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Comparative Characteristics of Verb Moods in Russian And English Languages

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Abstract: The article explores the grammatical category of verb mood in Russian and English from a comparative linguistic perspective. It provides an analysis of the forms and means of expressing the indicative, imperative, and subjunctive moods. The study identifies similarities and differences in the structure and function of moods in both languages. Special attention is given to the morphological and syntactic mechanisms of expressing modality, as well as the challenges faced by language learners.

Keywords: Verb, mood, indicative, imperative, subjunctive, modality, comparative linguistics, Russian language, English language, grammatical category.

Introduction: The grammatical category of mood occupies an important place in the system of verb forms in both Russian and English. It reflects the speaker's attitude to the action: reality, possibility, desirability or necessity of its implementation. Despite the general functional orientation, the realization of the category of mood in these two languages differs in formal, semantic and syntactic features. The purpose of this article is to conduct a comparative analysis of verb moods in Russian and English, to identify their common and distinctive features.

The mood category is related to modal-grammatical categories and expresses the relation of an action to reality. In traditional grammar, three main moods are distinguished:

Indicative - the action actually occurs, has occurred, or will occur.

Imperative - expresses an order, request, or advice.

Conditional / subjunctive - the action has not occurred, but is possible under certain conditions.

In Russian, mood is expressed morphologically, i.e. with the help of suffixes, particles and verb forms. In

English, mood is largely expressed syntactically and relies on auxiliary verbs, modal constructions and context.

The system of moods in the Russian language

Mood	Example	Means of expression
Indicative	He is writing a letter	Personal ending, tense
Conditional	He would write a letter	Particle would, past tense
Imperative	Write a letter!	Imperative form

The indicative mood expresses real actions and has forms of the present, past and future tenses.

The conditional mood (subjunctive) is formed using the particle *бы* and the past tense form: If he had come,

we would have started.

The imperative mood is used to express will: Tell me the truth!

The system of moods in English

Mood	Example	Means of expression
Indicative	He writes a letter	Simple form, tenses
Imperative	Write a letter !	Base form of the verb
Subjunctive I	I suggest that he write a letter.	The construction of the type "that + be bare infinitive"
Subjunctive II	If he were here...	Special form of the verb (were instead of was)

The English mood includes:

Indicative - used to describe real events.

Imperative - expresses a command or request.

Subjunctive - exists in two forms:

Subjunctive I (formal style, especially in American English): It is essential that he be informed.

Subjunctive II (conditional constructions and expression of unreality): If I were you...

Examples for comparison

Indicative mood:

Russian: Он женат в туе.

English: She studies at the university.

Imperative mood:

Russian: Закрой окно!

English: Close the window!

Conditional/subjunctive mood:

Russian: И нас мне мне не как мне.

English: If I had known, I would have come

Translation and learning difficulties

Due to differences in grammatical structure, mood categories cause difficulties for learners of both languages. Russian-speaking students often miss the features of subjunctive mood in English, especially in formal contexts. At the same time, English-speaking students have difficulty with the correct use of the particle and imperative forms in Russian.

Thus, despite the functional similarity, the realization of moods in Russian and English differs significantly. Russian predominantly uses morphological means of expression, while English uses syntactic and auxiliary constructions. Understanding these differences is important for both theoretical linguistics and the practice of teaching foreign languages.

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