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The Russian Male Macho Register and Performances of Masculinity

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The Russian Male Macho Register and Performances of Masculinity

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction

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in Anthropology

by

Amy Garey

2012

ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

The Russian Male Macho Register and Performances of Masculinity

by

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Master of Arts in Anthropology

University of California, Los Angeles, 2012

Professor Nancy Levine, Chair

ABSTRACT: This thesis argues that a speech register, the Russian Male Macho Register (RMMR) is a socially salient set of linguistic features used to project authority. En route to supporting this argument, I evaluate several models of Russian intonation and describe a synthesis that best accounts for salient prosodic characteristics in my data. I show that analyzing intonation in the context of discourse structure (1) reveals how speakers use suprasegmental elements to create meaning and (2) challenges some aspects of intonational study that focus on short, lab-produced speech samples (such as the Strict-Layer Hypothesis). After outlining the characteristics of RMMR, I analyze how these features index particular social personae and demonstrate how evaluative stances towards these figures are adopted through parody. Comedy performances which incorporate RMMR reinforce and rework Soviet-era tropes of toughness to comment on gender, nation, and ethnicity post-socialism.

The thesis of Amy Garey is approved.

Yunxiang Yan

Mariko Tamanoi

Nancy Levine, Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2012

To Nick

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The Russian Male Macho Register and Performances of Masculinity

0. Introduction

Soviet joke:

A Radio Yerevan listener calls in:
"Dear Radio Yerevan, I don't know what's the matter with me. I don't love the Party anymore. I feel nothing at all for Comrade Brezhnev or any of the leaders. What should I do?"
Radio Yerevan answers:
"Please send us your name and address."

Contemporary joke:

A New Russian is at a restaurant. The waiter brings him the second course. The New Russian looks at him for a while and asks the waiter:
- Hey man, do I know you?
- I don't think so.
- Did you go to the Riviera this year?
- No, sir.
- Have you ever worked for the tax police?
- No…
The New Russian thinks for a while, then exclaims:
- Oh! I remember now! You served me the soup!

The fall of the USSR shattered Russian economic structures, forever altering the social relations which had twined around them. Gender roles, consequently, have changed in the post-Soviet era. One of the places this is reflected is in comedy. The image of the BMW-driving New Russian (*novyi ruskii*), the *biznesmen,* and the trophy wife have replaced the Communist Party as comedic fodder. Such models of masculinity were not available for parody twenty years ago, but are now discursively conjured, referenced, and inverted as commonplace personae. Much of this humor is created by invoking the speech of Russian "tough guys," or through what I call the Russian Male Macho Register (RMMR). I argue that RMMR is a set of socially salient linguistic features used to project authority.

Unfortunately, neither the indexical valences nor the properties of this speech register are simple to explain. Much like British Received Pronunciation (RP), the speech register of the English upper class (Agha 2007), RMMR triggers associations due to common understandings of the way certain "types of people" speak. There is nothing

natural about the relationship between speech and status; such links are forged through ideologies about language use. People believe that rhyming the vowels of "horse" and "car," as RP speakers do, indicates high class standing, and this belief perpetuates a system of language use that, in turn, re-entrenches this thinking.

Pronunciation is RP's most important feature. An RP speaker pronounces the words "hate" and "pat" as *hejt* and *pæt,* while someone with a Cockney accent will pronounce them as *hæjt* and *pɛjt* (Rogers 2000: 110-12). It is fairly easy for linguists to gather tokens of words from people with different accents. First of all, the perception, transcription, and comparison of phonemes (the smallest unit of sound that carries contrastive meaning in a language) is well established. So subjects can be trucked into linguistics labs, asked to read lists of words or sentences, and linguists can then accurately compare peoples' production. Second, while the pronunciation of a given consonant or vowel does depend on which sounds precede and follow it—i.e., the /t/ in "cat" [kæt] is said differently than the /t/ in "butter" [bʌɾəɹ]—pronunciation of words by a single speaker should not vary much if they repeat the same sentence several times ("She pats the dog…She pats the dog").

However, the features characteristic of RMMR come from intonational rather than segmental properties (those tied to consonant and vowel production). Intonation is completely dependent on social context and communicative intent. I could say, for instance, "You want some ice cream," as a statement of fact, or "You want some ICE CREAM," if contradicting a friend's claim to want carrots, or "You want some ice cream?" if offering it to a guest. Intonational realization is, therefore, based on social, not phonological, context. Nearly limitless variation in pitch, speed, and loudness make it difficult both to suss out what intonational "phonemes" might be and to find minimal pairs that show contrasts between different kinds of prosodic production. My position is that true intonational phonemes—as a finite list—do not exist, as there are simply too many possible combinations of phrasal tunes

that can carry pragmatic meanings—with more being created everyday. However, just as musical notes can depict any song, a comprehensive tonal inventory can be used to describe intonational melodies.

In part one, I evaluate several models of Russian intonation and describe a synthesis that best accounts for salient prosodic characteristics in my data. In part two I outline the linguistic features of RMMR. In part three I focus on the language ideologies surrounding this register, demonstrating both how these features index particular social personae and how evaluative stances towards these figures are adopted through parody. Comedy performances which incorporate RMMR reinforce and rework Soviet-era tropes of toughness to comment on class, nation, and ethnicity post-socialism.

I Models of Russian Intonation

1 Russian Intonational Phonology

1.1 Controversies

Many fundamental questions in Russian intonational phonology are still unresolved (Igarashi 2008: 228). There is, for example, no consistent terminology or definition for intonation units in Russian. I take intonation phrases, defined as perceptually coherent conversational pieces bracketed by pauses, lengthening, or slowed speech, as the fundamental unit of analysis (Chafe 1994: 57-59; Du Bois 1992). The following terms in the literature roughly correspond to an intonation phrase: intonation construction, pitch contour, breath group, and syntagm (Bratus 1972, Davis 1970, Ode 1989, Yokoyama 2001).

Just as in segmental phonology, there are an infinite number of intonational sounds. Only some, though, are contrastive and meaningful to speakers. Current debates concern what the units of intonational "phonemes" are, how many tunes/tones/contours should be counted, and what the basis of their classification should be—phonetic, phonological, or pragmatic.

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With only minor adjustments, I have adopted Yosuke Igarashi's model of Russian intonational phonology (Igarashi 2002, 2006). Since there are legitimately competing models, however, most notably those of Elena Bryzgunova, Cecilia Odé, and Olga Yokoyama, it is first necessary to describe these approaches and outline their analytical limitations. I will take each model in turn, and prove why they account for fewer intonational phenomena than Igarashi's autosegmental-metrical model. While Igarashi does not call it this, I will refer to the combination of his tonal inventory and the modifications I recommend as "R-ToBI." This places the model in the tradition of scholars working worldwide to describe languages in terms of a Tones and Break Index (ToBI) approach to intonational labeling.[1]

1.2 Data

I recorded broadcasts of Russian news programs, speeches by Vladimir Putin, Russian sketch comedy competitions, and excerpts from Russian films. I also re-analyzed some of Cecilia Odé's data, as she has made it publicly available (Odé 2008). All sound files were analyzed with PRAAT.

1.3 The Pioneer: Bryzgunova's IK System

The most widely used system for describing Russian intonation was introduced by Elena Bryzgunova in the 1970's, and consists of seven intonation contours (Davis 1970). It was designed to help Russian language learners correctly interpret and produce tunes with common meanings, such as asking yes-no questions and making statements. Therefore, the system makes categorizations based on a mixture of phonological and pragmatic distinctions. Intonation contour (*inntonatsionnaia konstruktsia*, or "IK") number two, for example, corresponds to a pitch fall. Both statements and information questions are associated in this system with "IK-2." Some of the IK contours, though, are grouped primarily by interactional

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[1] For a fuller explanation of the ToBI system, see "ToBI," http://www.ling.ohio-state.edu/~tobi/.

effects, such as "emphatic."

It is very difficult to label long segments of naturalistic speech with the IK system. This is not what it was designed to do. Consequently, there have been three major attempts to revise Bryzgunova's typology. The first is a perceptual study and the second two are based on an autosegmental-metrical approach to intonation.

1.4 ToRI: Odé's Perceptual Approach

In the late 1980's, Cecilia Odé ran perceptual experiments to develop a typology of Russian intonation patterns in the Institute for Perception Research (IPO) tradition (Odé 1989). Some of these patterns correspond to those in Bryzgunova's system, but there is rarely an exact fit. Later, Odé developed a model called ToRI (Transcription of Russian Intonation) (Odé 2008). This system, like ToDI for Dutch, traces tones but not break indices. ToRI only marks juncture at the level of the "utterance," which usually, but not always, corresponds to an intonation phrase.

In many cases, what Odé calls the "pitch movement" following a pitch accent corresponds exactly to "phrase accents" in a ToBI model, as illustrated in the example below:

	Vy	ne	znaete	ego	adres?	(Odé 2008)
	You	*don't*	*know*	*his*	*address?*	

ToRI: %M   H*L   L%

R-ToBI   H*   L L%
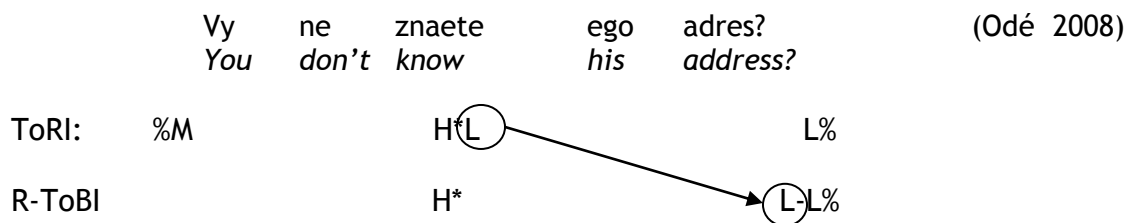
But in other cases, differences in labeling between ToRI and break index models are significant. There are three main differences between ToRI and R-ToBI. First, Odé's unit of analysis is an "utterance," the bounds of which are somewhat unclear. Second, ToRI only tracks tonal differences, not break indices. Odé describes well-formed "pitch contours," placing final boundary tones only after complete ones. It is less-fine-grained than a model

such as Igarashi's, which accounts for different levels of juncture between prosodic units: word, intermediate phrase, and intonation phrase. Ignoring break indices changes the way contours themselves are conceptualized. ToRI is not just a more simplistic model, it is one that limits analysis. In figure 1 below, reproduced from Ode's labeling guidelines data, Odé identified just one pitch accent and just one "utterance," or intonational phrase (2008).

Figure 1: Odé's utterance model in "But not about the most early youth"

%L			H*L			L%

no	ne	o	samom	rannem	detstve
but	not	about	the most	early	youth
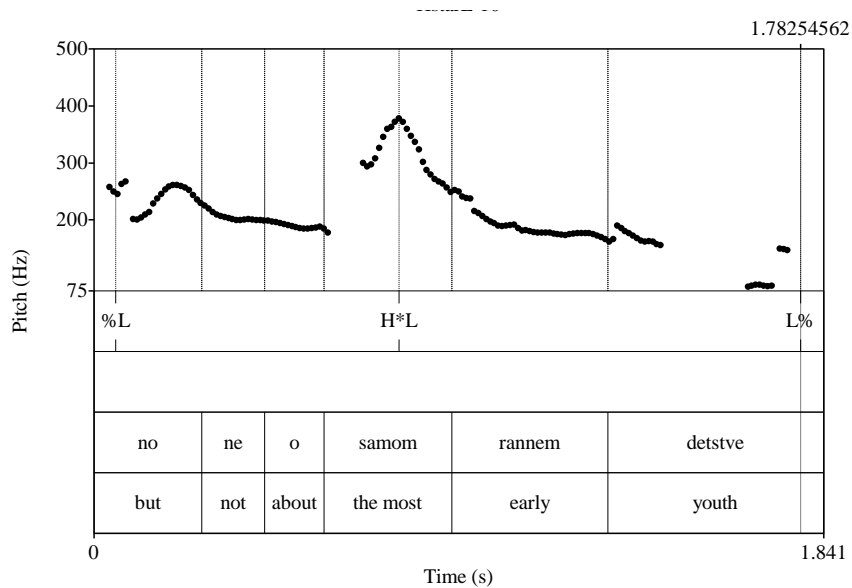
However, reanalysis of this sound file according to R-ToBI guidelines shows that there are three relevant intonational units (two intermediate phrases and one intonation phrase) and four pitch accents in this statement (as shown in Figure 2). The end of the first intermediate phrase (ip) is marked by slight lengthening. The second ip has a high phrase accent—one not noted by Odé at all. A further difference between these two versions is that the high target in the first (H*) pitch accent is not accounted for by Odé's notation. As the pitch track below illustrates, the phrase does not, in fact, begin on a flat low tone and rise to a high pitch accent. Instead, there is an initial rise, a fall, a steep rise, and downstepped high pitch accents leading to the nuclear pitch accent on "*detstve*" (youth). Marking the final

two pitch accents as downstepped also captures an additional relationship between words in the phrase.

Figure 2: R-ToBI reanalysis of "But not about the most early youth"
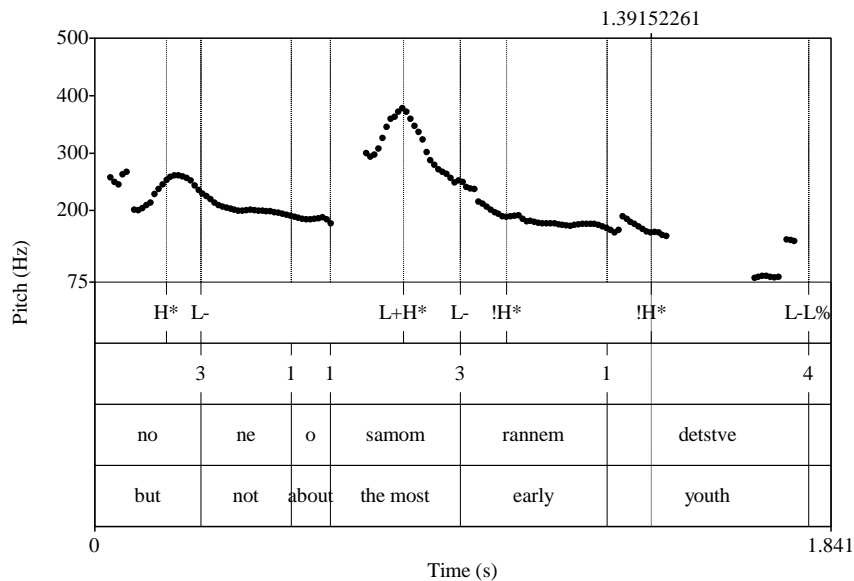
Once again using Odé's data, Figures 3 and 4 compare a ToRI description with an R-ToBI reanalysis. Both the ToRI and R-ToBI methods account for the pitch track. But R-ToBI picks out more pitch accents and intonation unit boundaries than ToRI. An additional advantage of R-ToBI is the ability to distinguish between L+H* and H* pitch accents. The former is a steeper rise, which is not reflected in ToRI. As Igarashi convincingly demonstrated, the difference between an H* L-L% pattern and a L+H* L-L% pattern accounts for a very significant pragmatic distinction in Russian, namely the difference between yes-no questions and wh- questions (Igarashi 2008: 194).

Figure 3: "Fortunately I had not very dived far," ToRI model
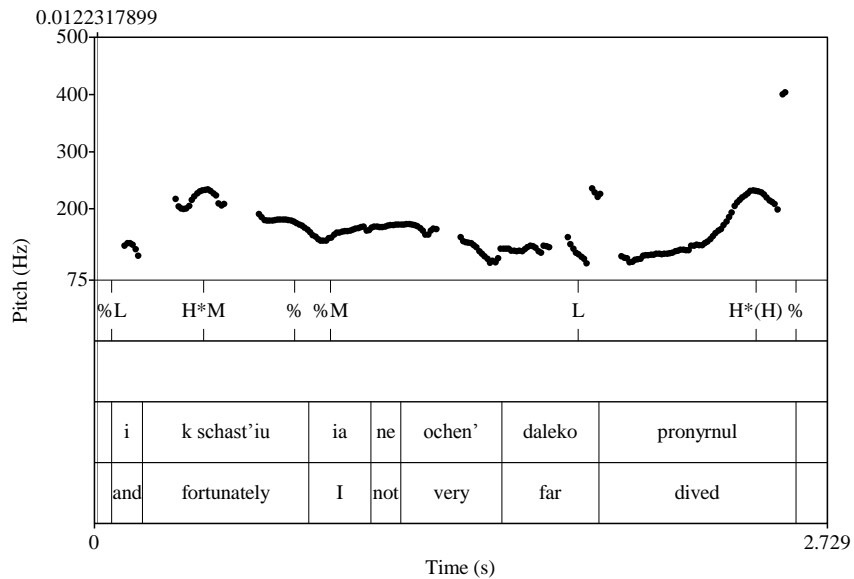
Figure 4: "Fortunately I had not dived very far," R-ToBI model
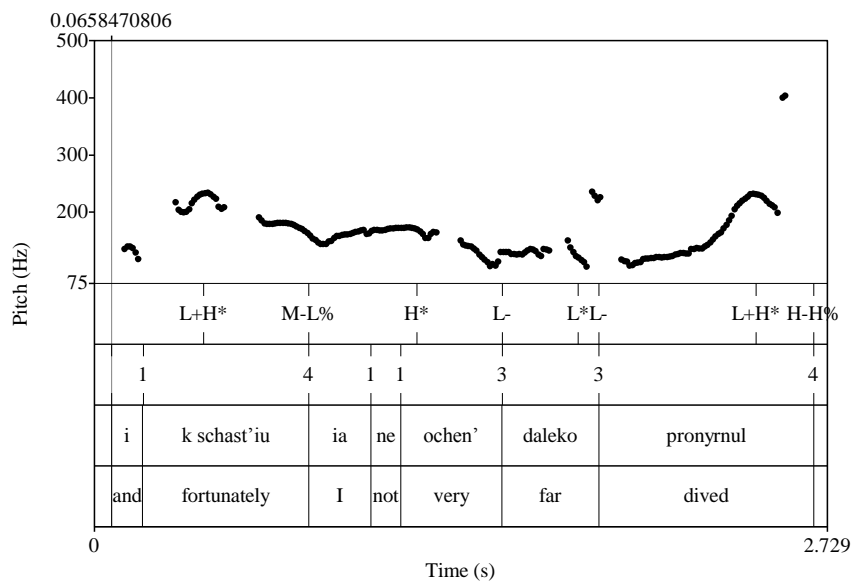
This example points to an additional ambiguity in Odé's utterance model. ToRI places an L pitch movement (phrase accent) after "*daleko*" (far) because there is a clear pitch drop. Without calling them such, then, ToRI notes some intermediate phrases, as the H, M, and L pitch movements can map onto ips. But just like intonation phrases, the ends of intermediate phrases may be cued by lengthening as well as pitch reset. ToRI only tracks pitch. For the

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purposes of description, cross-data comparisons, and analysis of discourse structure, it is better to explicitly deal with intermediate phrases. R-ToBI marks break index boundaries clearly, describes the domain of each type of phrase, and lists the features typifying them. The end of an intonation phrase includes final lengthening, a boundary tone, and may be followed by a pause. Intermediate phrases are marked by a phrasal tone and a juncture larger than a word boundary. Including such break index information allows for analysis of the connections between intermediate phrases within the same intonation phrase.

In figures 5 and 6 below, R-ToBI parses an utterance into two intonation phrases (IPs) whereas ToRI only finds one. This discrepancy is due to the fact that Odé labeled this sentence according to the overall shape of the pitch contour. Even though the *intonation contour* is uninterrupted, lengthening on "*voobshche*" indicates that this is an *intonation phrase* boundary (marked with a "4" in Figure 6). ToRI does describe the pitch track. But the fact that this contour has two intonation phrases is significant and not captured by ToRI's larger "utterance" unit of analysis.

Figure 5: "In general I very much like the Crimea," ToRI model
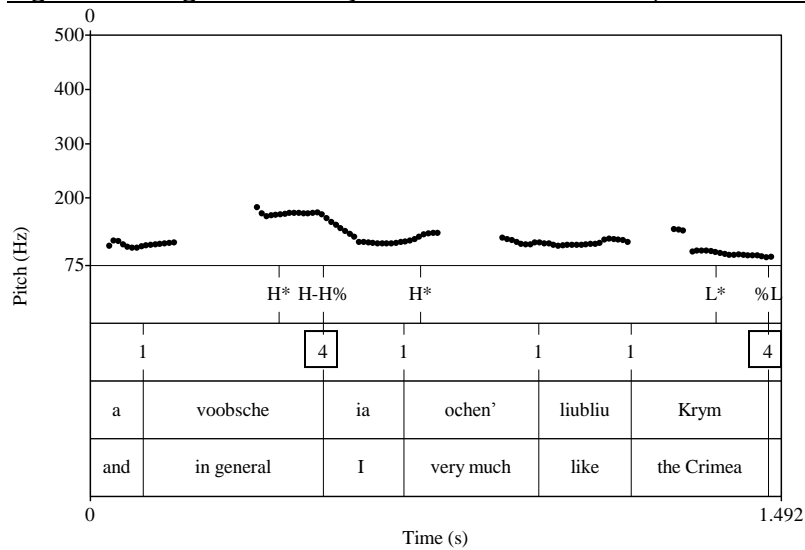
Unlike ToRI, R-ToBI does not use initial boundary tones. Odé denotes low, middle, and high phrase-initial tones. There is not much evidence, however, that there are pragmatic differences between, for example, an initial mid-tone rising to a high pitch accent and an initial low tone rising to a high accent. Since Odé (1989) was concerned with describing the shape of contours on phonetic grounds, she included these. But ToBI-style models are more concerned with relative prominence instead of shape. Following Pierrehumbert's logic for English, I do not label initial boundary tones, as this does change meaning (Pierrehumbert 1980). If a pitch accent's rise is sharp, for example, rather than just high, this is reflected in the pitch accent notation itself: L+H* vs. H*. Since a speaker's pitch range can expand or compress situationally, the beginning tone of the utterance counts for far less than the accents which follow them. Final boundary tones, in contrast, are very important in Russian phrases.

In a departure from Igarashi's model, though, Odé convincingly shows that there should be a mid-tone phrase accent (what Odé calls the M "pitch movement"). Her data illustrate that there is a difference in meaning between phrase-final H-L% and M-L%, so I have incorporated midtone into the data analyzed here. Odé argues that H* H-L% expresses

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"incompleteness," whereas the H* M-L% pattern shows "continuation" (2008). While these are very similar, "continuation" signals that the speaker has not yet finished their utterance, perhaps because they are in the middle of a series. "Incompleteness" could signify the same thing, but the fact that H* H-L% has more of a final rise could also indicate contradiction or insistence. Compare the differences in English between saying, "She's coming for ↗Easter, and ↗New Year's and ↗Christmas," which would correspond to "continuation," and saying, "But at least she's coming for ↗Easter."[2] There is a subtle but perceptible difference in meaning between the two intonational minimal pairs in Figures 7 and 8 below, taken from Odé's (2008) data. This is good evidence for the presence of an M- phrasal tone in Russian.

Figure 7: "She is coming for Easter," incompleteness (H* H-L%)

(Odé 2008)

---

2 "↗" indicates rising intonation.

Figure 8: "She is coming for Easter," continuation (H* M-L%)

0.014834253

	1	1	1	4
ona	priedet	na	Paskhu
she	is coming	for	Easter

Time (s)
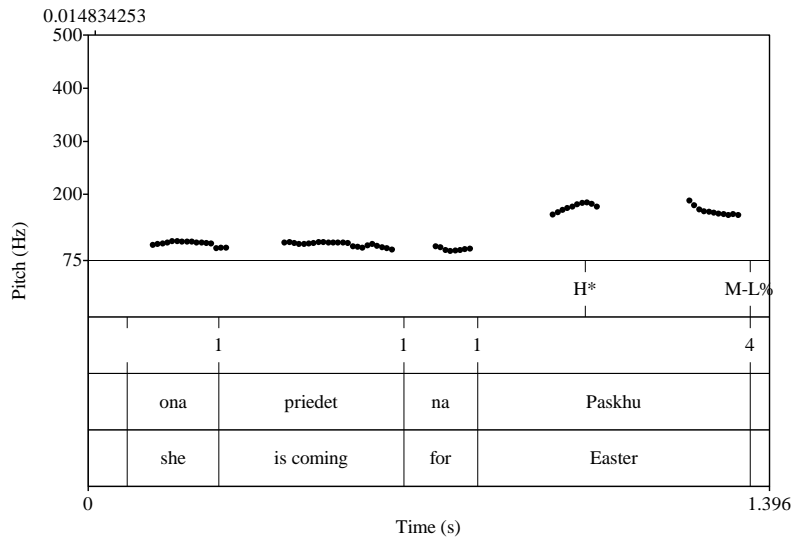
(Odé 2008)

1.5 Why Juncture Matters

In order to describe formal Russian intonation in enough detail, pitch accents, phrase accents, and boundary tones are all required. If we consider intonation units (either IPs or ips) to be meaningful to speakers and hearers, then their correct identification is important. In addition, different kinds of juncture have different pragmatic effects, effects such as continuation and focus. Parallelism between intermediate phrases creates the repetitive prosody of lists and regulates the syncopated rhythm of RMMR. Juncture operates alongside pitch to create meaning. Ignoring it is like trying to analyze a novel that's been stripped of all commas. In the following example (Figure 9), high pitch accents show the prominence of items in a sequence, and each of these is followed by low intermediate phrase boundaries (marked with a "3").

Figure 9: Intermediate phrase boundaries in a series

"improvement of the living conditions"

300
250
200
150
Pitch (Hz)
100
50

L-H%   H*   L-   H*   L-   H*   L-H%

4   [3]   [3]   4

prirody   uluchenii   uslovii   zhizni

21.78   23.97

Time (s)

"of Russian citizens"

300
250
200
150
Pitch (Hz)
100
50

H*   L-L%

1   4

grazhdan   Rossii

24.27   25.44
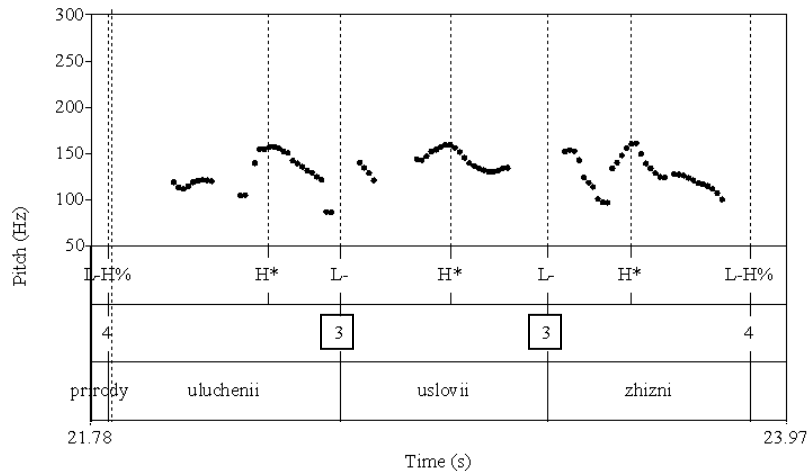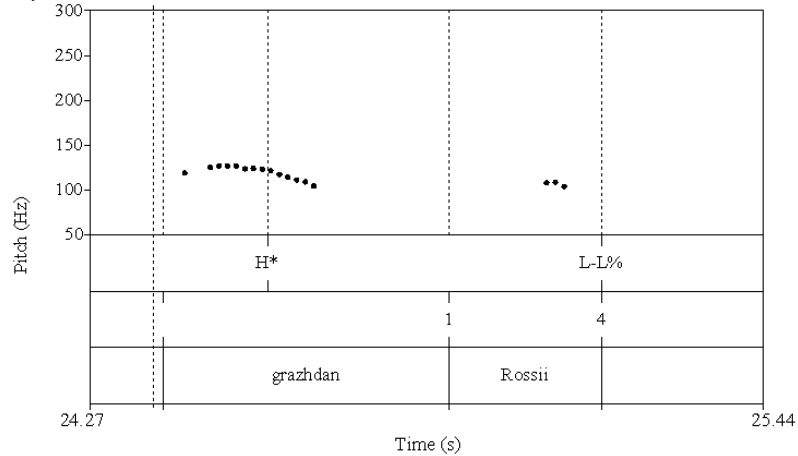
Time (s)   (Putin 2008a)

1.6 Yokoyama's Social Distance Model

Odé labels pitch accents but not break indices. Conversely, Yokoyama notes break indices but not pitch accents. She argues that "neutral" Russian intonation, or that with the pragmatic effect of "long interlocutor distance," exhibits a core LHHL toneme pattern (Yokoyama 2001:8). Yokoyama defines long-interlocutor distance as that which occurs between people who are not well acquainted or in more formal speech. We would expect, then, that if such neutral intonation exists, it would be found in all formal contexts. Using data from a Russian news broadcast and a speech by Vladimir Putin, I investigate the conditions under which this tonal sequence occurs in long stretches of naturalistic discourse.

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I chose these sources because they are representative of formal, non-conversational speech. This is the most "neutral" discourse ordinary Russians are likely to encounter.

Controversially, Yokoyama argues that pitch accents are only the surface realizations of underlying, phrase-governed low and high tones (2001: 5-8). This would mean that Russian formal speech operates like French and Korean, which also have underlying, four-tone toneme patterns: (H/L)HLH in Korean and LHLH in French (Jun 2000; Jun and Fougeron 2002: 152). French and Korean are also syllable-timed languages, however, and Russian is considered to be stress-timed in most contexts. But French has had a great deal of influence on Russian, as it was the language used by the upper classes well into the 19th century. Yokoyama suggests that the fixed LHHL phrase melody could be an intonational borrowing from French (2001: 17). If she is correct, this would have significant implications for how Russian intonation is conceptualized and researched. For instance, an accurate intonational labeling system would have to account for the interaction between syllable and stress-timed aspects of production.

While a LHHL pattern does emerge in my data, I argue that it results because of the *presence* of sentential stress, not its absence.

R.I. Avanesov identifies three ways of showing prominence via stress in Russian: dynamic stress, which is created by articulatory effort; musical stress, which results from pitch modulations; and quantitative stress, which comes from vowel lengthening (1964: 14). While pitch is the primary indicator of pitch accents, I have used all of these types of stress in labeling pitch accents, phrase accents, and boundary tones. For example, vowel lengthening is a good cue for the boundaries of intermediate and intonation phrases.

Yokoyama's model draws upon elements of English ToBI, but does not adopt pitch accents. She uses the term "sentential stress" (SS) to mean something much like Pierrehumbert's pitch accents, as in the phrases, "the SS is placed on the bold-faced word

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'*list'ja*'" and "in each of these phrases there is an SS" (2001: 15, 16). Very few Russian

sentences lack sentential stress/pitch accents, as these mark the difference between

statements and questions, separate items in lists, and cue contrast, emphasis, and focus.

Broadcast Russian, for instance, is formal and standardized, but it also makes heavy use of

emphasis. Nearly every content word in the following example has a pitch accent, since each

one carries new information.

Figure 10: Sentential stress in news broadcasts

"They forgot to order the bus for the awardees"

(NTV 2010a)
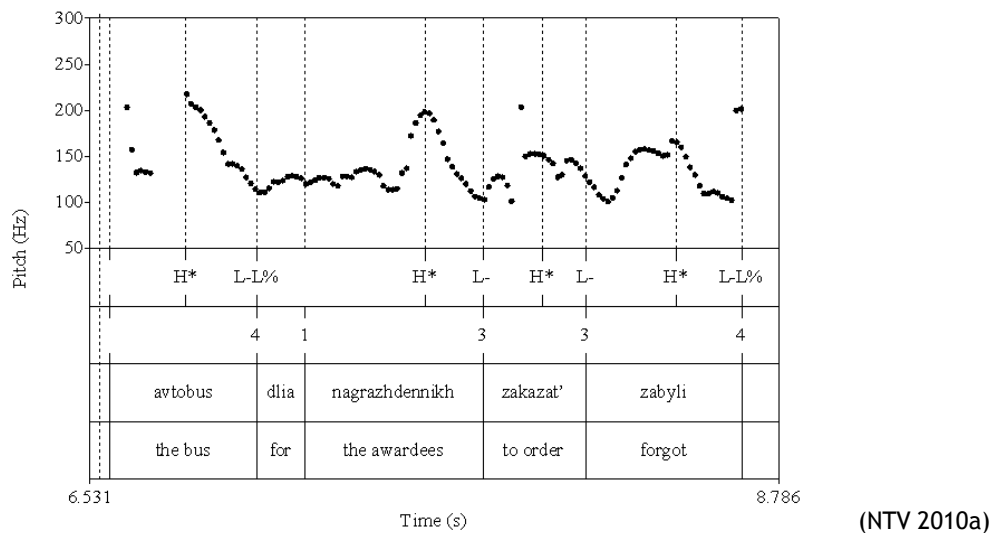
1.7 What is "neutral speech"?

Igarashi (2006) defines neutral Russian intonation as, "A pattern which occurs in the

neutral reading of a short declarative sentence," and states that it is "phonetically

characterized by "*F0 rise*s at the stressed syllable of the non-final words" and an "*F0 fall*

in the stressed syllable of the final word." The example below, from Igarashi (2006),

illustrates this. Igarashi places prenuclear high pitch accents on "*Romanova*" and "*guliala*,"

and a pitch fall on the nuclear pitch accent in "*v gorode*."

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"Romanova was walking in the city"
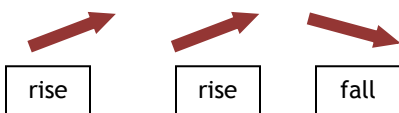
Románova guliála v górode

Neutral intonation for Igarashi, then, is characterized by one or more "rising prenuclear pitch accents" (Igarashi 2006). Yokoyama (2001) defines it similarly, but using slightly different terminology. She describes the pattern for neutral production as LH_NHL (a number (N) of rising (LH) tones followed by a falling (HL) tone). So each "LH" segment is a rise, and the intonational phrase ends with a pitch drop. Yokoyama makes three additional arguments, however:

(1) That LHHL occurs in the absence of sentential stress (2001: 8).
(2) That this pattern typifies "long interlocutor distance," or formal speech. Non-neutral intonation, she writes, "encodes short-interlocutor distance" (Yokoyama 2001: 16).
(3) That LHHL is an underlying "toneme" in Russian intonation (2001:8).

In section 2, "Justification for the R-ToBI pattern," I will investigate each of these claims in turn. First, though, I will outline Igarashi's model so as to explain data with reference to it.

1.8 Recategoriazation: Igarashi's Autosegmental-Metrical Approach

Igarashi bases his model of Russian intonation closely on Pierrehumbert's (1980) brand of intonational phonology, and employs six pitch accent types and two boundary tones. The "intonational phonemes" of a ToBI-style system are smaller than those Bryzgunova and Yokoyama identify. Rather than taking an entire contour (such as LHHL or "rise with final fall") as a fundamental unit of meaning, Igarashi decomposes tunes into sequences of pitch accents, phrase accents, and boundary tones. The following table illustrates how some of

Bryzgunova's contours look in ToBI notation:

Table 1: Igarashi's Re-categorization of IK Contours

IK	Pitch Description	Discourse Function	Pitch Accent	Boundary Tone
IK-1	Final fall	Declarative	—	L-L%
IK-2	Fall	Wh-question	H*(+L)	L-L%
IK-3	Rise	Yes-No question	L+H*	L-L%

(Igarashi 2008: 239)

The table below summarizes the tonal inventories of contemporary researchers on Russian intonation. The model I have adopted is essentially Igarashi's, though I have added a downstepped H pitch accent (!H*) and, following Ode (2008), a midtone phrase boundary (M-).

Table 2: Tonal Inventories for Russian

(H stands for "high," L for "low," M for "mid-tone." The "!" before an H tone indicates that the tone is downstepped—it is still high but of lower pitch than a preceding H pitch accent.)

	Yokoyama	Igarashi	Ode[3]	Garey
Pitch accents				
Simple pitch accents	—	H*	H*	H*
	—	L*	L*	L*
	—	—	—	!H*
Bitonal rising	LH	L+H*	—	L+H*
	—	L*+H	—	L*+H
Bitonal falling	HL	H+L*	—	H+L*
	—	H*+L	—	H*+L
Phrase accents				
	H-	H-	H-	H-
	L-	L-	L-	L-
	—	—	M-	M-
Boundary tones				
	H%	H%	—	H%
	L%	L%	L%	L%

(Igarashi 2002, 2008; Ode 1989; Ode 2008; Yokoyama 2001)

Another reason to prefer Igarashi's model over Yokoyama's is because it accounts for

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[3] Please note that this is not Odé's notation. For the sake of consistency, I have rewritten her pitch accent and pitch movement categories in terms of pitch accents and phrasal tones in the austosegmental-metrical model.

the difference between two types of rising accents: L+H* and L*+H (Igarashi 2006: 192). Both accents rise, but the stressed syllable of L+H* is high and the stressed syllable of H*+L is low.

2 Justification for the R-ToBI model

Instead of pitch accents, Yokoyama identifies rising and falling "contour tones" (LH and HL). There is, therefore, no way to differentiate an H tone resulting from a pitch accent and an H boundary tone. Her assumption is that the "neutral production" pattern regulates both pitch accents and boundary tones. What matters for her is the tune, which, like the formal "*vy*" ("you") pronoun, signals to listeners that they are in "long interlocutor distance" mode. One reason she proposes LHHL as an underlying form is because she notes that without some basic restrictions, the number of "allotone" patterns would proliferate infinitely (2001: 3). She writes,

> Conspicuously lacking has been one of the most basic notions of modern phonology, namely the phoneme-allophone opposition, which in this case would be manifested as an opposition between underlying tonemes and the pitch contours of their contextual realizations...The unconstrained nature of the semantic aspect of the IK system follows directly from its allotonic nature. Assigning meanings to surface realizations is futile, since meaning cannot be associated with contextually-determined, derived pitch contours any more than it can be associated with allotones...(2001: 2-3).

Intonational melodies are constructed from combinations of pitch and phrasing. Certain melodies—like words—have codified meanings. The most standard of these made it to Bryzgunova's system, and include things like, "L+H* L-L% signals a yes-no question."

But there are others, too. English has a "teasing tune," as in the taunt "I'm gon-na te-ell." This has a definite pragmatic meaning, but is used infrequently (by adults). A speaker's individual prosody could be parodied, too (cf. Tina Fey's imitations of Sarah Palin). Therefore, the list of intonational contour patterns *is* actually infinite, for the same reason that there is no limit to the number of possible words that can be formed with English phonemes. The word "wug" is nonsense to most people. Wug means something to linguists, though, because they share presupposed knowledge about its definition. Countless intonational tunes have significance in given speech communities.

It isn't productive, however, to teach language learners the tattling tune. So Bryzgunova's 7-contour system makes sense in the context of language acquisition. The flexibility of Igarashi's ToBI-based model makes it best for labeling long, naturalistic sound files.

2.1 Tests of the Speaker Distance Model

In the following section, I test the three claims Yokoyama (2001) makes about the LHHL pitch pattern.

Question One: Does the LHHL pattern occur in the absence of sentential stress?

What Yokoyama identifies with the $LH_N HL$ pattern is a sequence of "rise-fall" episodes. Figure 11, below, meets her definition of a LHHL sequence—LH LH HL—but it clearly has sentential stress. The F0 rises are due to pitch accents. These show prominence within the phrase, and are located on stressed syllables. The L- boundary tones occur after the high pitch accents, in part, because it is very difficult to mark prominence on successive words at high pitch. The final L tone results from an L* nuclear pitch accent and an L% boundary, which shows completeness in a Russian declarative sentence. There is an LHHL pattern, according to Yokoyama's scheme, as shown in the box with dashed lines. But this sentence is still stress-timed, and the pitch peaks and troughs are regulated by pitch accents rather than phrase-level tones. I have encountered no evidence that Russian has a stressless default variant.

Figure 11: Sentential stress in a LHHL pattern

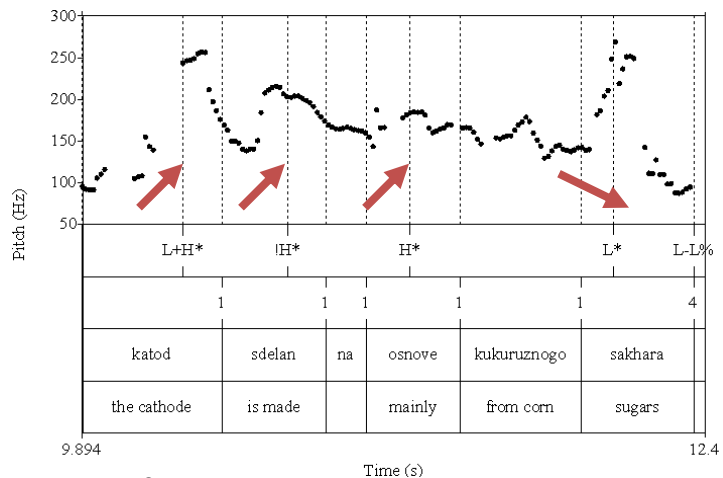*"people fear that the organic components will overheat"*

H*	L-	H*	L-	L* L-L%
L H		L H		H L
rastitel'nie	komponenty	boiat'sia	peregreva	v
vegetable	components	people fear	overheat	

Time (s) 24 — 26.11
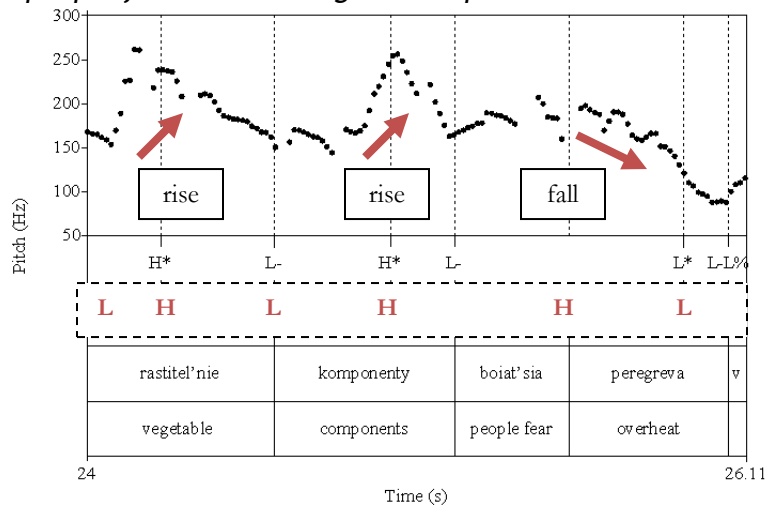
(NTV 2010b)

Question Two: Does the LHHL pattern typify formal speech?

Both news broadcasts and Putin's speeches are formal, and both do exhibit an alternating rise-fall pattern similar to LHHL. But this, again, is because high pitch accents—at some point—tend to be followed by low boundary tones. The news broadcasters, in particular, emphasize a good many of their content words. Strings of high pitch accents, then, are to be expected. Figure 12 shows rising prenuclear pitch accents followed by a low nuclear pitch accent and low boundary tone, as in Igarashi's example of neutral speech. If neutral speech is anything that has rising prenuclear pitch accents and a final fall, this would include even the most emphatic, colloquial, and informal variants of Russian. This is because high pitch accents and low boundary tones are not properties of a given speech style, but are rather ways of showing prominence and completion in ways that

Figure 12: LHHL as product of emphasis

"the cathode is made mainly from corn sugars"

L+H*	!H*	H*		L*	L-L%
	1	1 1	1	1	4
katod	sdelan	na	osnove	kukuruznogo	sakhara
the cathode	is made		mainly	from corn	sugars

Time (s) 9.894 — 12.4

cross-cut all speech genres.

My recordings of formal speech contained pitch sequences other than LHHL, as well. Still, the vast majority of intonation phrases in declarative sentences had at least one high pitch accent, and were usually followed by a low phrase accent or low boundary tone. So a (LH)HL pattern is common. But it cannot be said to denote long interlocutor distance or formal speech, in particular, any more than the rising intonation typical of questions typifies "informal" speech.

Question Three: Is there evidence that LHHL is an underlying tone pattern in Russian?

There is no evidence that LHHL is an underlying tone form. Rather than a set, phrase-level melody, this intonational pattern occurs because of two processes: (1) emphasis in Russian is most often signaled with high pitch accents (H*), and (2) utterance completion is denoted with a low boundary tone (L-L%). So the common tune is due to the independent pragmatic effects of high pitch accents, low nuclear accents, and low boundary tones.

Another strong argument against Yokoyama's model is that LHHL would lump two patterns with different meanings into the same category. My data illustrated that H* L-L% and L* L-L% signal different orders of utterance completion. In both the news broadcast and Putin's speech, intonational phrases that were related, often because they were in the same sentence, would end with a *high* nuclear pitch accent followed by a low boundary tone (H* L-L%). The L-L% boundary tone still shows utterance completion, but, almost like a paragraph-level nuclear pitch accent, the final phrase in a given segment would end with L* L-L%. This marked higher-order completion. Figure 13 shows two linked intonation phrases, the first of which ends in a high nuclear pitch accent, but a low phrase tone and boundary tone. It is clearly the end of an IP. The final fall (L-L%) denotes completion. But the next sentence has a low nuclear pitch accent (L*) followed by L-L%. This gives a greater sense of finality to the end of this set of related sentences.

Figure 13: Continuation prosody with H* L-L%: final and prefinal completion

"to contemporary and future generations"

(Putin 2008)
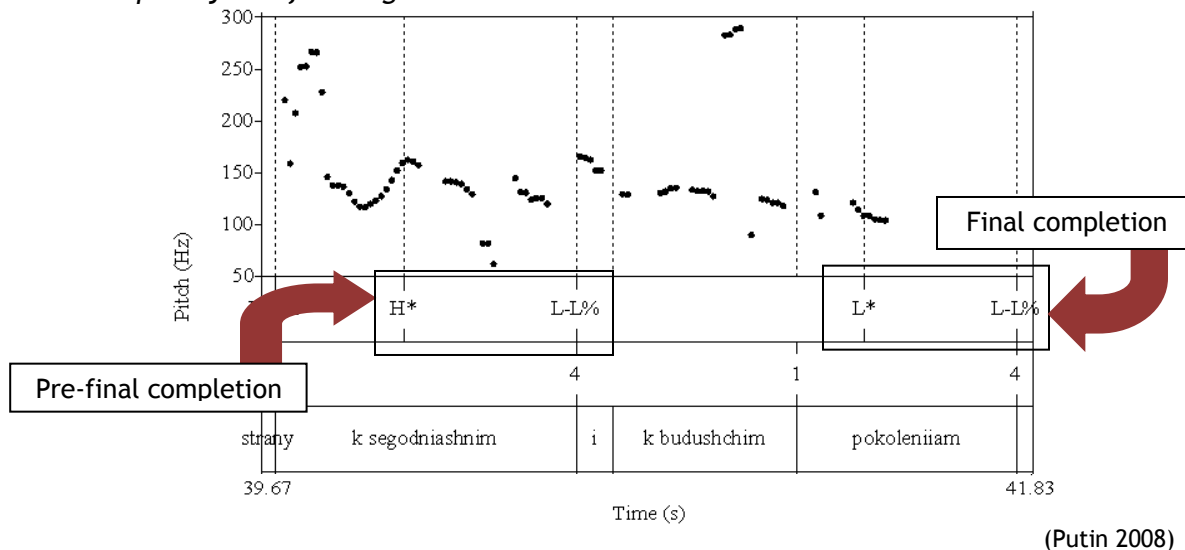
LHHL would classify both of these IPs as the same: both end in a low boundary tone. They are not the same, though, in terms of either R-ToBI labeling or communicative effect. Further, Igarashi would define only the latter (L* L-L%) as neutral, as he claims that a falling nuclear pitch accent characterizes neutral speech. Both phrases with high nuclear pitch accents and low boundary tones and ones with low nuclear pitch accents followed by low boundary tones occur frequently in these data. Neither production is more formal, or more neutral, than the other. Here is another example of final and pre-final completion from a news broadcast:

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Figure 14: Association of nuclear pitch accents to pre-final completion patterns

"the main problem"
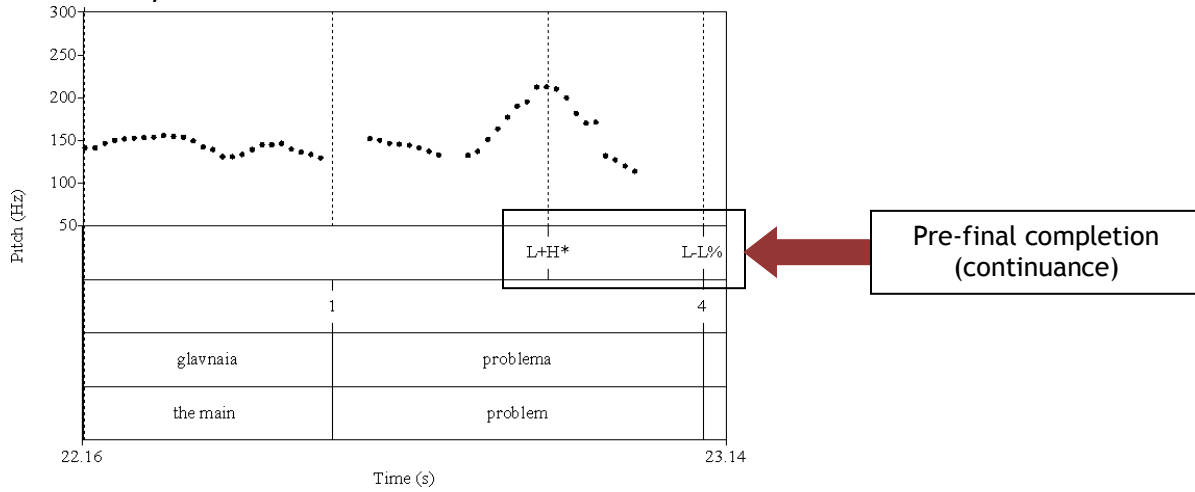
"is that"
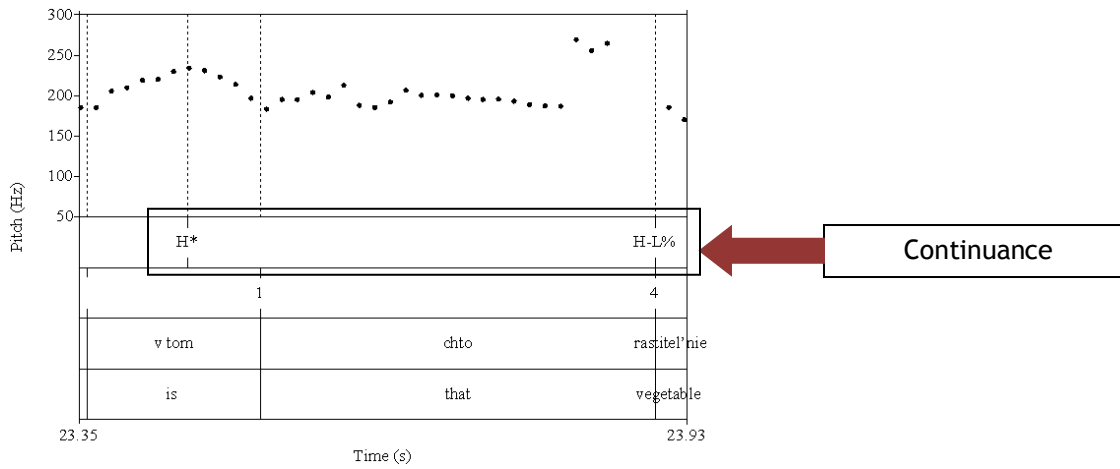
"people fear that the organic components will overheat."

(NTV 2010b)

23
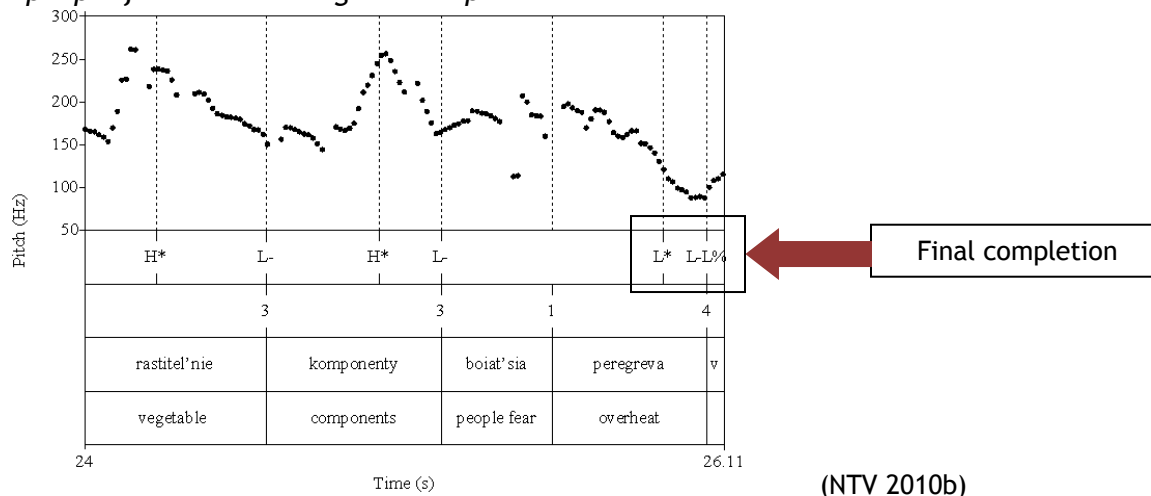
However, if stressed syllables consistently fell near intermediate phrase (ip) boundaries, this might indicate the presence of accentual phrases with set tone patterns, supporting Yokoyama's claims. But syllables stressed via pitch accent occur near the center of ips, not the edges. The stressed syllables of each word are marked with arrows in Figure 15, below.

Figure 15: Pitch accent placement in intermediate phrases

"a lithium-ion battery made from coffee and corn"
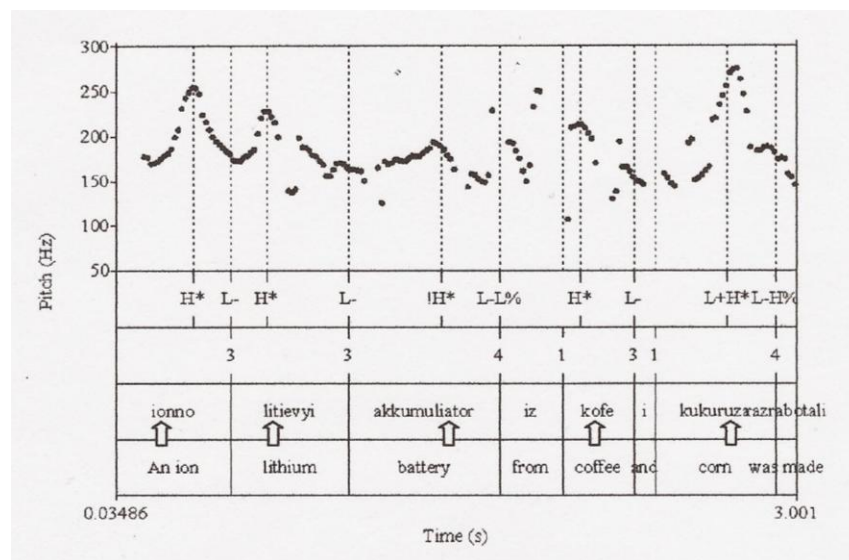
"was developed at the Japanese corporation Sony"
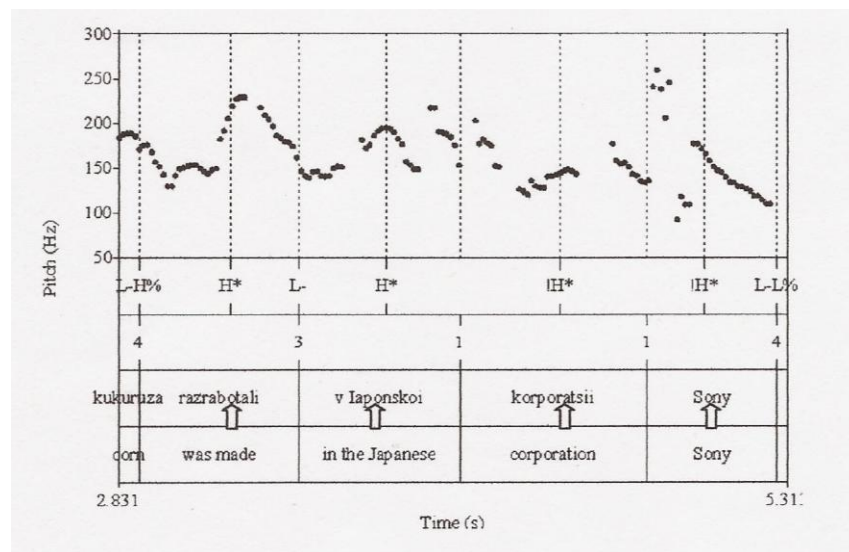
Proposing LHHL as an underlying tone is like claiming that, underlyingly, all Russian consonants are /prrp/ (cf. Igarashi 2008: 228). While /p/ and /r/ are both phonemes in Russian (Cubberley 2002: 63), /prrp/ means nothing in isolation. The tune of LHHL operates similarly. It, on its own, does not index a particular relationship between speakers (long interlocutor distance). Formal, read speech is more likely to contain declarative sentences, and thus to end with low boundary tones. If anything, it is these low boundary tones that mark read speech as formal. The pitch accents which precede them are variable. Pitch accents are not thus expressions of an underlying toneme. Pitch accents create the phrasal tune.

I have come to different conclusions than Yokoyama both because of the type of data I analyzed and the framework I used to describe it. Like Yokoyama, I examined recordings of news broadcasts. However, she reanalyzed Bryzgunova's short, clear news extracts—ones chosen with language learners in mind. Looking at intonation phrases in the context of overall discourse structure has allowed new connections between pitch, intonation units, and meaning to emerge. In addition, R-ToBI describes data in enough detail to pick out and compare significant intonational features, revealing both contrasts and parallels obscured by other models. This more flexible, modular tonal inventory is best suited to describing relationships both within and between intonation phrases. In Section II, I put it to use in identifying the characteristics of the Russian Male Macho Register.

3.0 Discourse Structure: Rethinking the Strict Layer Hypothesis

Before turning to that, though, a few words about the role that intonation plays in discourse structure will also support the R-ToBI model. I have demonstrated above that an H* L-L% pattern can signal continuation in multiple-sentence segments. Relationships can also be built between concepts in different intonation phrases through parallel tunes, contrasting

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accents, and downstepped accents. Downstepped pitch accents are generally considered to be triggered by a prior high accent *within the same intermediate phrase*. In English ToBI, at least, the consensus is that downstepped pitch accents cannot occur across intermediate or intonation phrase boundaries due to the Strict Layer Hypothesis. The Strict Layer Hypothesis states that each level of prosodic organization entirely subsumes subordinate units (Selkirk 1984). For example, an intonation phrase encapsulates intermediate phrases, and no intermediate phrase can cross the boundaries of intonation phrases. Similarly, downstepping relationships, according to this hypothesis, cannot cross the boundaries of ips. Intermediate phrases are supposed to pen in all pitch accent behavior.

However, my data indicate that speakers sometimes do associate concepts—via downstepped pitch accents—across intermediate phrase boundaries. Consider the following example, in which the first pitch accent, on "*vysshuyu*" (high) is 135 Hz and the second one, on "*gosudarstvennuiu*" (government) drops to 101 Hz. "High" modifies "government," which might be why the words are linked via downstep.

Figure 16: Downstepped pitch accents across ip boundaries

"You very rightly"
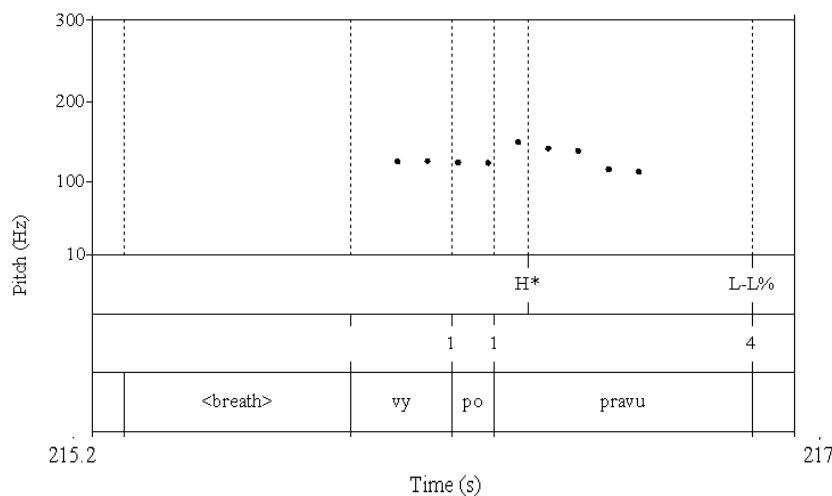
"receive today high government honors"
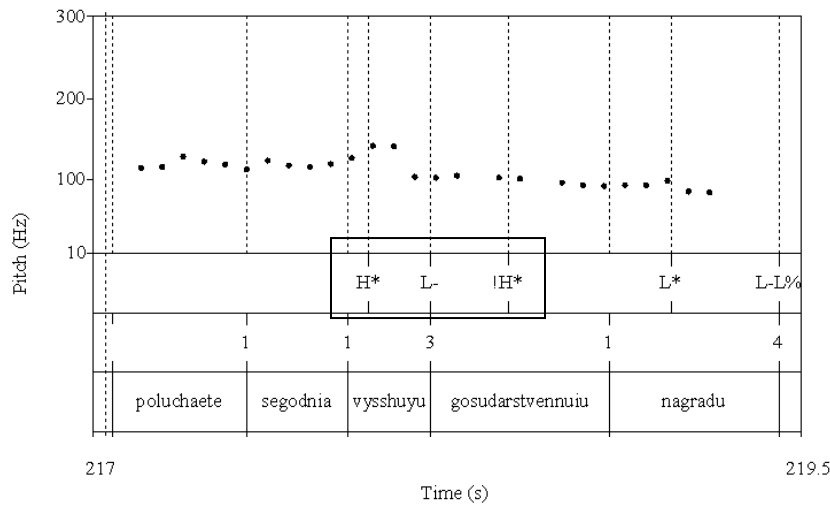
(Putin 2008c)

In the next example, the pitch drop after "*litievyi*" (lithium) marks an intermediate phase boundary. The next pitch accent, on "*akkumulator*" (battery), is perceived as high (there is a rise on the stressed syllable), but it is not a simple high pitch accent. Instead, it is an accent that is made with reference to the preceding L+H* accent; it is downstepped. The first accent is 222 Hz and the second is 186 Hz, for a difference of 36 Hz. It could be argued that these are not truly downstepped accents, but simply the result of natural pitch declination from a high pitch accent to a low final boundary tone. However, the syllables marked with !H* clearly have prominence in the sentence, which warrants pitch accent labels.
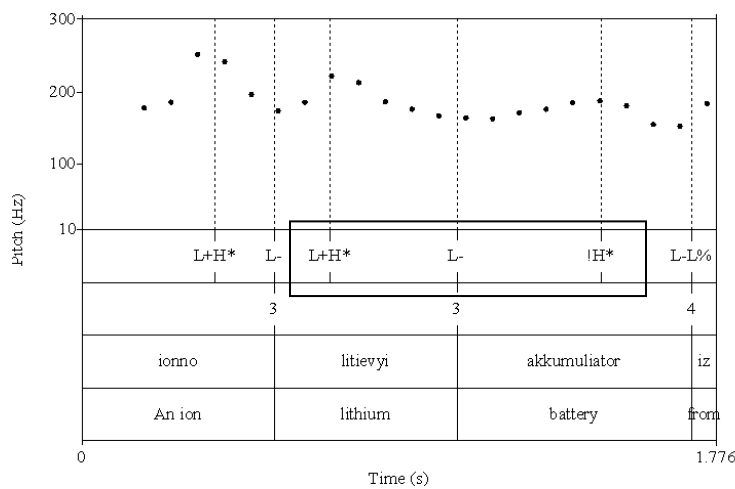
Figure 17: Downstepped pitch accents across ip boundaries

"A lithium-ion battery"

(NTV 2010b)

The next example, from the same news broadcast, shows an iteratively

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downstepped progression of accented words, once again after an intermediate phrase boundary.

Figure 18: Iteratively downstepped accents across an ip boundary

"was developed at the Japanese corporation Sony"
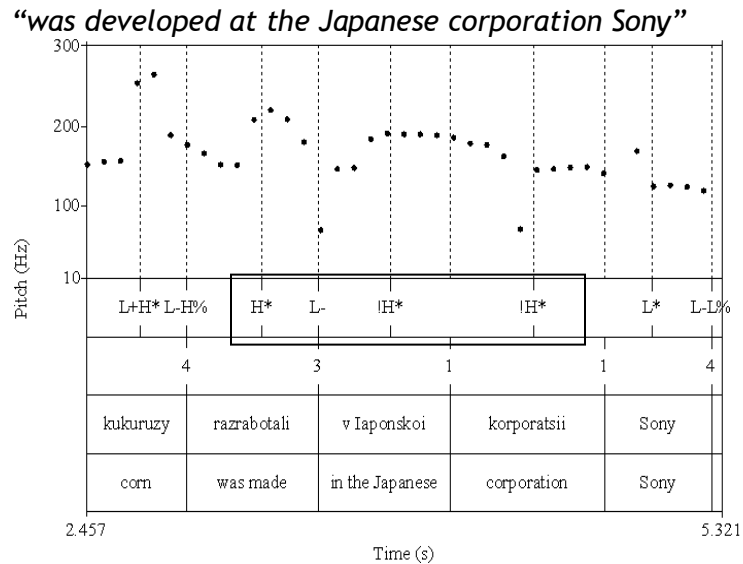
The best example, though, of downsteps across boundaries comes from two consecutive sentences with parallel melodies. The first sentence, shown in Figure 19, has a normal progression of downstepped pitch accents, leading to a final low pitch accent and low boundary tone (L* L-L%). The next sentence, in Figure 20, exhibits the same pattern—but the downsteps follow a pause of .17 seconds. This is an intonation phrase-level juncture. The pause after the word "*anod*" (anode) in the second sentence helps contrast it with the leading word of the previous sentence, "*katod*" (cathode). In the first pitch track, the pitch accent on *katod* is 249 Hz, that on *sdelan* is downstepped in 211 Hz, and the next pitch accent, on *osnove*, falls at 184 Hz. The same pattern of a steeply rising pitch accent, two downstepped accents, and a final fall is mirrored in the next sentence. They are both syntactically and intonationally parallel. The only labeling difference between them is that in the second sentence the iterative downsteps are interrupted by an IP boundary.

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Figure 19: Downstepped accents within an intonation phrase

"The cathode is made from mainly from corn sugars."
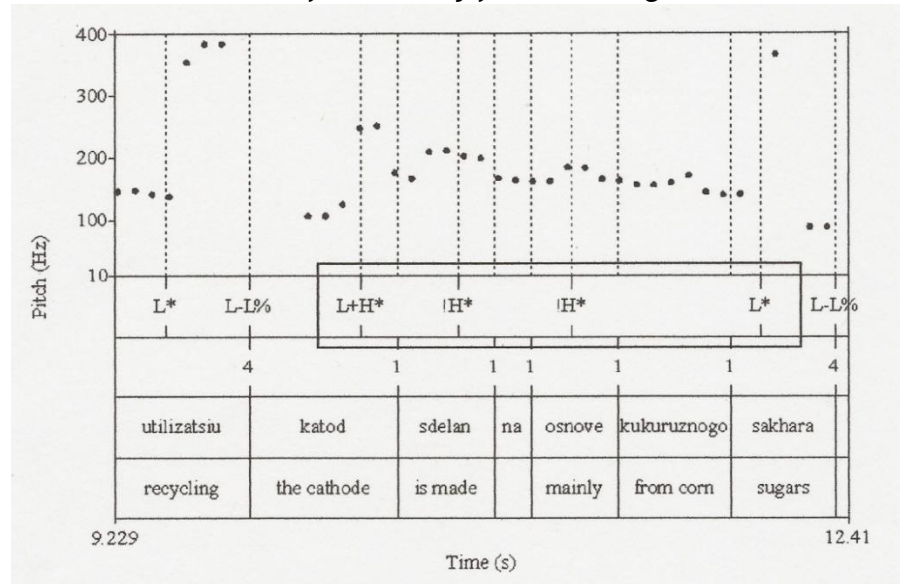
(NTV 2010b)

Figure 20: Downstepped pitch accents across an IP boundary

"The anode—from coffee bean extract."
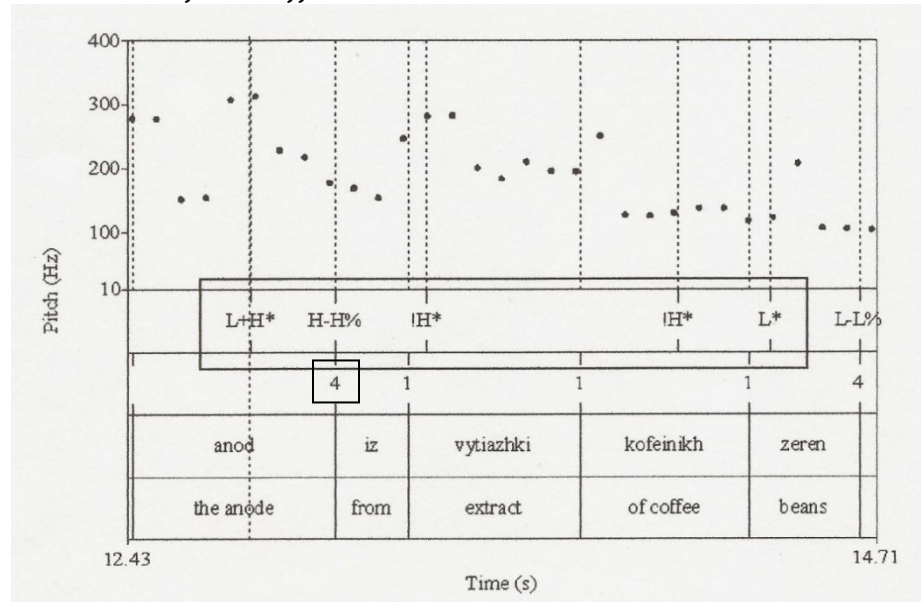
(NTV 2010b)

Table 3: Parallel Pitch Accents in Two Consecutive Sentences

L+H*	!H*	!H*	L*
katod 249 Hz	sdelan 211 Hz	osnove 184 Hz	sakhara 53 Hz
anod 312 Hz	vytiashki 282 Hz	koffeinikh 130 Hz	zeren 122 Hz

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After describing the anode and cathode, the news announcer goes on to list the materials in the final element of the organic battery, the contact plate ("*kontaktnaia plastina*"). This utterance, like the previous two, ends in an L* pitch accent and a final fall (L-L%), marking completion. When transcribed in intonation phrases, the segment looks like this:

|	
Katod sdelan no osnove kukuruznogo sakhara.	The cathode is made from ordinary corn sugars.
Anod	The anode
iz vytiashki coffeinikh zeren.	from coffee bean extracts.
Kontaktnaia plastina	The contact plate
iz cellulosi.	from cellulose.

Viewed this way, it is easy to see how intonation and syntactic structures mutually inform each other. Intonation phrases do not exist in isolation, but often refer forwards and backwards to the IP's which surround them. Some of this was described in the analysis of final and pre-final completion, above. An H* L-L% pattern can signal pre-final completion in a string of related declarative sentences. A low boundary tone might mark the end of one declarative sentence, but its H* nuclear pitch accent indicates that the speaker will continue. A contrasting pattern, L* L-L% denotes higher order or "final" completion. These are only two examples of the ways in which speakers use prosody to associate one idea with another— either to point out similarities with or contrasts between items in intonation phrases.

II Intonational features of the Russian Male Macho Register

4 Defining Speech Registers

Asif Agha defines a speech register as "a linguistic repertoire that is associated, culture internally, with particular social practices and with persons who engage in such practices" (2000: 216). Auctioneers, lawyers, teenagers, and computer hackers all have their own ways of speaking. Vocabulary idiosyncrasies might catch most people's attention, but regularities in pitch, intonation, and sentence structure also mark registers. Robert Podesva,

for example, tracked how the selective use of falsetto indexed "flamboyance" for a gay doctor (2007). Likewise, the pronunciation of African-American Vernacular English is linked to particular characterological figures in the popular imagination. Race, clothing, and profession contribute to stereotypes, but language alone can carry this indexical burden. This is why schools are often so invested in policing students' speech.

Registers are related to both Bakhtinian voicing and speech genres (cf. Bakhtin 2004 [1981]). The main differences between them lie (1) in how standardized prosodic, lexical, and syntactic patterns have become and (2) how strongly they are associated with social stereotypes. For example, I can voice my best friend but there is no "Jane" register. And while discourse genres are uniform ways of presenting texts, differences between genres tend to regulate form and content rather than manner of speaking (Bakhtin 1986: 60-62). Sports announcer talk is a register (Agha 2000), but game shows are a genre. The line between "register" and "style" is less clear-cut, with the choice of terms falling partly along disciplinary boundaries (Agha 2007: 185-186). I use the word "register" in order to emphasize the consistent, situation-linked, socially mapable nature of this manner of speaking (cf. Irvine 1990; Agha 2007). RMMR is a set of linguistic features that operates less as an aberration from Standard Modern Russian than as a co-existent repertoire option (Eckert nd.; Podesva 2007).

Outlining methodological considerations, Agha claims that the best way to identify a discourse register is by tracking native speakers' metapragmatic assessments of different speech forms. In fact, he even contends that "…we have no empirical evidence for the existence of pragmatic values for any register that is independent of observations of *overt* metapragmatic activity…" (2007: 189). I do not have such data. However, I argue that metapragmatic assessments are not always explicit or lexicalized. The evaluation of a register as high or low prestige, for example, happens as people interactively orient towards

it (cf.Keenan 1989; Irvine and Gal 2000; Podesva 2007). These assessments are, to use Agha's

terminology, "socially locatable semiotic behaviors" (2007: 189). They are just

nonreferential. My contention, that RMMR is a coherent, socially salient speech register,

rests on three arguments:

(1) That there are patterns in Russian prosody (pitch and intonation) that deviate from Standard Modern Russian production
(2) That these patterns can be linked to particular social personae
(3) That the stereotypes indexed by the linguistic elements identified as RMMR are, in fact, so widely recognizable that they can be parodied

Registers are always tied to social structure. If indexical links between RMMR and

discursively constituted characterological figures can be demonstrated, the above contention

will be confirmed. My goal is to systematize the intuition that tells us a speaker sounds

"tough."

Much like American Valley Girl speech, the Russian Male Macho Register is highly

recognizable, much-parodied, and may be stigmatized. In order to describe how, exactly,

RMMR deviates, it is first necessary to identify the norm. While there is no single, much less

simple, definition of Standard Modern Russian, it is possible to describe overall intonational patterns in male speech and note how RMMR differs. The following example (Figure 21) comes from an interview from within a televised news story. Here, the mayor of a town speaks to a reporter in a relatively formal yet still conversational manner.

Figure 21: Andrei Baranov pitch tracks

"I understand that it is difficult for veterans to climb to the third floor"

32
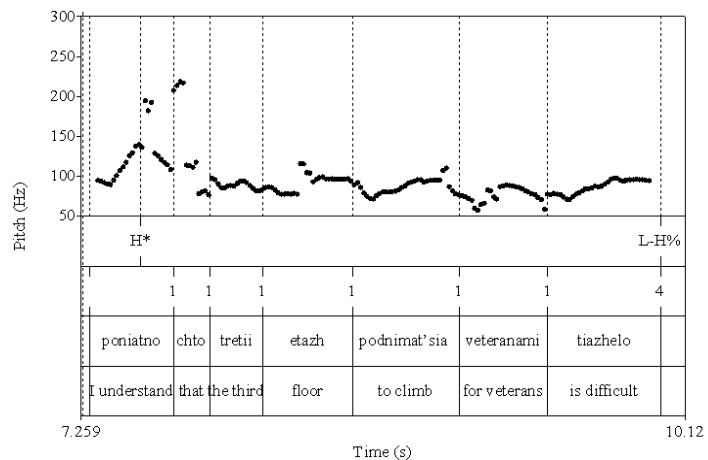
"But at that moment, when they say that people began climbing on their knees"

	H*		L-						H*	L-H%
2	1	3	1		1 1		1	1 1		4
no	tot	moment	kogda	govarit	chto	liudi	polzli	na	koleniakh	
but	at that	moment	when	they say	that	people	began	climbing	thier knees	

10.33   13.13

Time (s)
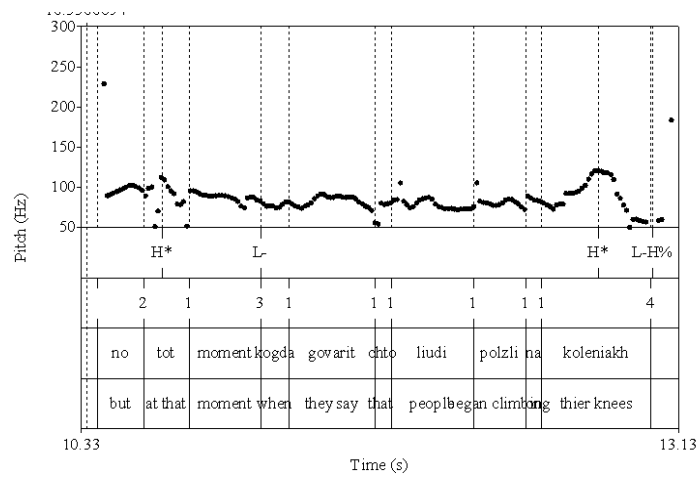
"There wasn't anything like that"

H*	L-L%
1	4
etogo	nebylo
like that	there was nothing

13.14   14.12

Time (s)
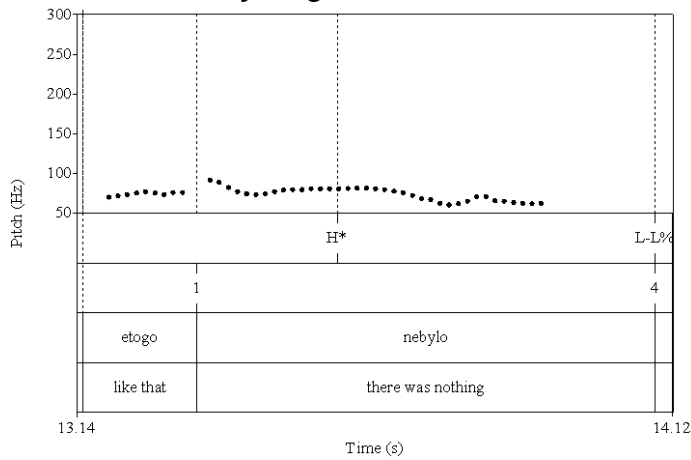
(NTV 2010a)

Figure 22: Focus prosody in Standard Russian

"specially arranged"

H*	L-	H*	L-L%	H*	L-H%
	3		4		4
podstroenno		spetsial'no		chto	
arranged		specially		that	

1.88   3.859

Time (s)
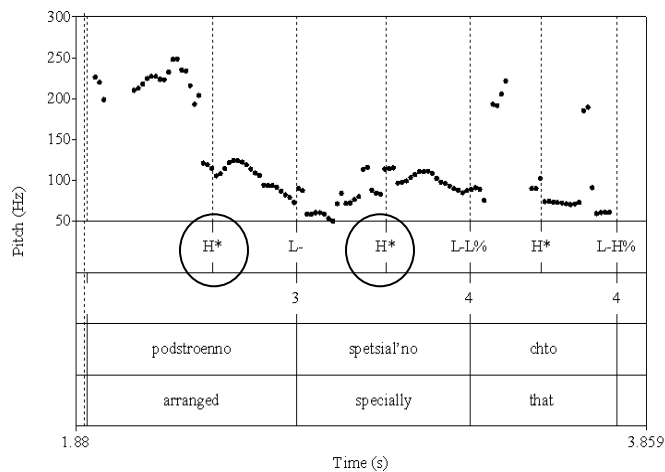
In figure 22, two of Andrei Baranov's pitch accents have special prominence—prominence above simple emphasis. The accents on the words *"podstroenno spetsial'no"* ("specially arranged") are focused. Mayor Baranov, here, is contesting claims that veterans being honored at a special ceremony were scheduled to climb to a third floor balcony

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by mistake. He says, instead, that this was "specially arranged," not accidental, so that people could take photographs. These two accents are the most heavily stressed in this segment, as indicated by both pitch and lengthening. Mayor Baranov's pitch varies in this excerpt from 57 Hz to 126 Hz, and these two accents both fall near the top of his range, at 114 Hz. Out of his high pitch accents, there are only two higher, at 121 Hz and 126 Hz. These, though (on the words "*kolenkiakh*" and *"poniatno"*), are not as abnormally lengthened as "*podstroenno spetsial'no.*" This is an example of focus prosody embedded in Standard Modern Russian. It will serve as a baseline for comparing focus in RMMR.

5 Focus prosody in RMMR

Russian speakers index machismo by exploiting focus prosody. If broadcast speech is typified by the fact that nearly every content word gets a pitch accent, RMMR is notable for its heavy reliance on focus. Focus implies contrast with something the audience already believes. In RMMR, though, even seemingly unimportant information gets extra force. The following sentences sound strange—if not patronizing—in Russian for the same reason they come off as aggressive in English (words in all caps are focused):

Bring the CHAIR by the WALL.

He wanted a LAMP and a TABLE from the RADIOSHACK, but they didn't HAVE any.

The focused words in Mayor Baranov's production each occupy their own intermediate phrases. This is because they are lengthened and there is a great deal of pitch movement. It would be difficult to focus a second, subsequent word without pitch reset, so there must be a boundary tone, either for an intermediate or intonation phrase, after most focused words. Therefore, if focus-style emphasis is a feature of RMMR, we should see a high proportion of focused accents per IP, each tending to occur in their own ips. As I will demonstrate below, this prediction is borne out.

In an excerpt from the 1997 Russian crime movie *The Brother* (*Brat*), a top

gangster relates his plan to take out rivals. Rather than using focus prosody to signal

contrast, this speaker adds it for rhythmic purposes (Balabanov 1997). Focused pitch accents

are circled in the pitch track below.

Figure 23: Focus prosody in *The Brother*

"they also moved from Moscow to Peter"
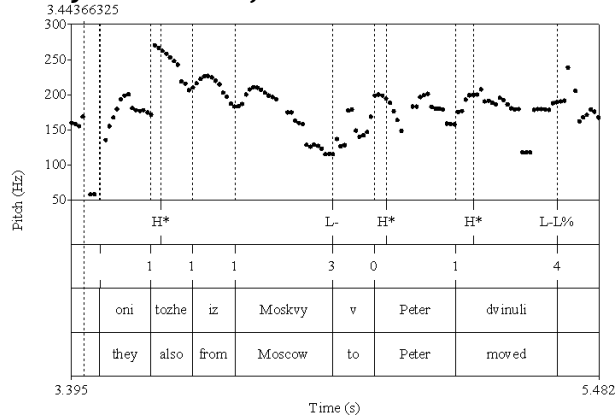
"they take everything, brother"
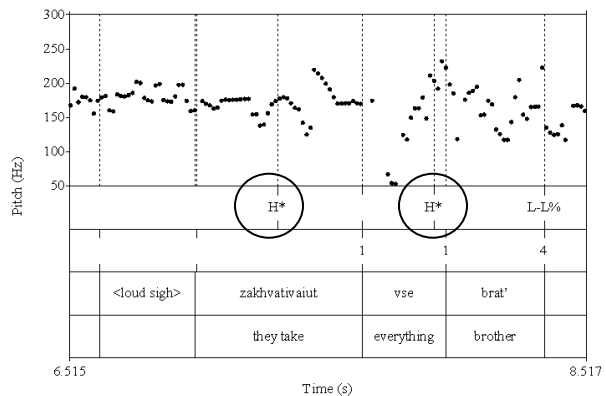
"but I tell you what"
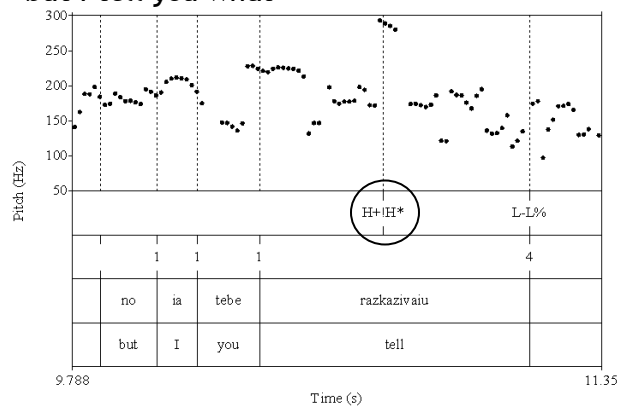
Comparing the excerpt from *The Brother* with a selection from one of Vladimir

Putin's speeches helps disambiguate RMMR prosody from simple emphasis. Both Putin's

speech and the excerpt from *The Brother* make authoritative statements, both concern turf

wars, and both contain focus prosody. But a much lower proportion of Putin's pitch accents

are focused than those in *The Brother* (focused syllables are in all-caps below). Unlike the

gangster's speech, Putin's pitch and volume peaks on focused pitch accents make sense in the

context of emphasizing important information. The gangster seems to gain little by focusing "also" in the first pitch track or "tell" in the third one since there is no competing point of view. "I TELL you what," in English, makes sense if the speaker thinks the word "tell" is particularly significant. In RMMR, an awful lot of words get such status.

Transcript: Vladimir Putin

1	khochu obratit' vashe vnimanie,	I want to direct your attention
2	uvazhaemye kollegi	respected colleagues
3	takikh **SPOR**nikh territori	to this disputed territory
4	po suti u nas	in fact we have
5	bolee dvukh **TY**siach	more than two thousand
5	esli my	if we
6	khot' kog**DA**-nibud' v budushchem	at any time in in the future
7	pozvolim sebe vtia**NUT**'sia v etot delezh,	allow ourselves to enter into this fracas
8	on budet beskonechnym	it will be unending
9	i razrushit stranu.	and destroy the country (Putin 2008b)

In Mayor Baranov's excerpt, there is focus emphasis in two pitch accents out of eight intonation phrases, for a ratio of 0.25. In the sample from *The Brother*, the speaker focuses 12 syllables in only 19 intonation phrases, for a ratio of 0.63. Putin's production falls in between, at 0.40.

Table 4: Ratio of Focused Pitch Accents to Intonational Phrases Across Speakers

News broadcast	Baranov	Putin	Brother
0.00	0.25	0.40	0.63

The rhythmic focus pattern of RMMR may be what Odé called the "harmonica" intonation contour. It has a similar stress alternation and Odé's native interviewees

considered it negatively marked (1989). However, I argue that RMMR is more than simply an intonation contour type. When used in male speech, it indexes recognizable social personae. But who exactly those characters are is complicated.

III RMMR's Indexical Valences

6 Social personae

The Young Pioneers was a Soviet youth group, an elementary-school precursor to Communist Party membership. Since they were purportedly perfect socialist children, we would not expect Young Pioneers in Soviet-era cartoons to use stigmatized speech. It would also seem strange for the character of a young boy to display "machismo." Nonetheless, a Young Pioneer leader in the cartoon *Cheburashka* uses RMMR (Svartsman 1971).[4] His prosodic melody is the same as that of the gangster above, with a focused word occurring every few syllables (Figure 24). Since there is far more focus prosody—and thus more high pitch accents—this results in a high average number of intermediate phrases per intonation unit (since there are pitch resets after the focused accents).

Figure 24: Young Pioneer pitch tracks

"and anyway"

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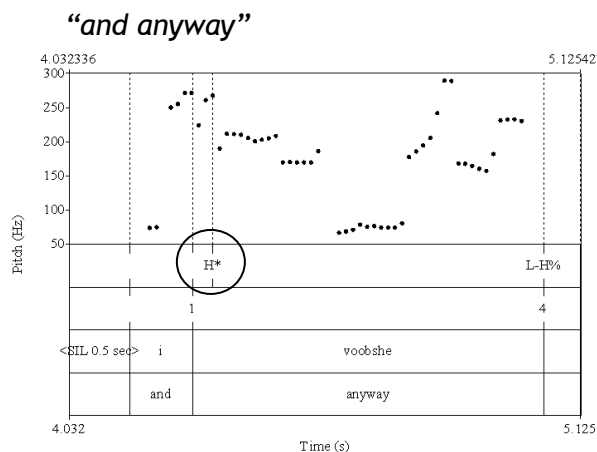
[4] The Young Pioneer leader in Figure 24 is also not the only child character using RMMR. A main character in a Soviet cartoon series, *No-nothing on the Moon ("Neznaika na lune")* speaks in this register.

"the Pioneers take"
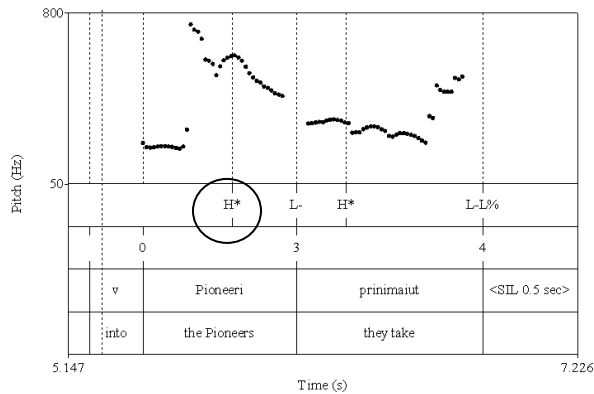
"the very best"
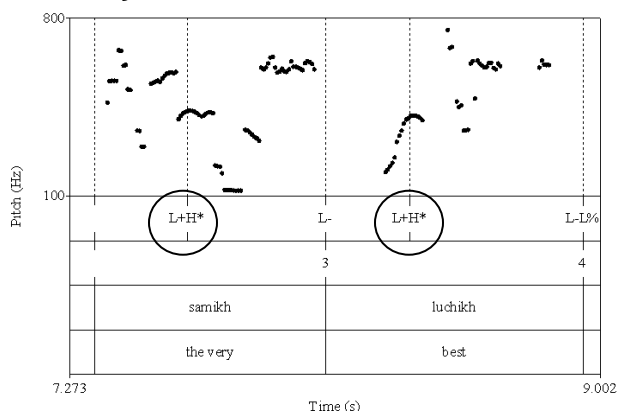
More typically tough characters use RMMR in a sketch comedy program called
"Club of the Merry and Quick-witted," (*Klub veselikh i nakhodchivykh,* or KVN). KVN is much
like *Saturday Night Live,* but teams compete against one another before a panel of judges. It
became a sensation in the 1960's as teams from universities, factories, and municipalities
faced off for regional titles and the chance to play on national television (Janco forthcoming).
It was the most successful TV program in the history of Russia, but, more importantly, it
created a durable competitive infrastructure in smaller towns. Even prisons formed teams
(Roth-Ey 2003: 367). KVN combined the sociality of American tennis and bridge leagues with
the fame of *American Idol.* Now it is a pan-Eastern bloc network whose champions meet each
year for a final tournament.

In an elimination round, the team "Astana.kz" from Astana, Kazakhstan spoofed

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an interaction between apartment residents and their landlord. One renter says, "These communal taxes take half of my salary!" The landlord, dressed in a tuxedo and fur-lined black leather jacket, callously answers, "See—you still have some money left!" (KVN 2008). This routine's humor relies on the contrast between rote Soviet-era apartment meetings and the decidedly undemocratic nature of their commercialized successors. The ostentatiously wealthy, capitalist owner clashes against the image of the Soviet apartment block manager (*upravdom*), sometimes portrayed as a dowdy middle-aged busy-body.[5] This skit was more than just a critique of new taxes. It also referenced class disparity, the downsides of privatization, and the government's responsibilities towards its populace. The landlord in this skit did not use RMMR, but this nevertheless illustrates how social roles and expectations have changed in the last twenty years in the former USSR. Businessmen are different from Soviet bureaucrats, factory workers, or military leaders, past templates of masculinity.

Thus, the speaking style that indexes machismo is now being applied to entirely new characters: the New Russian, the gangster, the corporate breadwinner. Just as in American culture, though, tough guys in Russian media are not always to be emulated. They are as often villains, criminals, or romantic rivals as they are heroes. Mr. T, Arnold Schwarzenegger, and Rambo are, indeed, bad (you know it). But their testosterone-drenched performances come off as a bit cartoony. They are supposed to. Some key heroes in Soviet film— Vysotskii in *Mesto Vstrechi Izmenit Nel'zia* (*The Meeting Place Cannot Be Changed*) and Gosha in *Moskva Slezam ne Verit* (*Moscow Does Not Believe in Tears*)—don't use this register. In post-Soviet film, Mikhailkov in *Burnt by the Sun* and Daniel in *The Brother* are, like Clint Eastwood, calm, classy heroes with normatively flat Russian intonation contours.

A brilliant KVN performance, also by Astana.kz, mapped the gender-power-buffoonery dynamic fostered by RMMR onto geopolitical, ethnic, and class distinctions (KVN 2008). The

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[5] Cf. Leonid Gaidai (1968).

team performed seven skits in about seven minutes. The three that I describe in detail highlight both the Russian nation-state's relationship with Kazakhstan and a reversal of ethnic relations within Kazakhstan itself. In the Soviet era, ethnic Russians actually outnumbered ethnic Kazakhs. Most non-Kazakhs in Kazakhstan had either resettled there for employment or had been exiled from other areas of the USSR (Dave 2007). This has changed. Both in terms of population and governmental control, Kazakhs now have the upper hand—at least within their borders.

The opening skit illustrates some of these tensions. In this sketch, a group of Kazakhs visits Moscow and asks a taxi driver how much it costs to get to the center of the city. "Are you Kazakhs?" he asks. When they admit that they are, he claims that the price is 7,000 Euros. The wily tourists haggle him down to a mere € 3,500. If one were keeping score, the Russians won that round. As if in answer, though, the second skit inverted the ethnic Russian/ethnic Kazakh power relationship. A spindly Russian walking down the street bumps into a large, burly Kazakh, presumably in Kazakhstan. Even though the Russian apologizes, the Kazakh grabs him by his shirt collar and tells him, "I'm the wide one here," i.e., "Stay out of my way," in the RMMR melody outlined so far. While the Kazakh (literally) has the upper hand in this interaction, his ultra-tough persona is ridiculed. In comedy, actors amplify stereotypes. In this example and the following two, they exhibit hyper-masculinity through RMMR.

Transcript: "Wide Guy" ("*Shirokii Chelovek*")
Team Astana.kz from Astana, Kazakhstan. Competition in Moscow, 2008.

[*Announcer:*	*A seichas, real'noe sluchai v oblasti*	*And now, a real-life situation in the region*][6]
1 Russian	Oi	Oh

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[6] Transcription conventions:

↗	Rising intonation	::	Lengthening
↘	Falling intonation	*((…))*	Nonverbal action

2		Prostite pozhaluista	Please excuse me
3		Ia 'chas ne—	I didn't—
4		*((Kazakh grabs Russian's neck))*	
5		Izveni-ni	Excuse m—me
6	Kazakh	Ty chto takoe?	What's with you?
7		Shirokii chto li?	Are you wide, or what?
8		Uh?	Huh?
9	Russian	Nye::t↗	No::o
10	Kazakh	Ia takoe shi(rr)okii	I'm just that wide

[lines omitted]

11	Kazakh	*Ia* zdes shirokii	*I'm* the wide one here
12		ponial?	Got it?
13	Russian	Da↘	Yeah
14	Kazakh	Zapomni raz↗	Remember once
		<silence 1 sec>	
15		i vse	And for good
16		*((Kazakh releases Russian's neck, grabs tie and pulls him forward, as if about to toss him across the stage))*　[9 seconds]	
17		Idti	Go

This interaction shows negotiations of interlocutor footing, which Erving Goffman defines as "a participant's alignment, or set, or stance, or projected self…" (1981: 128). The Kazakh, by gripping the Russian's collar and asking him how he managed to "accidentally" bump him, shifts from neutral footing to a dominant stance. The Kazakh barks orders and questions, fully controlling the conversational floor (and the poor Russian's neck!). RMMR, much like the actor's physical moves, enhances the aggression. By and large, the Kazakh overreacts to a minor slight. That's why it's funny. Although the audience laughed at the Kazakh's territorial reaction, they likely recognized that the true object of the parody was Kazakhstan's newfound sovereignty. The skit portrayed Kazakhstan as saying, "This is my

turf!" more like a terrier than a tough guy. Russia, in the figure of a skinny white guy, then

responds, hands metaphorically raised, with "Hey, no problem, take it easy."

"Taxi" and "Wide Guy" punned on power reversals synchronically and diachronically.

They are synchronic in the sense that the dominance structure changed based on whether

characters were in Moscow ("Taxi") or Astana ("Wide Guy"). But the colonial relationship

portrayed in "Taxi," where Kazakhs were visiting minorities, recalls Soviet experience, as

well. This is the diachronic, time-based dimension. The conflicts between characters stand-

in for changing ethnic relations in Kazakhstan and in the broader region.

Russian-Kazakh power relations were inverted yet a third time in another skit in this

routine. In this one, (then) outgoing Russian president Vladimir Putin and Kazakhstani

president Nursultan Nazarbayev sit down for a final meeting. Ego-mongering unfolds

conversationally as Nazarbayev and Putin one-up each other. If Putin is a hard worker, for

example, Nazarbayev never takes time off. The Kazakhstani president zings Putin every time.

The segment below is the third joke in this sequence. After Nazarbayev deflects a jab about

his age, Putin counters by asserting his continued (perhaps eternal?) political authority. He

explains that even though he will no longer be president, he is keeping his old phone number.

That is, his title may be changing but his status is not.

Transcript: Putin vs. Nazarbayev
Team Astana.kz from Astana. Competition in Moscow, 2008.

1	Putin	Vy znaete	You know
2		U menia teper nomer telefona otmenaetsia	My telephone number is changing now
3	Nazarbaev	A kakoi budet?	And what will it be?
4	Putin	Ah—	Uh—
5		A kakom v proshlom zapomnite?	Which one do you remember from before?
6	Nazarbaev	Ah—vosem sem'sot sem'—	Ah—eight seventy-seven—

7	Putin	A vot takoi budet	That's the one it'll be
8		Um hmm	Um hmm

Nazarbayev, then, coolly comes up with a rejoinder:

9	Nazarbayev	A (skinte) pozhaluista chtobi ia sokhranil	Call me, please, so that I can save it *[in my phone]*
10	Putin	A na kakoi nomer?	On what number?
11	Nazarbayev	A na luboi Kazakhstanskii nomer (skinte)	Just dial any Kazakhstani number
12		Mne peredoidut	They'll transfer you to me

If Putin gets to keep his old number, Nazarbayev has control over every phone line in the country. Nazarbaeyv tells Putin, "Call me so that I can save it [in my phone]," forcing Putin to yielding to a request from Nazarbayev. But more crucially, this changes the topic, gives Nazarbayev control of the conversational floor, and lays a discursive trap for Putin. "On what number?" Putin asks, setting up the joke perfectly.

One of the reasons Astana.kz's performance is so successful is because it employs three overlapping temporal frames: (1) the past (2) the present of the skit and (3) the immediate performance space. The team not only plays off of audience reactions, as any performers will, but references one particularly famous person in attendance. At one point in the Putin-Nazarbayev dialogue, Nazarbayev tells Putin that he has a team in the Moscow KVN tournament and asks if he knows anyone there. The TV camera pans from the stage to the audience, then to where the actual President-elect Dmitri Medvedev is sitting, smiling. "Putin" then gets a mock text message from "Medvedev" praising the competition overall but slamming the current skit (their own). "The introductions are running," writes "Medvedev," as Medvedev looks on. "They are playing well. But the last act is dragging a bit." This self-referential, self-depreciatory tactic was yet another way of confounding expectations for comic effect. One expects teams to promote themselves, so they did the opposite. Contrasts drive humor (Raskin 1985; Attardo 2001). The denser the indexical strata, the more

pronounced the disconnect between the world of the joke and the audience's reality, the funnier the skit tends to be. For the same reasons, it is funny for Kazakhstanis to act like Russia's kid brother because it adds an extra contrasting image. Unlike "Wide Guy," characters in the "Taxi" and "Putin vs. Nazarbayev" skits do not use RMMR. But all three skits deal with hegemonic posturing. It is in this context that the affectedly tough Kazakh in "Wide Guy" uses RMMR to assert a dominant stance. The performers, furthermore, make a metapragmatic—though nonreferential—criticism of the type of person imagined to speak RMMR by making the tough guy the butt of their joke.

Astana.kz also used RMMR to comment on Kazakhstan's shifting ethnic balance in an earlier, 2002, performance (KVN 2002). The skit "That's Our Cow" puns on the similarity between the word *kazak*, which means "Cossack," and *kazakh*, or an ethnic Kazakh. This number portrays Kazakhs as ignorant drunks in comparison to Cossacks, who were cavalrymen (and had a reputation for rowdiness themselves). True or not, the Kazakhs' characters are intended to be rough, less cultured, and lower class than that of the Cossacks. The actors signal this with their bodies by slouching, and with their speech by using RMMR.

Transcript: "That's Our Cow"
Team Astana.kz from Astana. Competition in Sochi 2002.

1	MC	tak vse taki	so anyway
2		chem zhe otlichaetsia	what's the difference between
3		kazakhi	Kazakhs
4		ot kazakov?	and Cossaks?
5	Speaker 1	kogda kazak	when a Cossack
6		sedlaet svoego konia	is saddling his horse
7		k nemu podnimaet kazakh	a Kazakh approaches him
8		podpivaet kumis	drinking *kumis*[7]
9		govarit	and says

---

[7] *Kumis* is a Central Asian drink made of fermented horse milk.

10	Kazakh	e-eh	hey
11		mezhdu vprochim eto nasha korova	at any rate that's our cow
12		I my ee doim	and we milk it

(KVN 2002)

Figure 25: "Our Cow" pitch tracks

"hey"

"at any rate that's our cow"
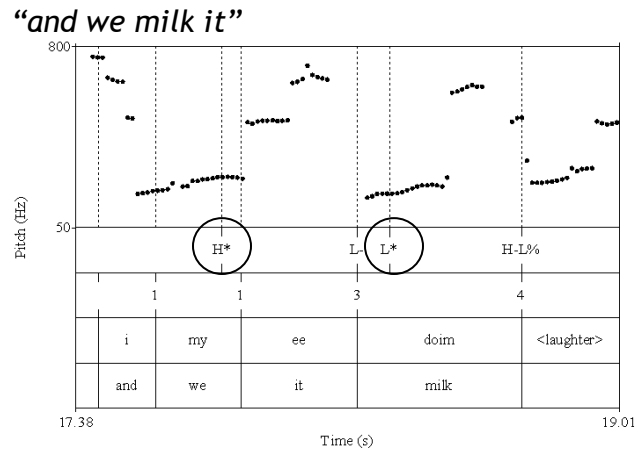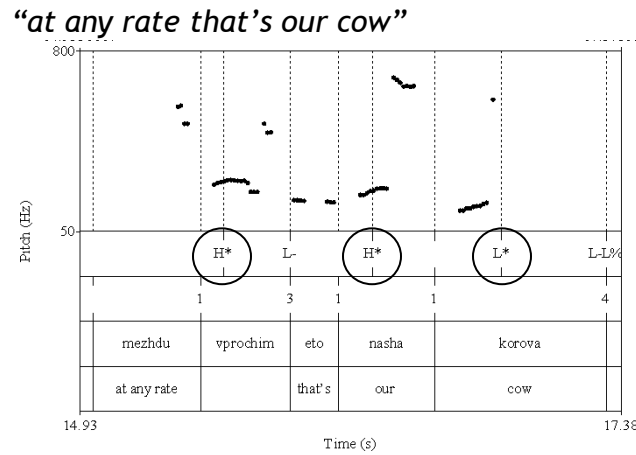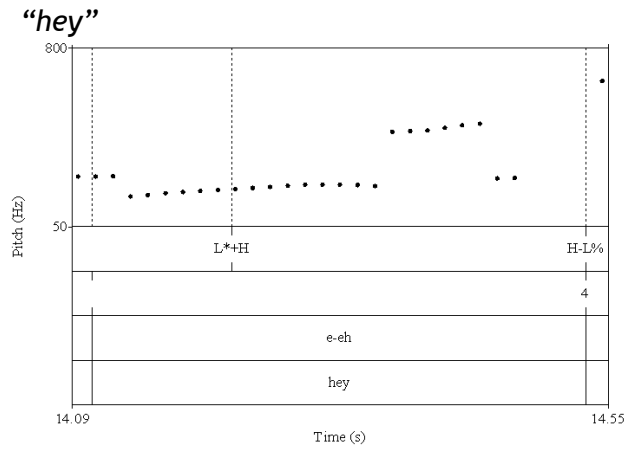
"and we milk it"

The punchline, "At any rate that's our cow. And we milk it" comes from the gangster series *Lethal Force* (*Uboinaia Sila*), in a scene which features rival gang members facing off. The "cow" in question is turf. In the skit, the Kazakhs challenge the Cossack's ownership of the horse. The fact that this phrase is from a gangster show lends support to the interpretation of RMMR's indexical linkages with exaggerated, non-normative masculinity. Denotationally, the Kazakh is making a property claim (to his "cow"). It is certainly an authoritative move, but the speaker is a clown.

In an interesting reversal, *women* use RMMR in a 2009 skit by the team "Malina" from Krasnoyarsk. The scene takes place in the industrial town of Ivanovo, where men are apocryphally in short supply (KVN 2009). The humor of the entire skit hinges on the fact that women are acting, uncharacteristically, like predatory men. "Do you want me?" one says to a scared looking young man. He says no, backing away. The women close in, though, continuing to bully the guy in exaggerated RMMR. The contrast between their "female" appearances and "male" behavior is achieved almost exclusively through their speech.

Figure 26: "Ivanovo" pitch tracks

"and what if I find some?"

"one more time, do you have desire?"
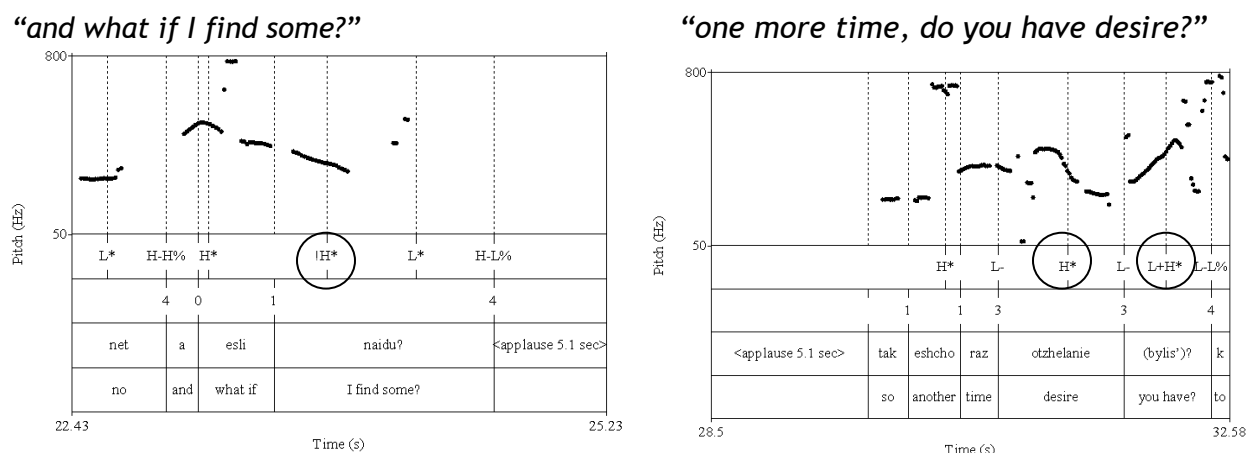
Transcript: "Ivanovo"
Team "Malina," from Krasnoyarsk. KVN competition in Sochi, 2009.

1	MC	kriminal'nyi raion	criminal neighborhood
2		v gorode Ivanovo	in the city of Ivanovo

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3	Leader	eh patsanchik	hey boy
4		idti siuda::a	come here
5	Guy	ch-chto?	wh-what?
6	Leader	khochish menia?	do you want me?
7	Guy	(gulp)	
8		v smisle?	in what sense?
9	Leader	ia govariu,	I mean,
10		zhelanie est'?	do you have desire?
11	Guy	*((shakes head))*	
12		nye::et	nooo
13	Leader	a esli ia naidu::?	and what if I find some? (KVN 2009)

If the genders had been reversed, with a pack of men chasing down a young, unwilling woman, the skit would not have been any more funny than CSI. The potential for sexual violence was rendered humorous because the skit trades on an apparent logical contradiction—that women can't assault men. This example suggests that RMMR is, in fact, linked to male identity categories and is not simply a gender neutral way of projecting authority, such as raising one's voice, controlling the conversational floor, or interrupting.

Here, as in "Wide Guy" and "Our Cow," RMMR signals aspirational power rather than actual authority. It operates like a linguistic dunce cap, the prosodic equivalent of gold chains and a bejeweled dental grill.

Since the characters of both a youth leader of the proletariat and a common gangster use RMMR, it would be inaccurate to equate the register with low-class or thug-like stereotypes. Instead, RMMR is a stance-taking measure (Goffman 1967), like speaking legalese to intimidate someone or feigning ignorance to build conversational rapport. It indexes a toughness delinked from either occupation or class. While post-Soviet media representations of the social locations of those using RMMR shifts—from farm *muzhik* (bloke) to *biznesmen*,

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from factory worker to banker—it gleans its macho authority from a central civilized/savage, rude/refined distinction (Levi-Strauss 1975 [1964]). In RMMR as in African-American English, however, popular associations of speech style with aggression can slide into stereotypes of stupidity and brutality. Perceived roughness lends interactional punch. But this also leaves it open to ridicule in comedy performances.

The RMMR examples described here exhibit consistent features. Above all, RMMR is rhythmically marked. More precisely, all of the selections I've identified as RMMR have a higher ratio of focused syllables per intonation unit than Standard Modern Russian. The strongest example of the register is the monologue from *The Brother,* with a focused accent to IP ratio of 0.63. The highest ratios occur in the Young Pioneer excerpt, "Ivanovo," and "Our Cow." That said, the selections from Vladimir Putin and the "Wide Guy" skit have the same ratio (0.40). Their rhythmic patterns, though, are quite different. The Kazakh in "Wide Guy" does not let more than eight syllables go by without focus prosody. Putin speaks for long stretches without adding special emphasis. In fact, the selection presented here was excerpted from a largely unemphatic hour-long speech, and the ratio drops off sharply if a longer sample is taken. So the proportion of focused words will not signal RMMR on its own; metrical placement matters.

Figure 27: Ratios of Pitch Accents to IPs and Focused Accents to IPs Across Speakers
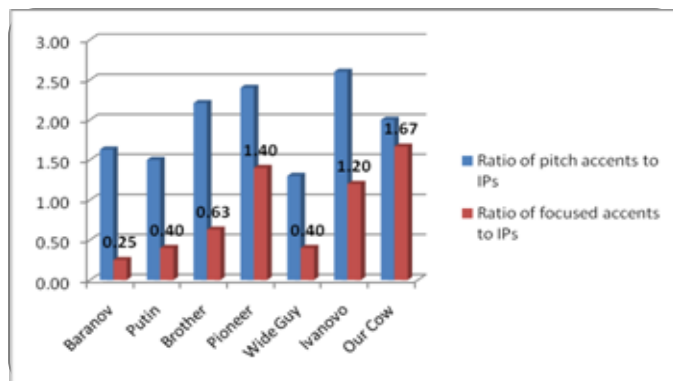
7 Language Ideologies Surrounding RMMR

The jokes in the KVN skits both referenced real displays of dominance and served as

political statements in their own right. In other performances, Bulgarian teams waved national flags and dressed in traditional costumes. Ukrainians made pipeline jokes, since Russia routinely hikes up natural gas prices and threatens to cut off supplies if they don't agree to new terms. Such antics are hilarious during Eastern European winters. Astana.kz's skits parodied, in telescoped form, the kinds of hegemonic power plays made every day. The team took a public stance on foreign relations, framing and articulating a particular relationship with Russia. In a darker take on the naïve country bumpkin theme of "Taxi," in the fourth skit of Astana.kz's 2008 routine a young Kazakh woman who thinks she's auditioning for the reality TV show *House 2* (*Dom 2*) ends up in a Moscow house of ill repute instead (KVN 2008). Human trafficking is only one of the ancillary tragedies created by postsocialist economic disparity.

If a bit acerbic, none of the jokes were vicious. And most (wisely) made Kazakhstanis look foolish rather than Russians. Self-depreciation is far more diplomatic than Other-bashing, especially if the Other in question is hosting the competition you're in and contributes a great deal of the foreign investment in your homeland. Callous, self-interested considerations aside, a genuine sense of joint cultural heritage may have driven the friendly tone. Astana.kz's act opens with a Kazakh saying, "Well, neighbors, let's on with the humor!" (*"Nu chto sosedi, lovite iumor!"*). Whatever frictions might exist between Kazakhstan, Russia, and the other Soviet-bloc countries, they still have quite a bit more in common with each other—culturally, economically, and politically—than any of them do with Europe, Asia, or the Americas. Just like the Soviet nostalgia show *Old Songs About the Most Important* (*Starye pesni o glavnom*), KVN acts rely on shared pop cultural and ideological knowledge (cf. Oushakine 2007). Even taking cracks at each other serves to shore up the imagined community of post-Soviet space (Anderson 2006 [1983]).

In these performances, the ideas of masculinity indexed by RMMR are bound up in

language ideology, which is the notion that "linguistic features are seen as reflecting and expressing broader cultural images of people and activities" (Irvine and Gal 2000:37). These skits illustrate all three semiotic processes comprising language ideology: iconization, fractal recursion, and erasure (Irvine and Gal 2000: 37-39). In iconization, a linguistic feature comes to stand in for an entire sociological category of people. That feature, here, is the RMMR intonational melody. Fractal recursivity refers to a process in which labels get projected onto smaller and smaller sets of interactions. Just as a geometric fractal can be divided into endless identical replicas of itself, a structural opposition can be recursed to infinitesimal social moments. In "Our Cow," the same anchoring civilized/savage opposition which was applied to Russians and Kazakh bumpkins in "Taxi" gets scaled down, this time projected onto differences between ethnic Russians (Cossacks) and Kazakhs within Kazakhstan (cf. Gal 2005). The Cossack is the "civilized" individual in that interaction, while the *kumis*-guzzling, RMMR-speaking Kazakhs correspond to "savages." The same distinction could separate more "cultured" Kazakhs from others, or rural people from city dwellers.

The third process, erasure, is selective omission. This is the unstated information that nonetheless structures the said. Tensions between Russia and Kazakhstan never had to be explicitly talked about. They were the backdrop, though, to the humor in Astana.kz's skits.

Structural lines between the categories presented here continually cross and re-cross each other, building inversions upon inversions in these performances. Within the course of Astana.kz's 2008 performance, the Russian/Kazakh balance of power switched three times. The team pinned oppositions between Kazakhs/Russians, history/the present, and theater/reality on a delightfully shifting performative framework. However, the central line between civilized and savage organized oppositions between time (present/Soviet), space (Russia/Kazakhstan), nation (Soviet/Russian/Kazakh), and ethnicity (Russian/Kazakh). The Kazakh Wide Guy was a bully. The taxi driver came off as a con-artist. Nazarbayev held his

own. People laugh because these are surprising reversals. Ethnic oppositions flipped from skit to skit across time and space. At each level of the diagram below, the term on the left was hegemonic. The lower-status, aggressive characters are on the right.

Unmarked category   **Marked category**

ethnic Russians ———————————— *ethnic Kazakhs*   (Past: Soviet era norms)

ethnic Kazakhs ———————————— *ethnic Russian*   (Present: Moscow—"Taxi" skit)

ethnic Russians ———————————— *ethnic Kazakhs*   (Present: Kazakhstan—"Wide Guy" skit)

   Agha writes that, "An individual can trope upon a register formation in any way he or she pleases. But its interpersonal effects depend on matters of uptake and response" (2007: 171). The fact that there is uptake, response, and parody of RMMR in Russian language sketch comedy proves that its linguistic attributes invoke social personae. The fact that it is recognizable enough to be parodied—and by women—indicates that RMMR is a real speech phenomenon. When comedians parody RMMR, it is in the context of making fun of macho men, just as "Valley Girl Speech" can be used to ridicule certain kinds of feminine expression. Valley Girl speech is characterized by whiny intonation, nonstandard end stress patterns, and profligate use of the lexical items "like" and "what*ever*." This is an appropriate and expected speech register in some contexts, but one cannot imagine Justice Sotomayor delivering opinions in this style. Similarly, RMMR is a socially meaningful register, but one that carries gendered connotations. As the Young Pioneers example proves, though, RMMR is not just about machismo, per se. It reflects masculine stance-taking.

   RMMR tends to occur when differential status is relevant to the interaction, although this does not mean that the one claiming higher rank actually has it. Its significance would vary, though, by the time period in which it was used. There were no ultra-rich gangsters in the Soviet Union—at least not in the movies—but RMMR certainly existed in the Soviet era (and perhaps much longer). Future research could compare the prosodic characteristics of

RMMR to Old Church Slavonic and Russian peasant dialects. If they were similar, it might indicate that RMMR does not index machismo as much as it does *muzhik,* a Russian word whose closest English translation is "bloke." *Muzhik* refers to a male peasant, but its root is the word for man. Now it denotes someone who is rural and uncultured, yet intensely masculine. While contemporary usage retains many of the indexical meanings of the past—be they links to Ancient Rus' or the Communist Party—new ones are undoubtedly, constantly, and unpredictably layered atop them.

Both strait-laced and satirical, the characters who voiced RMMR all asserted dominance—usually unsuccessfully, often to hilarious effect. The prosodic characteristics outlined here metaphorically mark interactants as masculine and less so, powerful and subordinate. In *Cheburashka* and *Brat* macho characters are leaders. In KVN they are fools. In all cases, though, RMMR's social traction comes from a common understanding of the register as a conversational move. That a given pattern of sound and sentence structure exists in Russian is trivial. But like a tattoo or a wedding band, RMMR is an accessory with interpersonal implications. Sounds are symbols, too.

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