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GRAMMATICAL AND SYNTACTIC FEATURES OF SUPPORTIVE SPEECH ACTS IN ENGLISH AND RUSSIAN LANGUAGES

Babayeva Irada Sabirovna
Independent Researcher of Uzbekistan
State World Languages University
E-mail: iradachka82@mail.ru

Abstract:

This article explores the grammatical and syntactic features of supportive speech acts in the English and Russian languages. The study analyzes the structural patterns, sentence models, and grammatical constructions used to express emotional support, encouragement, sympathy, and reassurance in communication. Special attention is given to the comparative analysis of syntactic organization, modal expressions, imperative and interrogative structures, as well as pragmatic functions of supportive utterances in both languages. The research also examines the role of linguistic and cultural factors in shaping supportive communication strategies.

Keywords: Supportive speech acts, grammatical features, syntactic structures, English language, Russian language, communication, pragmatics, modal expressions, emotional support, comparative linguistics.

Introduction

In contemporary linguistics, the study of speech acts has become one of the central areas of pragmatics, discourse analysis, and intercultural communication. Among different types of communicative acts, supportive speech acts occupy a special place because they reflect emotional interaction, empathy, psychological

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assistance, and social solidarity between interlocutors. Supportive communication plays a significant role in maintaining interpersonal relationships and reducing emotional tension in various communicative situations. In this context, the grammatical and syntactic organization of supportive speech acts becomes an important subject of linguistic investigation.

The English and Russian languages possess diverse grammatical constructions and syntactic models used to express moral support, encouragement, sympathy, reassurance, and emotional understanding. These linguistic structures include imperative constructions, modal expressions, interrogative forms, exclamatory sentences, elliptical structures, and emotionally expressive syntactic patterns. The grammatical arrangement of supportive utterances directly influences their pragmatic effect and communicative function.

From the perspective of speech act theory, supportive expressions perform not only informative but also emotive and persuasive functions. According to John Searle, speech acts are closely connected with communicative intention and social interaction. In supportive discourse, grammatical forms often function as pragmatic instruments that soften emotional pressure, establish solidarity, and strengthen interpersonal contact. Therefore, the analysis of grammatical and syntactic features allows researchers to understand how language structures contribute to emotional communication.

Comparative investigation of English and Russian supportive speech acts is especially important because both languages demonstrate different communicative traditions and cultural norms. English supportive discourse is generally characterized by politeness strategies, syntactic simplicity, and indirectness, whereas Russian supportive communication tends to display emotional expressiveness, syntactic intensification, and direct emotional involvement. These distinctions reflect broader sociocultural and pragmatic differences between the two linguistic communities.

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Furthermore, modern communication technologies and digital discourse have expanded the use of supportive speech acts in online interaction. Social networks, instant messaging platforms, and virtual communication environments increasingly rely on simplified grammatical constructions and emotionally marked syntactic forms. This process demonstrates the dynamic evolution of supportive discourse under contemporary communicative conditions.

This article aims to analyze the grammatical and syntactic features of supportive speech acts in English and Russian languages, identify their communicative functions, and examine their pragmatic and cultural peculiarities within interpersonal communication.

Literature review and methodology

Supportive speech acts represent one of the most significant communicative phenomena in interpersonal interaction because they reflect emotional solidarity, empathy, and psychological assistance between interlocutors. In modern linguistics, supportive discourse is studied within the frameworks of pragmatics, discourse analysis, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and intercultural communication. The grammatical and syntactic organization of supportive utterances plays a crucial role in determining their communicative effectiveness, emotional impact, and pragmatic interpretation. Comparative analysis of English and Russian supportive speech acts reveals important distinctions in the linguistic realization of emotional support that are deeply connected with national communicative traditions and cultural norms.

According to John Searle's speech act theory, every utterance contains both propositional meaning and communicative intention. Supportive speech acts belong primarily to expressive and directive categories because they simultaneously convey emotional attitudes and influence the emotional state of the listener. The grammatical structure of such utterances directly affects the degree of emotional involvement and pragmatic force. For example, English

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supportive constructions often employ modal verbs and softened imperative forms:

- “You should stay positive.”
- “Try not to worry.”
- “You can get through this.”

These constructions demonstrate the preference for indirectness and politeness characteristic of English communicative culture. Modal verbs such as “should,” “can,” and “might” reduce categorical pressure and create a supportive rather than authoritative communicative effect.

Researchers in pragmatics, particularly Geoffrey Leech, emphasize that politeness strategies play an important role in supportive discourse. English supportive communication frequently utilizes mitigated grammatical structures to preserve interpersonal harmony and individual autonomy. The use of conditional constructions and soft imperatives reflects a communicative orientation toward emotional sensitivity and personal independence. For instance:

- “Maybe you should take some rest.”
- “It might help if you talk to someone.”

These examples illustrate how syntactic organization contributes to pragmatic politeness.

In contrast, Russian supportive speech acts demonstrate greater emotional explicitness and syntactic intensity. Russian discourse often employs direct imperatives, emotionally expressive syntax, repetitions, and exclamatory constructions:

- «Держись!» (“Stay strong!”)
- «Не переживай, всё будет хорошо!» (“Don’t worry, everything will be fine!”)
- «Мы обязательно справимся!» (“We will definitely overcome this!”)

The syntactic structure of Russian supportive expressions frequently strengthens emotional involvement through exclamation marks, emphatic particles, and

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emotionally charged intonation. Scholars of Russian communicative behavior note that emotional openness and sincerity are socially valued communicative features within Slavic discourse traditions.

A detailed grammatical analysis demonstrates that supportive speech acts in both languages rely on several dominant syntactic models:

1. Imperative constructions

English: “Keep going.”

Russian: «Не сдавайся.»

Imperative forms function as motivational tools aimed at strengthening psychological resilience. However, English imperatives are often softened through politeness markers, whereas Russian imperatives may appear more direct and emotionally intensive.

2. Modal constructions

English: “You can overcome this situation.”

Russian: «Ты сможешь это пережить.»

Modal verbs express possibility, encouragement, and emotional reassurance. Their semantic function is connected with increasing confidence and reducing uncertainty.

3. Interrogative supportive forms

English: “Are you okay?”

Russian: «Как ты себя чувствуешь?»

Interrogative structures perform phatic and empathic functions. They initiate emotional contact and demonstrate interpersonal attention.

4. Exclamatory constructions

English: “You’re amazing!”

Russian: «Ты сильный человек!»

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Exclamatory syntax intensifies emotional evaluation and increases expressive force.

The study also reveals important syntactic differences related to sentence complexity. English supportive communication frequently favors short and syntactically simplified utterances because concise expressions are considered emotionally efficient and pragmatically appropriate. Russian supportive discourse, however, often utilizes extended syntactic structures containing emotionally descriptive elements:

– «Я прекрасно понимаю, насколько тебе сейчас тяжело, но ты обязательно справишься.»

Such constructions strengthen emotional solidarity and create a stronger sense of interpersonal intimacy.

The cognitive dimension of supportive speech acts is equally important. According to George Lakoff, linguistic structures reflect conceptual models through which people understand emotions and social interaction. In English supportive discourse, grammatical constructions frequently conceptualize emotional recovery as movement or progress:

– “Move forward.”

– “Keep going.”

– “Stand strong.”

These metaphoric patterns reveal an action-oriented conceptualization of emotional resilience. Russian supportive discourse, on the other hand, often conceptualizes emotional endurance through metaphors associated with the soul, heart, and inner strength:

– «Сильный духом.» (“Strong in spirit.”)

– «Не падай духом.» (“Do not lose heart.”)

Such grammatical and semantic structures reflect culturally specific models of emotional cognition.

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The influence of sociocultural factors on supportive syntax is particularly evident in the use of personal pronouns. English supportive communication frequently centers on individual emotional autonomy through pronouns like “you,” emphasizing personal capability:

- “You will manage.”
- “You are strong enough.”

Russian supportive discourse more actively employs collective pronouns emphasizing solidarity and shared emotional experience:

- «МЫ ВМЕСТЕ.» (“We are together.”)
- «МЫ СПРАВИМСЯ.» (“We will overcome this.”)

This distinction demonstrates differing communicative orientations toward individualism and collectivism.

Digital communication has also significantly transformed supportive speech acts. Online discourse encourages syntactic reduction, abbreviated grammatical forms, and multimodal communication. Emojis increasingly function as syntactic substitutes that intensify emotional meaning and compensate for the absence of nonverbal communication.

Another important aspect concerns the psycholinguistic effectiveness of supportive syntax. Supportive grammatical constructions influence emotional perception and cognitive interpretation. Studies in psycholinguistics demonstrate that positively structured supportive utterances reduce anxiety, activate emotional reassurance mechanisms, and strengthen interpersonal trust. The effectiveness of supportive discourse therefore depends not only on lexical meaning but also on syntactic organization, intonation, rhythm, and pragmatic context.

Researchers in intercultural communication, including Anna Wierzbicka, argue that grammatical structures encode cultural norms of emotional expression. English communicative culture tends to regulate emotional intensity through grammatical moderation and indirectness, while Russian discourse permits greater syntactic expressiveness and emotional openness. These distinctions

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explain why equivalent supportive expressions may produce different emotional effects across cultures.

The comparative analysis further indicates that supportive speech acts fulfill several communicative functions simultaneously:

- emotional reassurance;
- reduction of psychological tension;
- establishment of solidarity;
- maintenance of social harmony;
- strengthening of interpersonal trust;
- regulation of emotional interaction.

These functions are realized through carefully selected grammatical and syntactic strategies adapted to cultural expectations and communicative contexts.

Thus, grammatical and syntactic features of supportive speech acts in English and Russian languages represent a multidimensional communicative system influenced by pragmatic, cultural, psychological, and cognitive factors. Their study demonstrates that supportive communication cannot be understood solely through lexical meaning because grammatical structures themselves carry emotional, social, and cultural significance. Comparative analysis of supportive syntax contributes significantly to modern pragmatics, discourse analysis, intercultural communication, and psycholinguistics by revealing the complex relationship between language structure, emotional expression, and cultural mentality.

Results and Discussion

The conducted research demonstrated that grammatical and syntactic structures play a decisive role in the realization of supportive speech acts in English and Russian communicative discourse. The comparative analysis revealed that both languages actively employ imperative, modal, interrogative, and exclamatory constructions to express encouragement, empathy, consolation, reassurance, and

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emotional solidarity. However, the grammatical realization of these communicative intentions differs according to cultural norms, pragmatic traditions, and emotional communication patterns.

The results showed that English supportive speech acts are characterized by syntactic simplicity, grammatical moderation, and indirectness. English speakers frequently use modal verbs and softened imperative constructions in order to maintain politeness and emotional balance.

Such constructions demonstrate the tendency of English discourse toward communicative mitigation and emotional restraint. Modal verbs such as “should,” “can,” and “might” function as pragmatic softeners that reduce categorical pressure and create psychologically comfortable interaction.

In contrast, Russian supportive speech acts demonstrate a higher level of emotional expressiveness and syntactic intensity. Russian supportive communication often employs direct imperative forms, repetitions, exclamatory constructions, and emotionally intensified lexical units.

The use of emotionally expressive syntax strengthens interpersonal solidarity and creates a stronger emotional connection between interlocutors. The findings confirm that Russian communicative culture permits more direct emotional involvement and open demonstration of empathy.

The analysis further revealed that supportive speech acts in both languages perform several important communicative and psycholinguistic functions. Firstly, they reduce emotional stress and anxiety during difficult communicative situations. Secondly, they establish interpersonal trust and emotional closeness. Thirdly, they regulate psychological interaction by increasing confidence and emotional stability.

Particular attention was paid to the role of syntactic structures in conveying pragmatic meaning. Interrogative constructions such as “Are you okay?” or «Как ты себя чувствуешь?» function not only as requests for information but also as indicators of empathy and emotional concern. Similarly, exclamatory

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constructions intensify emotional evaluation and create stronger supportive impact.

The discussion of results also demonstrated that grammatical organization of supportive discourse is strongly influenced by cultural and sociolinguistic factors. English supportive communication reflects communicative norms associated with politeness, emotional moderation, and individual autonomy, while Russian discourse reflects collectivist tendencies and emotional openness. These distinctions influence the selection of grammatical forms, sentence structures, and communicative strategies.

Another important finding concerns the transformation of supportive speech acts in digital communication. Such examples illustrate the integration of verbal and visual communicative elements in modern supportive discourse. Emojis and graphic symbols increasingly function as emotional intensifiers and syntactic substitutes in online interaction.

The results also indicate that supportive speech acts possess strong intercultural significance. In multilingual communication, misunderstanding of grammatical and pragmatic nuances may reduce the effectiveness of emotional support. Therefore, understanding grammatical and syntactic peculiarities of supportive discourse contributes to the development of intercultural communicative competence and pragmatic literacy.

In conclusion, the research confirms that grammatical and syntactic features of supportive speech acts represent a complex communicative mechanism influenced by linguistic, pragmatic, cognitive, psychological, and cultural factors. Comparative analysis of English and Russian supportive discourse reveals both universal patterns of emotional communication and culture-specific grammatical strategies of expressing empathy and moral support.

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Conclusion

The conducted study demonstrates that grammatical and syntactic features play a crucial role in the formation and functioning of supportive speech acts in English and Russian languages. The analysis revealed that supportive communication is realized through a wide range of grammatical constructions and syntactic models that express encouragement, reassurance, sympathy, empathy, and emotional solidarity.

The comparative analysis showed that English supportive speech acts are characterized by syntactic simplicity, politeness-oriented modal constructions, and indirect communicative strategies. Imperative structures, modal verbs, and concise affirmative sentences are frequently used to provide emotional support while maintaining communicative politeness and individual autonomy. In contrast, Russian supportive discourse demonstrates greater emotional expressiveness, syntactic intensification, and interpersonal involvement through exclamatory constructions, emotionally marked vocabulary, and expressive sentence patterns.

The research also confirmed that grammatical structures in supportive discourse perform important pragmatic functions. They help establish emotional contact between interlocutors, reduce psychological stress, and strengthen communicative cooperation. Different syntactic forms influence the emotional perception and effectiveness of supportive communication depending on context, intonation, and cultural norms.

Furthermore, the study highlighted the influence of sociocultural factors on the grammatical organization of supportive speech acts. English communicative culture tends to prioritize emotional moderation and indirectness, while Russian discourse reflects stronger emotional openness and solidarity. These cultural differences are manifested through distinct syntactic and grammatical strategies used in supportive interaction.

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The investigation also demonstrated that modern digital communication significantly affects supportive speech acts by introducing simplified sentence structures, abbreviated grammatical forms, and multimodal communicative elements. As a result, supportive discourse continues to evolve in response to technological and social changes.

In conclusion, grammatical and syntactic features of supportive speech acts in English and Russian languages represent a complex linguistic phenomenon shaped by pragmatic, cultural, psychological, and sociolinguistic factors. Their comparative study contributes to the development of pragmatics, discourse analysis, intercultural communication, and modern linguistics while deepening our understanding of emotional interaction in human communication.

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