



## EXPLORING FORMAL AND INFORMAL CONDOLENCE EXPRESSIONS IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK LANGUAGES

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### KEYWORDS

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### ABSTRACT

This article is devoted to the exploration of formal and informal condolence expressions in both English and Uzbek languages. The article reveals a cross-cultural comparison, examining how formal and informal communication methods are utilized in expressing condolences within English and Uzbek contexts, and their implications on language, culture, and social norms. The analysis encompasses a study of condolence letters by presidents and literary works, providing insights into the nuances of expressing condolences in both formal and informal setting across these languages. Having conducted the research, the following findings were revealed: (1) in formal English expressions of condolence the primary focus lies on conveying sympathy and offering comfort to the bereaved family. (2) officially condolence expressions in Uzbek language are characterized by a greater emphasis on acknowledging and amplifying the qualities and actions of the deceased individual. The practical implications of this study can be used to understand cultural differences in expressing condolences and enrich cross-cultural communication.

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## **Introduction**

Human existence is intertwined with diverse emotional experiences, including joy, happiness, and inevitable loss. Comforting loved ones during times of sorrow is a fundamental aspect of collective empathy. Condolences serve as a conduit between individuals grappling with grief and those seeking solace, underscoring the centrality of empathy in interpersonal communication.

The significance of condolences extends beyond verbal or written expressions to encompass the manner of delivery, highlighting the importance of every sentiment articulated through language. Speech expression is categorized into formal and informal modes.

According to B. Hasanov's scholarly insights, formal speech appeals adhere to rigorous protocols and established conventions, representing a structured form of communication within various societal spheres. These formal appeals are typically directed towards individuals occupying authoritative roles within organizational hierarchies, including workforce leaders, senior specialists within manufacturing enterprises, educators in academic institutions, and high-ranking officials in military and law enforcement establishments, as well as during nationally significant events, contingent upon contextual variables such as gender or social standing.<sup>2</sup>

It is imperative to acknowledge that formal speech appeals are contextually appropriate exclusively within official settings. In contrast, informal addresses exhibit broader and more pervasive usage across diverse communicative contexts. Informal appeals are predominantly deployed in everyday interactions and interpersonal communications. Broadly categorized, informal addresses encompass appeals directed towards loved ones, intimate acquaintances, and anonymous recipients.

Expressions of sympathy vary based on the formality of the situation and the relationship between conversational partners. Across diverse societies, offering condolences is a culturally significant aspect of communication, governed by established norms in languages such as English and Uzbek. Limited research has been conducted on the linguocultural aspects of condolence speech in English and Uzbek languages. Consequently, this article aims to elucidate the disparities between formal and informal communication in English and Uzbek languages when conveying condolences.

## **Literature review**

Limited research has been undertaken to explore the intricacies of formal and informal communication in conveying condolences across linguistic and cultural contexts. Scholar Geoffrey Leech has conducted extensive research on expressions of sympathy, ranging from congratulatory remarks to expressions of commiseration, which can vary in formality depending on social dynamics. At the formal end of this spectrum lies condolence, a formal expression of sympathy conveyed over bereavement, which serves as the most

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<sup>2</sup> Husanov B. Muomala madaniyati. – Toshkent: Ta'lim, 2009. – 81b.

stereotypical example.

Despite the challenges associated with obtaining examples of condolences from corpus data due to their private nature, a recurring theme in condolence messages is the expression of sympathy, where the sender seeks to convey shared sorrow with the recipient, offering comfort and solace during their time of bereavement. One common approach to expressing condolence is through generalization, wherein the sender emphasizes the value of the deceased's life and their role therein, while also indicating that the sorrow will be widely shared. For instance, phrases such as "He will be greatly missed" are frequently employed in condolence messages to convey this sentiment.

This observation underscores the overlap in the functions of the approbation and sympathy maxims in communication. By delving into the nuances of formal and informal communication in conveying condolences, researchers can attain deeper insights into the cultural and linguistic factors influencing the expression of sympathy across different contexts. Further research in this area is warranted to better understand the complex dynamics at play in condolence communication and its impact on individuals' experiences of bereavement.<sup>3</sup>

Additionally, J. Holmes reveals the linguistic features of condolences encompass lexical choices, syntactic structures, and discourse patterns used to convey sympathy and empathy. Research in sociolinguistics and pragmatics has identified various linguistic markers employed in condolences, including lexical items such as "condolences", "sympathies", and "sorry", as well as syntactic constructions such as conditional clauses and passive voice.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, Goffman points out discourse strategies such as indirectness and mitigation play a crucial role in mitigating the potentially face-threatening act of offering condolences.<sup>5</sup>

### **Research method**

This research was carried out using comparative analysis that was primarily based on a cross-cultural comparison. A cross-cultural framework was employed to elucidate the cognitive processes underlying formal and informal communication in conveying condolences across English and Uzbek languages. This research endeavors to delineate the variations in linguistic phenomena inherent in condolence speech within these disparate cultural and linguistic milieus. Through a comparative analysis, this study aims to discern the nuances of formal and informal expressions across English and Uzbek cultures. Literary works such as "The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society" by Mary Ann Shaffer, "Mehrobdan chayon" by Abdulla Qodiriy serve as primary sources for exploring these intricacies within distinct cultural contexts. For formal speech, examples such as the correspondence of condolences by former U.S. President George Volker Bush to William Sentner, and President Shavkat Mirziyayev's tribute to Abdulla Oripov, demonstrate the

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<sup>3</sup> Leech G. The Pragmatics of Politeness. – New York: Oxford university press, 2014. – p.211.

<sup>4</sup> Holmes J. Women, Men and Politeness. – London: Addison Wesley Longman, 1995 – p.11.

<sup>5</sup> Goffman E. Frame Analysis: An essay on the organization of experience. – Boston: Northeastern University, 1986. – p.496.

formalized nature of condolence discourse in diverse cultural contexts.

### **Data analysis**

In the novel an excerpt from Mary Ann Shaffer's "The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie", one can discern the manifestation of informal speech in the portrayal of a letter exchange.

Eng.l:

From Amelia to Juliet

10th April 1946

My dear Juliet,

I, too, have felt that the war goes on and on. When my son Ian died at El Alamein - side by side with Eli's father, John- visitors offering their condolences, meaning to comfort me, said, "Life goes on". What nonsense, I thought, of course it doesn't. It's death that goes on; Ian is dead now and will be dead tomorrow and next year and forever. There's no end to that. But perhaps there will be an end to the sorrow of it. Sorrow has rushed over the world like the waters of the Deluge, and it will take time to recede. But already, there are small islands of - hope? Happiness? Something like that, anyway. I like the picture of you standing on your chair to catch a glimpse of the sun, averting your eyes from the mounds of rubble.

In Uzbek culture, the authenticity of informal speech is exemplified through the introduction of lamentation in Abdulla Qadiri's novel "Mehrobdan Chayon".

Uzb.l:

"Anvarning birinchi martaba marhum do'stiga atab yozgan marsiyasi motamlilik otonani yana bo'zlatqan edikim, biz marsiyadan bir necha misrani quyida ko'rsatamiz:

Ochilmay so'lsa har gul g'unchasi piru juvon yig'lar,

Emas piru juvon, balki hamma ahli jahon yig'lar.

Ajal yamog'ari bog'i zako ichra uzib zanjir,

Rahmsiz ezsa ma'sum lolalarni, chun hazon yig'lar.

Nasimim ketdi olamdin meni qayg'u aro tashlab,

Ko'zimdin oqsa xun hech bir ajab yo'q, chunki qon yig'lar.

Jahonda erdi tanho men yatimga hamnishin, dildor,

G'ariblikning diyorida adashkan notavon yig'lar.

For formal speech, the correspondence of condolences authored by the former President of the United States of America, George Volker Bush, addressed to William Sentner, serves as a prominent illustration.

Eng.l:

The White House

Washington

June 27, 2006

Mrs. William Sentner

Orlando, Florida

Dear Maria:

I am saddened to learn about loss of your husband.

Our nation depends on the brave individuals who put themselves at risk to keep the peace, save lives, and protect their fellow citizens. Americans Buddy's selfless service will always be remembered.

Laura and I offer deepest sympathy and pray for God's blessings on you and your family. May you find strength in the encouragement and support of your loved ones.

Sincerely,

George. W. Bush. [ Letter from President Bush to Mrs. Sentner. Department of justice. 27.06.2006]

President Bush expresses sympathy to Mrs. Sentner following her husband's passing, employing a solemn tone and acknowledging the deceased's service with respect and solemnity.

Similarly, in Uzbek culture, condolences expressed by political figures like President Shavkat Mirziyayev demonstrate the formalized nature of condolence discourse. President Mirziyayev's letter to the late Abdulla Oripov, a renowned national poet, praises Oripov's contributions to Uzbek literature, emphasizing themes of love, loyalty, and national pride. Through eloquent prose, President Mirziyayev offers condolences while honoring Oripov's lasting influence on Uzbek culture and identity.

Uzb.l:

"Ulkan so'z san'atkori, nodir iste'dod egasi Abdulla Oripovning betakror ijodi teran milliy ruhi va hayotiyliigi bilan o'zbek adabiyoti xazinasidan munosib va mustahkam o'rin oldi. U o'zining sermazmun, badiiy yuksak she'r va dostonlari, dramatik va publisistik asarlarida ona yurtimiz va xalqimizga, azaliy qadriyatlarimizga mehr va sadoqat tuyg'usini beqiyos mahorat bilan tarannum etdi Abdulla Oripov mustaqil Vatanimiz O'zbekiston Respublikasi Davlat madhiyasining muallifi sifatida el-yurtimiz qalbidan chuqur joy egalladi. Ayniqsa, istiqlol yillarida Vatanimiz ozodligini, xalqimizning erkin va obod hayotini, milliy g'urur, inson sha'ni va qadr-qimmatini ulug'lovchi she'r va dostonlari, zamondoshlarimizning oliyjanob fazilatlari va fidokorona mehnati haqidagi publisistik chiqishlari bilan jamoatchilik e'tiborini qozondi",— deyiladi ta'ziyanomada. [Prezident shoir vafoti munosabati bilan ta'ziya bildirdi Gazeta.uz 11.11.2016].

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, the examples provided in both languages vividly depict the experience of losing a loved one and the accompanying emotions of sadness, pain, and grief. The prose-style letter articulates the mother's poignant reflections on the loss of her child, while the lament conveys similar sentiments through poetic language enriched with vivid imagery and metaphors.

This study has scrutinized the cultural and linguistic dimensions underlying the dichotomy of condolence speech into formal and informal modes in English and Uzbek languages, contingent upon the relationship between the sender and recipient of

condolences, as well as prevailing socio-cultural norms. Furthermore, the research endeavors to enhance our comprehension of the empathetic expression of sympathy in various communicative contexts, shedding light on the intricate nuances of offering comfort through both formal and informal channels of communication.

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