lexemes compared to being a means of differentiation of forms of the same lexeme. The overwhelming supremacy of the first significative function over the second one suggests that movability as one of the characteristics of Russian word stress, contrary to popular belief, does not play a very important role.

The analysis of intracategorical homographs also leads to the conclusion that over 80% of the aforementioned 46,350 interlexemic rows, standing at the centre of Russian homography in general, come from the pairs of lexemes (mainly nouns, adjectives and verbs) homographic in their initial (nominative) forms, such as *арийка* – *арийка*, *венец* – *венец*, *орган* – *орган*, *атласный*

– *атласный, безобразный* – *безобразный, ирисовый* – *ирисовый, забежать* – *забежать, парить* – *парить, тупиться* – *тупиться* etc. In contemporary Russian, there exist about 700 word pairs of this type. They are the ones that unequivocally determine the present systemic nature and quantitative parameters of Russian homography.

The **intercategorical homographs** occur 10 times less often than the intracategorical ones. According to our research material, they are represented by almost 4,800 word pairs and include such oppositions as *хрома* (dat. sg. of *хром*) – *хрома* (short form of *хромой*), *сердит* (3rd person sg. of *сердить*) – *сердит* (short form of *сердитый*), *пропасть* (noun) – *пропасть* (verb), *издали* (adverb) – *издали* (verb), *потом* (noun) – *потом* (adverb), *здорово* ('famously, marvelously, properly'; adverb) – *здорово* ('hello', 'hi'; interjection) etc. By definition, the intercategorical homographs are exclusively lexical-grammatical homographs and originate as a result of interaction of all, without exception, parts of speech. This interaction is mirrored in 34 types of binary relationships of varying productivity. Three of them are the most frequent: "noun – adjective", "noun – verb", and "adjective – verb". They materialize, for example, in such homographic pairs as *дорогою* (*дорога*) – *дорогою* (*дорогой*), *жаркое* (noun) – *жаркое* (*жаркий*), *едок* (noun) – *едок* (short form of *едкий*), *уже* (*уж* 'reptile') – *уже* (comparative of *узкий*), *электрик* (noun) – *электрик* (adjective); *тону* (*тон*) – *тону* (*тонуть*), *долей* (instr. sg. of *доля*) – *долей* (*долить*), *начала* (*начало*) – *начала* (*начать*), *замер* (noun) – *замер* (*замереть*), *гостя* (*гость*) – *гостя* (participle of *гостить*), *перемолот* (noun) – *перемолот* (participle of *перемолоть*); *терпим* (*терпимый*) – *терпим* (*терпеть*), *пошло* (short form of *пошлый*) – *пошло* (*пойти*), *хорошей* (*хороший*) – *хорошей* (imperative of *хорошить*), *целую* (*целый*) – *целую* (*целовать*). Word pairs like these cover 90% of all Russian intercategorical homographs.

In this chapter, apart of two-component homographic rows, numbering roughly 54,000 oppositions, tens of three-component homographic rows, both intracategorical and intercategorical ones, have been thoroughly investigated and widely described. These rows may be illustrated by the following examples: *выносите* (indicative and imperative of *выносить*) – *выносите* (indicative of *выносить*) – *выносите* (imperative of *выносить*), *перепела* (gen. and acc. sg. of *перепел*) – *перепела* (nom. pl. of *перепел*) – *перепела* (past of *перепеть*), *здорово* ('hard, sturdily'; adverb) – *здорово* ('hello', 'hi'; interjection) – *здорово* (short form of *здоровый* 'strapping, strong, massive').

**Chapter III** contains considerations on the relationships between homography and word formation. Such considerations only make sense in respect of interlexemic (lexical and lexical-grammatical, both intra- and intercategory) homographs. A deeper analysis of interlexemic homographic pairs, which comprise up to about 95% of all homographic pairs put together, reveals that the vast majority of them owe their existence to word formation mechanisms. It means that both components of a homographic pair or at least one of them belong to the category of derivatives. For example, substantive interlexemic homographs are in 60% determined by derivational processes. In case of adjective homographs, the degree of their dependence on word formation makes up almost 100%. In the area of verbal homographs, this degree reaches 85%. The high or even entire dependence upon word formation is also typical of intercategory homographic pairs, particularly of the ones based on the models “noun – adjective”, “noun – verb”, and “adjective – verb”. The intercategory homographs of the first and the second models are derivationally involved in 72% and 80%, respectively, whereas those realizing the third model are almost always derived words.

The structural, systemic and quantitative description presented here does not exhaust all possible aspects of the accent homography, but may provide the impulse for further penetration of the issue related to one of the most evident areas of ambiguity (amphiboly) in the lexical-morphological system of Russian language. Undoubtedly, further explorations will enable the researcher to solve many theoretical problems related, for example, to the semiotic aspect of the homographic phenomena and may additionally contribute to comparative language studies. Moreover, the research of homographs has an undisputed practical value. Firstly, it can be applied in development of methodology of creating dictionaries of homographs. Secondly, typology of homographs and defining their place in the language system may prove to be invaluable in dealing with establishing algorithms of effective recognition of speech and eliminating graphical ambiguity in the system of Russian-language translation of written texts. Thirdly, the results of the investigation of homographs may turn out be useful in modern speech technologies, especially in the processes of mechanical transformation of written text into sound speech. Fourthly and finally, the obtained findings can and should be used in the teaching of Russian language – both as a native and a foreign one.