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Phrases of praise and encouragement in the comments on the Internet

Фразы похвалы и поощрения в комментариях в интернете

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Introduction

Words are a powerful means to influence people's opinion, thoughts and mood. They do more than just convey information but they create a reaction and can affect other people around us. By words people can send a message of value, respect and appreciation or disrespect, discouragement and de-motivation. Words are tools. They can bridge differences and inspire dreams.

One of the most powerful means of communication is praise and encouragement. Effective praise can raise someone's performance. At the same time, wrong praise at the wrong time, in the wrong manner, can be worse than useless.

Nowadays the most of communication goes on the Internet which has broken the boundaries and brought people together by means of different networks, Internet communities and websites where people share their opinions on different issues. People comment on everything.

As we all can see the majority of comments appear to be in English. People really enjoy participating in exchanging opinions on the Internet but the main concern is whether the comments sound non-offensive and friendly, and whether they fully reflect the message people intend to express. And it's surprising how people really manage to build up correct phrases and how they choose the right means to express their attitudes.

This facts cause lots of curiosity and explain the choice of our research. It aims at studying the phrases of praise and encouragement in the comments to different reality shows, contests and videos in order to see how people comment.

The **urgency** of the research is determined by underestimation of phrases of praise and encouragement in the English language as not only one of the best means

of evaluating people and their achievements, but also as the best means to learn the English language through its most dynamically changing style - informal, or spoken. The urgency is also introduced by the results of the survey (APPENDIX A) which has been aimed to examine students' knowledge and skills to use phrases of praise and encouragement in their comments.

The phenomenon of praise and encouragement has already been studied and researched. We've found some useful theory in the works of N.A. Bigunova, Mike Myatt, William Huitt, Jane Nelsen, and others. But there are still plenty of things for us to clarify and to prove. For instance, there's none or little research among non-native learners of English about the modern phrases of praise and encouragement in the comments for different videos or reality shows on the Internet as they display the modern spoken English and the changes in it.

In the course of our research work we are going to study the phrases of praise and encouragement in the comments from different prospects: psychology, stylistics, their differences in meaning and structure. The above mentioned phrases will be put into groups according to different criteria. It will be introduced by the results of the survey in the appendix.

The **novelty** of the research topic is that we have searched and analysed the most frequently used and the most modern words and phrases of praise and encouragement through the comments on the Internet.

The work **purpose** is to study the phrases of praise and encouragement in the comments to different videos, to group them according to the classification, and also to show if they are the best means to learn the spoken English language.

The research tasks are to:

- to examine praise and encouragement as means of communication;
- to study the phrases of praise and encouragement in the English language;
- to explore specific features of phrases of praise and encouragement in the comments on the Internet;

- to prove that the phrases of praise and encouragement in the comments on the Internet are the best means of learning the spoken English language.

The research **hypothesis** can be formulated as follows. We suppose that phrases of praise and encouragement in the comments on the Internet are the best means to learn how to praise and encourage using the spoken English language.

The **subject** of the research is the peculiarities of using the phrases of praise and encouragement in the spoken English language.

The research **object** is the most commonly used English phrases of praise and encouragement in the comments on the Internet.

The research **material** was taken from the articles on psychology, linguistics and stylistics, and also from the comments to such contests as “Britain’s got talent”, “X-Factor”, “American Idol”, “the Voice”, “World of Dance” on “You Tube” video-hosting website.

The **methods** of survey, observation, structural and semantic description, analysis of vocabulary definitions, quantitative analysis were used in the current research.

The research results can be practically used by the non-native learners of English to enrich their vocabulary and to participate in the Internet debates, as well as by teachers of the English language in their daily work to praise and encourage students, or to teach them the modern spoken language used on the Internet.

1. Phrases of praise and encouragement in the English language

1.1. Praise and encouragement as means of communication

Praise and encouragement are one of the main means of communication in different spheres of our everyday life: working, teaching, learning, or just sharing opinions with other people. They are both used to evaluate and reward.

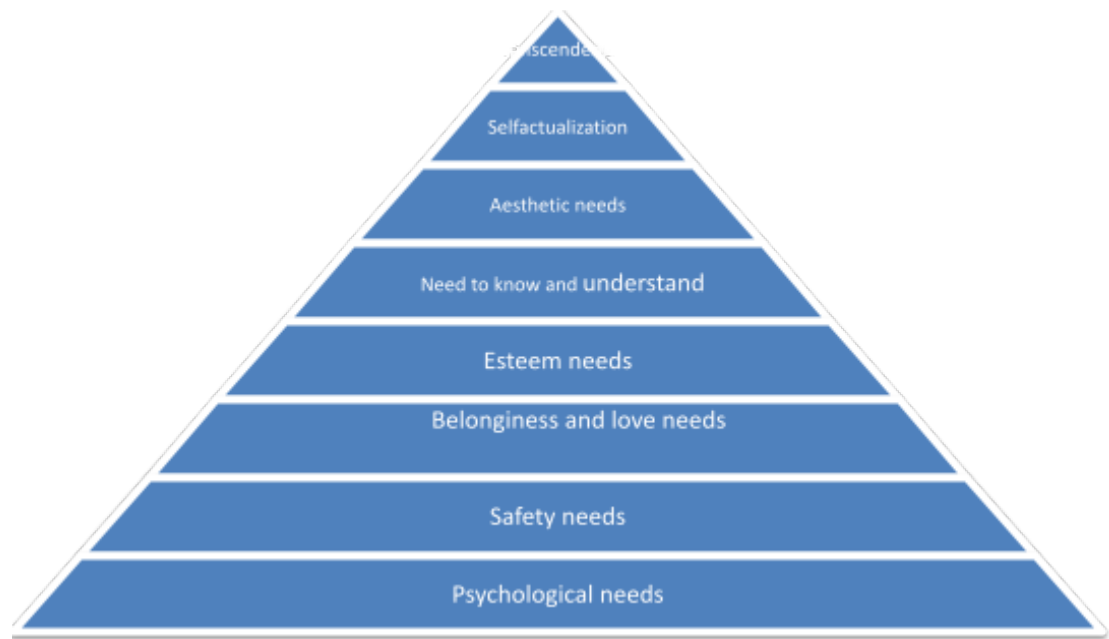
Longman dictionary of contemporary English gives the following definitions:

‘to encourage’ 1. to say or do something that helps someone have the courage or confidence to do something; 2. to make something more likely to happen or make people more likely to do something.[4, p.451]

‘to praise’ 1. to say that you admire and approve of someone or something, especially publicly; 2. to give thanks to God or show respect to him. especially by singing in a church.[4, p.1105]

Let us first see if people really need someone’s opinion about their achievements, and if they also need being motivated. Firstly, we start with the need of every person to be praised.

We have studied the article “Motivation to Learn: An Overview” by W. Huitt and have found the proof that people need to be praised. For example, one of the leading scientist and psychologist Abraham Maslow posited a hierarchy of human needs based on two groupings: deficiency needs and growth needs:



The first four levels are deficiency levels, but the rest are the growth needs:

- 1) Psychological: hunger, thirst, bodily comforts;
- 2) Safety/ security: out of danger;
- 3) Belonginess and love: affiliate with others, be accepted;
- 4) Esteem: to achieve, to compete, to gain approval and recognition;
- 5) Cognitive: to know, to understand and to explore;
- 6) Aesthetic: symmetry, order and beauty;
- 7) Self-actualization: to find self-fulfillment and realize one's potential;
- 8) Self-transcendence: to connect to something beyond the ego, or to help others to find fulfillment.

A.Maslow states that within the deficiency needs, each lower need must be met before moving to the next higher level.

Thus we may see that gaining approval or being evaluated are our basic needs, and this fact has been proved by scientists.

It's important to mention that praise and encouragement always motivate people to improve themselves or to get better results. As it comes from a variety of works in psychology, motivation is an internal state or condition (sometimes discovered as a need, desire or want) that serves to activate or energize behavior, and

give it direction. Motivation itself depends on different factors: personality, cognitive development and environment. [6]

By the way, there are several ways to express people's attitude towards others. It was surprising that praising can be different in its aims. So, we can treat others by the phrases that mean encouragement, praise, compliment or even flattery.

Let's study the differences between these notions taking into consideration the aims of our sayings.

It is important to understand that praise and flattery, while often used interchangeably, are not synonyms. "Praise" is mostly commonly defined as "the expression of favorable judgment or sincere appreciation. "Flattery" is most commonly defined as "excessive and insincere praise".

The best example of flattery is Aesop's fable "The Fox and the Crow". By flattery we are promoting or fostering not a behavior but a person's perception of his self-worth. Praise, or compliment, on the other hand, is more about recognizing the actions a person performs, and in particular the benefits it derives. [7]

So, here we may say that praise may also be called a compliment or flattery, nevertheless encouragement also appears to differ from praise. We may see such a point of view from various sources.

The best comparison, we think, belongs to Jane Nelsen, a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist and Child Counselor in San Diego, the USA. In her book "Positive Discipline in the Classroom: Teacher's Guide" she gives a table showing the main differences between praise and encouragement. [5] (Appendix B, Table 1)

Summarizing the above mentioned information we see that praise and encouragement are definitely important as people always need to get approval or evaluation of their behavior or deeds. It's in human nature to judge or to be judged, but negative judgments mostly lead to the loss of confidence and interest in the subject matter, or in someone's abilities and self-esteem, and even develop dependence on others' opinion. Nevertheless, words of encouragement or praise are motivating and inspiring, making a person believe in his abilities and strengths.

1.2 Phrases of praise and encouragement in the English language

In spite of the large amount of the phrases of praise and encouragement in the comments, the vast majority of them are subjected to common language rules.

N.A. Bigunova, a famous Ukrainian linguist and a professor at Odessa National University, describes lexical, syntactic and intonation means, forming encouragement speech acts. According to the author's research, phrases of praise and encouragement are usually expressed by such means as:

1) vocabulary which is positively colored: 'nice' (adjective), 'beauty' (noun), 'well' (adverb), etc.) ;

2) stylistic means: simile('as gorgeous as a queen'), epithets ('gorgeous', 'magnificent'), metaphors ('she danced, a young and beautiful fairy'), hyperbole ('You are the best player of all times');

3) intensifiers ('very', 'at all', etc.);

4) syntactic means: exclamatory sentences ('You are a beauty!'), elliptical sentences ('Well done.'), inversion ('Never before have I seen such beauty');

5) intonation. [1, pp. 15-18], [3]

As the object of our research **h** **i**s the peculiarities of using the phrases of praise and encouragement in the modern English language in the comments on the Internet, let us take a closer look at the language style these phrases belong to as the existence

of styles is connected with the specific condition of communication in different spheres of human life. [2, p.4]

It is important to mention that throughout its history the English language has evolved a number of functional styles such as official (documents, papers), scientific (scientific publications, brochures, etc.), newspaper style (mass media), belles-lettres style (genres of creative writing). These are the examples of the formal written English language. But there is also an informal style, which is defined as suitable for ordinary conversations or letters to friends. So, it is a form of spoken language used in colloquial speech.

The informal style is used in conversations between people, or to socialize (to create a social contact). It depends on people's gender, age, and social and religious differences. This style is also widespread on the Internet. [2, p.4-11]

We may easily identify formal and informal styles. We have arranged their most common features into the table. (Appendix C, Table 1)

Phrases of praise and encouragement in the comments on the Internet are the best examples of the informal English language, expressing people's emotions, thoughts, and mood, and reflecting the latest changes in the language.

Summarizing the above mentioned facts, we may state that as the comments on the Internet are written in an informal style, the phrases of praise and encouragement used there possess all the features of the modern colloquial speech. Nevertheless, they follow common language rules as well.

2. Phrases of praise and encouragement in the comments on the Internet

2.1. Specific features of phrases of praise and encouragement in the comments on the Internet.

Modern young people use different video hosting websites to present their personal videos for the viewers to watch and evaluate by comments. Such people are called vloggers, i.e. video bloggers, who distribute their videos over the Internet. The vlog category is very popular on YouTube video hosting website, which is ranked as one of the most visited sites on the web.

Throughout our research process we referred to YouTube as one of the main data base where we found most of the phrases of praise and encouragement. There are plenty of them found in the comments to different music or dance auditions and contests, as well as to various video channels and top trending music videos and playlists.

Analyzing about 300 rewarding phrases we've come to the following results: about 40% of these phrases are praising, the rest of them – 60 % - are encouraging. [8] Praise was expressed directly and indirectly: directly – by praising the performers' talent and achievements, for example, *“Gods of popping”*, *“So freakin good!”*, *“I just love it!”*, etc. And indirectly – by diminishing the addressers' own abilities and talents, like in the following expression *“I thought I was a good dancer until I watched this video....”* Crystal Lee writes, for example, *“I've watched this video so*

often; the solos give me goose bumps. Such talented souls, I almost cried tbh. Love your individual athletics, boys". Some – combined both praise and encouragement. Anonymous writes "*This is by far one of my favorite performances from Laurent. That solo dance was art, it was unique, it was legendary.*" [8] (Appendix C, Table 2)

People express their own emotions and attitude towards the watched video or the performer by using various stylistic means. The study shows that the comments are highly emotional in the word meaning and graphically.

First of all, people chose positively colored words such as *amazing, awesome, excellent, great, cool, fantastic*, etc. (Appendix C, Table 3) They used such verbs as *like, enjoy, love, impress, adore*, etc. Negative words were definitely avoided unless they were used to intensify the meaning of another word, for example, as 'because the internet' (nickname) writes: "*...That was AMAZINGLY OUTRAGEOUSLY great*" [8] (Appendix C, Table 5)

As the rewarding comments were very emotional, many sentences (46%) were exclamatory as they ended with exclamation mark, though pure exclamatory sentences (starting with *How* and *What*) took only 19% out of the total number.

Interrogative sentences are few and there are only 7 questions there (2%), with 4 of them rhetorical (Appendix C, Table 4)

Imperative sentences haven't outnumbered the questions a lot: 9 sentences (3%).

The largest quantity of sentences **is** declarative sentences (49%). But this number could be less if people followed grammar rules and put punctuation marks. According to the emotions expressed by the words in the phrases of praise and encouragement, these sentences should have been exclamatory. It can be seen from such an example as: "*what an absolute joy :)*"('lyingmongoose') with no exclamation mark after it. The above mentioned statistics is reflected in the following diagram:

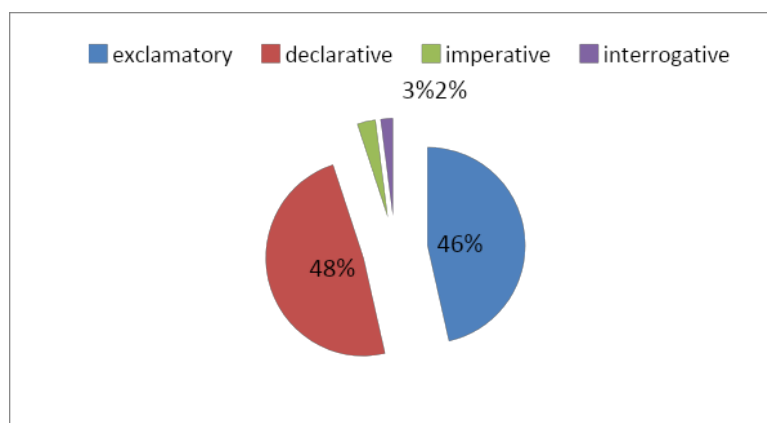


Diagram 2.1 – Communicative types of sentences

The comments with words of praise and encouragement are mainly short in their structure (Appendix C, Table 3). Those, consisting of a word or an elliptical sentence, are about 15%. For example, people could just write: “tooooooop” (Ludhiana Oliveira) or “The two finest dancers on this planet” (‘jetpowered’).

And 32% of the comments were simple sentences such as *“They aren’t human. But we are happy to see them here”* (OlsenUpdate), or else *“you are awesome guys!!!”* (NagiaGougou). Some comments consist of two or three simple sentences divided by exclamatory mark, dots or other graphic devices (Appendix C, Table 5), as we can see there: *“I watch this every day...whole a new different level of dancing...Lau[rent]’s solo makes me cry...”* (Kasumi)

Rewarding comments were made of compound (11%) or complex sentences (38%). These comments mainly consisted of one sentence of this type but we have found 11 large comments (3, 7% out of 300 comments), formed of several complex sentences. For example, ‘Hateful Glare’ writes: *“Getting the chill refers to that feeling you can get when you experience something awesome, like a wave of pleasure going down your spine – also sometimes causes goosebumps, like cold does, hence ‘the chills’. It is actually the result of dopamine being released inside your brain in order to focus your attention & memory on something you find stimulating.”*

This statistics is shown in the following diagram:

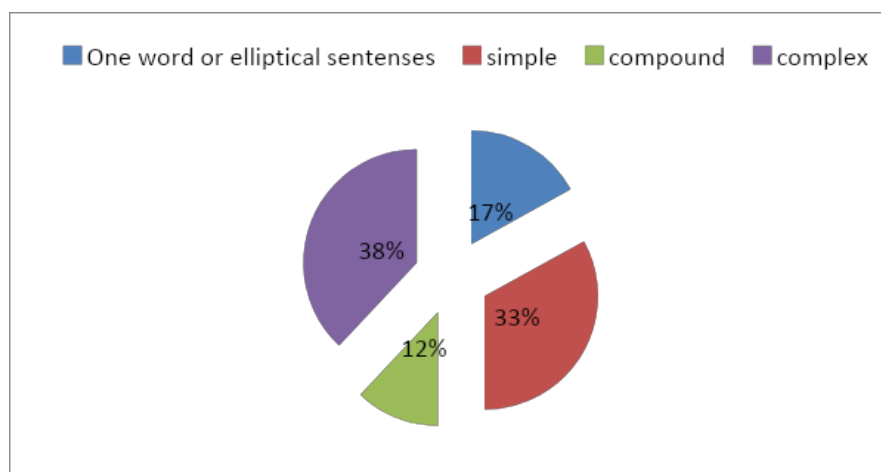


Diagram 2.2 – Structural types of sentences

The stylistic means that people used in the phrases of praise and encouragement on the Internet were not varied, but we could find such stylistic means as epithets, metaphors, hyperbole, anaphora, aposiopesis and others. (Appendix C, Table 5)

Epithets and metaphors are the most often stylistic means used in the phrases of praise and encouragement (61%). The best example is given by AzizPeregrino-Brimah: “*Laurent outshined his brother in this one*”. Ryan West also writes: “*These two ... so amazing. I love both their choreographed performances and their freestyling – the former has such polish, while the latter is so impressive it’s hard to believe they aren’t telepathic*”, “*Daaaaaaaamn he is hot!*”

Next come hyperboles – about 20%. The examples are: “*best dancers in history*”, “*his movements are just out of this world*”, etc.

Aposiopesis takes about 9% of the sentences with praise and encouragement like in: “*Wow...amazing!*”, or in “*That mini masterpiece that starts at 8:16 is..., I’m not even going to sully it by attempting to describe it. Just ah!*”; and in “*Amazing talented skills...love it!*”. But people seemed to misuse dots as they put them instead of a comma or exclamation mark.

We have also found some anaphors (6%), such as in the comment “*Some are excellent dancers, some are excellent athletes, the twins are all of those in one package!*”, or in “*amazing music, amazing dancers! Can’t stop watching!*”

The remaining 4% of rewarding comment contained other stylistic devices: antithesis (“*these boys make me feel proud of the French, and make me feel sick that*

I'm not as talented as they are!"); zeugma (*"They killed the dance and me as well"*), etc. The researched data is depicted in the following diagram:

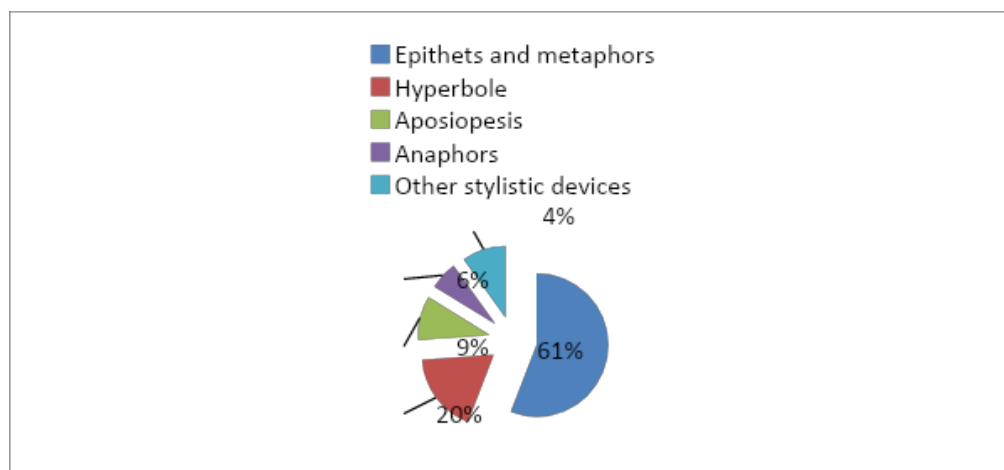


Diagram 2.3 – Stylistic means of expressing praise and encouragement

The overview of the comments showed that the majority of them were written in the informal, or colloquial, style of the English language. This fact has been proved by the choice of the words and expressive means such as graphic devices; SMS-language and Internet slang (Appendix C, Table 6)

We can see that people tend to make their messages look attractive and very expressive in written. And we noticed that the better impressions are the more graphic means are used. Therefore visual effects are aimed to reveal the emotions as we can observe in the case of capitalization: *"OMG!"*, *"LOVE YOU, GUYS!"*. The same emotions are expressed by repetition of the exclamation mark: *"Perfect performance!!!!!!!!!!"*; by multiplication: *"Soooooooooooo cool!"*; by other punctuation marks or pictures: *"WOW :0"*, *"My heart just sank... ☺"*, *"Amaaaazzziing!!!!♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥"*

Grammar rules are not the priority as the users would prefer expressing emotions and thoughts rather than following grammar rules. The main intention of the rewarding comments was to transfer emotions, feelings and the attitude with less effort. People contracted words (*'fav'*, *'awsm'*. etc), they also used abbreviations (*"U R the coolest!"*) and slang words (*"jeez! they r great!"*), etc. Many comments had no punctuation marks, verb tenses were simple or the predicate was just omitted.

Summarizing the mentioned information we may state that praise and encouragement in the comments are expressed by different means inherent in the written language. As any other phrases, praise and encouragement are put in the form of sentences different in structure and the aim of communication, but written in the informal style and being emotionally colored, they begin to possess various stylistic and graphic devices. These facts show that the phrases of praise and encouragement in the comments are the most expressive means of evaluation, as well as depicting emotions and attitude towards the subject matter.

2.2. Phrases of praise and encouragement in the comments on the Internet as the means of learning the spoken English language

As the purpose of our research was to study the phrases of praise and encouragement in the comments, we considered to take one the most popular dance contest on YouTube “World of Dance” where most of the comments were made in English.

In order to do some statistics we took the video of the group “Les Twins” at World of Dance Competition and studied the first 600 comments. The rewarding comments took approximately 30% from the total number. But it doesn’t mean that other comments were negative – people discussed other things, such as the choice of music, the general look of the dancers, and agreed or disagreed on them, etc.

But the most surprising and curious thing appeared to be the names, or to be precise, the nicknames of people who has left the comments. We have looked through these nicknames to see whether they really belong to the English native-speakers. They were put into three groups: “English” (e.g. Bill Johnson), foreign (e.g. Leonardo Kardoza), and non-identified (Suspicious Cat or Bike Team). The results were quite a surprise: 36% sounded English, 40% sounded foreign, and 24% were not identified as “English” or foreign, and it can be seen in the following diagram:

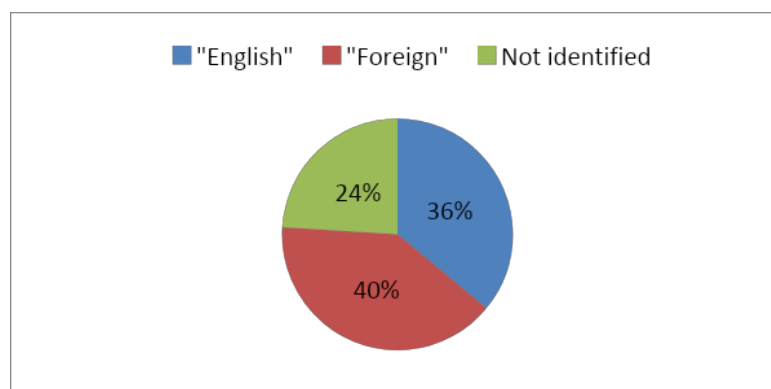


Diagram 2.4 - Nicknames

We suppose that the number of the English native speakers can be at least 20% larger due to the fact that there are millions of people, for example, in the USA that came there long time ago as immigrants, being assimilated, and having English as their second language, or what is more important, their children's native language. So, nicknames can be deceptive. Nevertheless, comments written with mistakes were easy to understand as well. It may be seen in the following example: Bhan Khan says *"think they gods"*, and the answer was: *"Same, man...they are the best on the planet!!!"* (Wonderman)

The status of English as an international and the most studied language should also be taken into consideration. People all over the world learn to speak English fluently, and we may just rely on them being good-learners.

Consequently, we can't either prove or disprove that the phrases of praise and encouragement in the comments on the Internet represent the modern spoken English language. But at least we have penetrated into the most dynamically developing sphere of communication – comments on the Internet, thus having studied the most emotional part of it – the phrases of praise and encouragement. Moreover, we have learned how to communicate positively using the informal style of the spoken English language with no fear of making a mistake, as our opinion will be understood in any case.

In the course of our research we discovered the main regularities that, if followed, can help the learners to comment on the Internet using correct words or phrases, being at the same time very positive and not judgmental.

In conclusion we may say that people from all over the world communicate on the Internet using English as the means of communication. And the comments on the Internet can't show us whether the phrases of praise and encouragement are written by the native speakers and are built correctly, or whether they just belong to the informal English which is also a dynamically developing system where grammar doesn't matter. We may just monitor the main regularities and show the most commonly used patterns in order to teach the English learners to exchange positive opinions on the Internet. (Appendix D)

Conclusion

The aim of our research was to prove that the phrases of praise and encouragement in the comments on the Internet are the best means to learn how to praise and encourage using the spoken English language.

The first part of the work is a short theoretical review of the notions of praise and encouragement as one of people's basic needs, the differences in their meaning and aims, and the peculiarities of their appliance in the English language. Psychologists confirm that being evaluated is one of basic human needs. Both praise and encouragement are defined as evaluative though they are used with different aims. Phrases of praise and encouragement are built according to the common language rules possessing all the features of the colloquial speech. These phrases express emotions, so the means used there include positively colored words, different stylistic devices, and basic syntactic structures. Phrases of praise and encouragement in the comments on the Internet also belong to the informal style of the English language with some features of SMS-language and Internet slang.

The practical part introduces the research itself where we may observe phrases of praise and encouragement in the comments on the Internet.

The research question that is to be answered in this study is whether the phrases of praise and encouragement in the comments on the Internet subordinate the main language rules and whether we can use the researched patterns to communicate on the Internet. Thus we studied the most popular and most visited video-hosting site YouTube where we looked through the comments to several British and American auditions and contests. And we may definitely say that we can easily use the researched expressions in our comments.

The research shows that the phrases of praise and encouragement in the comments on the Internet belong to the informal style of the English language with some features of SMS-language and Internet slang. Nevertheless, they can be easily grouped according to definite phrase patterns and sentence structures which subordinate to the common English language rules. In spite of the fact that stylistic devices aren't various, the emotions are also expressed by graphic means.

Unfortunately, the hypothesis of the work can't be proved, as we found out that the comments in English are written not only by people from the English-speaking countries but also by people from other countries all over the world, therefore we can't rely on their knowledge of English.

Taking into consideration all the above mentioned facts we believe that the research purpose has been achieved, though the hypothesis has been disproved.

Nevertheless, we traced the main features and regularities of the phrases of praise and encouragement used in the comments on the Internet. We also arranged them into several tables in APPENDIX C. We suppose that they can be very helpful for the English language learners in different spheres of their everyday life as they portray the best examples of the informal style - an important part of the English modern spoken language.

Summing up, evaluation is one of our most important needs in life. Every person is worth being praised and encouraged as it supports his or her self-esteem, and it is the key to future success. Praise and encouragement are a part of our everyday communication and culture. Nowadays many people communicate on the Internet using the English language as the main tool to talk to others, but the problem

of conflicts and misunderstanding on the Internet is quite sharp. We hope that our research will help the English learners communicate effectively getting positive emotions and being positive themselves. Active Internet users may also follow our advice in Appendix D.

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Appendix A

DATA SURVEY REPORT

We conducted a survey among 70 students of 9th, 10th, and 11th forms of gymnasias. The purpose of the survey was to examine whether students comment on the Internet and whether they have difficulties in writing comments. The questions and the results of the survey are put into the following table:

Question	Answers
Do you leave comments in English?	Yes -65% No -35%
Do you think you are skillful enough in writing comments in English?	Yes -31% No – 69%
What difficulties do you have in writing comments?	a) I don't know how to build up sentences – 16%

	b) I don't know which verb tense to use – 19% c) I'm afraid that my comments don't sound "English"- 65%
What comments do you usually leave?	Positive – 88% Negative – 12%
Will it be helpful for you to learn how to write correct comments?	Yes -76% No -24%

Table 1 – The Questionnaire

Thus we may see that the majority of the students have difficulties in writing comments and need some advice.

Appendix B

	Praise	Encouragement
Dictionary definitions	1. to express favorable judgment 2. to glorify, esp. by attribution of protection 3. an expression of approval	1. to inspire with courage 2. to spur on: stimulate
Addresses	The doer; "Good girl!"	The deed: "Good job!"
Recognizes	Only complete, perfect product: "You did it right!"	Effort and improvement: "You gave it your best." Or, "How do you feel about what you accomplished?"
Attitude	Patronizing, manipulative: "I like the way Susie is sitting."	Respectful, appreciative: "Who can show me how we should be sitting now?"

“I” message	Judgmental: “I like the way you did that”	Self-directing
Examples	“I’m proud of you for getting an A” (robs a person of ownership of his own achievement)	“That A reflects your hard work.” (recognizes ownership and responsibility for effort)
Invites	A person to change for others. “Approval junkies”	A person to change for himself/herself. “Inner direction”
Locus of control	External: “What do others think?”	Internal: “What do I think?”
Teaches	What to think. Dependence on the elevation of others	How to think. Self-evaluation
Goal	Conformity. “You did it right!”	Understanding. “What you do you think/feel/learn?”
Effect on sense of worth	Feel worthwhile when others approve	Feel worthwhile without approval of others
Long-term effect	Dependence on others	Self-confidence, self-reliance

Table 1 – The main differences between praise and encourage

Appendix C

	Formal style	Informal style
divided into	official, scientific, newspaper style, belles-lettres style	colloquial, slang, dialect
used in	mostly in the written language	in the colloquial speech
sentences	long sentences with more complex structures and clauses	simple sentences (often ellipsis), rather coordinate than subordinate
words and phrases	involves longer words or words with origins in Latin, French and Greek	more phrasal verbs; noun phrases are simpler; frequent use of adverbial intensifiers; words are simplified (contractions and abbreviations)

semantic patterning	correct grammar and punctuation, absence of discourse markers	use of clichés, word play; speech is full of false starts, incomplete utterances, pause fillers
aimed at	to describe or give information	to exchange information
examples	<i>friend</i> <i>meal</i> <i>congratulations</i>	<i>pal/chum(coll)</i> <i>snack(coll)</i> <i>congrats(a contracted word)</i>

Table 1 – Differences between formal and informal styles of the English language

Praise	Encouragement
You're + top/a joy/#1/a winner/the greatest/sharp/so kind/a shining star/super/a pleasure to know/a champ/special/unique/inspiring/very talented/an angel/my fav(favorite)/a living miracle/a great example for others!etc. You've + got it/outdone yourself/got what it takes/earned my respect/made it happen/made the difference/made me smile (happy, cry etc.), etc. You should be proud! /happy/glad, etc. You deserve a hug! I'm + impressed/proud of you! Hooray/good + for you! Hats off to you! I + like it/enjoyed it! What a + genius/an imagination! I think + it's worth a round of applause/the highest prize! etc. It brought me to tears/made me cry! etc.	How artistic/original/extraordinary! Great/cool/breathtaking/stupendous/remarkable/magnificent/phenomenal/terrific/marvelous/wonderful/sensational/awesome/wow/superb/excellent/ exceptional/very good/brilliant/expressive/super-duper/very courageous/lovely/stunning/radical/incomparable! etc. Unbelievable/ Extra special work! Amazing/great/outstanding/spectacular effort (performance)! Great discovery! Super/great/fantastic job (work)! Way to go! Far out! Two thumbs up! You tried hard! Congratulations! It couldn't be better! Nice going! Getting better all the time! Very courageous!

	Right on! You've improved! You've made progress! A job well done! Keep it up! That's the way!
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Table 2 – Phrases of praise and encouragement

Pattern structure	Example
Adjective	Nice! Amazing! Cool!
Pronoun /Noun+aux verb + Adj	You are nice! They are unique! She is beautiful! You're the greatest! That's perfect! You're inspiring!
Pronoun/Noun+aux V+Noun/Noun phrase	You are a real beauty! They're a real joy! You're the winner! He is the best dancer!
Intensifier + Adj/Noun/Preposition	Very good! Too cool! How extraordinary! Such a beauty! What a nice girl! Far out! So cute!

Adj + Noun	Unbelievable work! Super job! Outstanding effort! Neat work! Great discovery! Great enthusiasm! Incredible movements!
Adj + for + Pronoun	Good for you!
Adverb + Verb	Well done! Nicely performed!
Phrases with a modal verb	It couldn't be better! You should be proud! You can do it!
Noun + Infinitive phrase	Way to go!

Table 3 – The most common pattern structures

Types of sentences			
Communicative types	Examples	Structural types	Examples
Declarative	I knew you had it in you. I'm impressed. You're a pleasure to know. You've made a progress. It's everything I hoped for. You've earned my respect. I'm proud of you.	simple sentence	They are truly talented.
		compound sentence	I watched it like a million times and I can do it again and again.

	I love it. She is #1! He couldn't do better.	complex sentence	But they are first and foremost artists because they are extremely creative and have invented hundreds of moves nobody has ever thought about...
		nominative or elliptical sentences	Love you, Les Twins. The best, I think. Goosebumps... Just ah!
Interrogative(questions)	What is the secret of your tremendous success? They are the best of the best, aren't they? How has he done this?(rhetorical) What can be more beautiful than this? (rhetorical)		
Imperative	Leave me here to die... Keep trying! Keep it up!		

Exclamatory	This is the best ... in my life! What a cool song it is! How thoughtful of you! Bravo! How original! How artistic! What a genius! This is the best ... in my life! What a cool song it is!		
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Table 4 – Sentence structures

Stylistic means of expressing praise and encouragement	
epithets	Their performance was <i>magic</i>! Outstanding performance! His facial expressions was priceless
metaphor	It's almost subliminal how they <i>telegraph</i> supporting moves between each other instantaneously
hyperbole	Les Twins are <i>gods</i> of dance I watched it a <i>million</i> times...
Repetition (anaphora)	This is by far one of my favorite performances from Laurent. That solo dance was art, <i>it was</i> unique, <i>it was</i> legendary.

Words with negative meaning as intensifiers	It's just <i>ridiculous</i> how talented they are <i>damn</i> awesome! That was AMAZINGLY RIDICULOUSLY OUTRAGEOUSLY great!
aposiopesis(an unfinished syntactic structure)	I've come across this video and ... WOW! They both did it well. But Laurent...

Table 5 – Stylistic means of expressing praise and encouragement

Other means of expressing praise or encouragement in the comments (graphic, SMS-language, Internet slang)	Examples
Shortened/contracted words/vowels removing	Congrats! You're my fav! These guys r amazing! Awsm!
Capitalization/abbreviations	U R great! (You are great!) OMG! (Oh my God!) NICE! DAMN GOOD! tbh (to be honest)
Multiplication(the repetition of the same letter)	Sooooooooo cool! Daaaaaamn he is hot!!!
Punctuation marks/pictures to show emotions or used instead of smiles	Excellent performance!!!!!!!!!!!! She won my heart! :D♥♥♥ Hot! :) So amazing XD Oh God! :O (for surprise) Collabro still my fav...Love them ^^ <3 it (love it)
Colloquial words/slang	Holly jeez!(Jesus) Okay(OK)

	they hit <i>dat</i> romantic challenge (that)
Ignorance of grammar rules(punctuation, grammar, capitalization, etc.)	<i>i</i> think <i>its</i> cool! They're <i>killin</i> me <i>i</i> never get tired of this
Numbers instead of words	they're just 2 cute to be real...(too) 1 of the best, for sure...(one) As 4me I adore their performance

Table 6 – Other means of expressing praise and encouragement in the comments

Useful tips for the English language learners on improving communication on the Internet.

Our tips will be the following:

- Praise is more evaluative and judgmental than encouragement, and fosters fear of failure;
- Encouragement sets up a person for success and independence, fostering acceptance of being imperfect;
- Accept that people can be different, and while commenting somebody's achievements, try to be positive, using polite and positively colored words;
- Remember that the language in the comments on the Internet is rather informal than formal though correct phrases, both stylistically and grammatically, will show that you are a well-educated person;
- Avoid writing large messages, as they are hard to read;
- Your message will look emotional and dynamic if you use SMS-language, Internet slang and graphic devices, but you must be careful enough not to use rude or low-vulgar words, as they sound disrespectful and may cause misunderstandings and conflicts.