

UDC 811.51, 81'342.4

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PITCH CONTOUR IN FRAME STRUCTURES WITH IMPERATIVE MEANING IN THE EVENKI LANGUAGE

Abstract

The present study aims at studying the peculiarities of pitch contour in frame structures with the imperative meaning in the Selemdzha local accent of the Evenki language. The results of the acoustic study showed that these structures are characterized by the general pitch declination. A consistent feature of imperative intonation is a high onset, followed by tone lowering to a minimum level at the end of the structure. The acoustic study did not find any proof for pitch accent in the Evenki language. One and the same word could be pronounced with different pitch directions depending on a particular location in the syntagma – structure-initial, structure-internal and structure-final. This finding indicates that changing the pitch contour in the Evenki language does not change the meaning of words, as it happens in tonal languages of Southeast Asia, Africa and America. Therefore, any pitch direction change (no matter declination or inclination type) can be considered as a probable correlate of word stress.

Keywords: pitch contour, imperative sentence, acoustic features, inclination, declination, the Evenki language.

doi: 10.22250/2410 7190_2018_4_4_115_126