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### **STYLISTIC ANALYSIS OF BLESSINGS AND CURSES IN UZBEK AND ENGLISH**

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#### **Abstract**

Blessings and curses represent an important layer of expressive vocabulary in many languages, reflecting cultural values, emotional states, and social norms. This article provides a comparative stylistic analysis of blessings and curses in Uzbek and English. The study examines their linguistic structure, stylistic functions, pragmatic usage, and cultural specificity. By analyzing examples from both languages, the paper highlights similarities and differences in form, meaning, emotional coloring, and communicative intent. The research demonstrates that while blessings and curses in both languages serve expressive and evaluative functions, Uzbek expressions are more deeply rooted in religious, familial, and collectivist values, whereas English expressions often reflect individualism and metaphorical imagery. The findings contribute to contrastive linguistics, stylistics, and intercultural communication studies.

**Keywords:** Stylistics, blessings, curses, Uzbek language, English language, expressive vocabulary, pragmatics

#### **Introduction**

Language is not only a means of communication but also a reflection of a nation's culture, worldview, and emotional life. Among the most expressive elements of any language are blessings and curses, which function as emotionally charged speech acts. These expressions are used to convey goodwill, hope, anger,



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frustration, or condemnation, often going beyond literal meaning to achieve a strong stylistic and pragmatic effect.

In both Uzbek and English, blessings and curses occupy a special place in oral speech, folklore, religious discourse, and everyday communication. However, their stylistic realization and cultural significance differ considerably. This article aims to conduct a stylistic analysis of blessings and curses in Uzbek and English, focusing on their linguistic features, stylistic coloring, and communicative functions.

The relevance of this study lies in its contribution to comparative stylistics and intercultural communication. Understanding how blessings and curses function in different languages helps language learners, translators, and linguists avoid pragmatic failures and better grasp the cultural nuances embedded in speech.

### **Theoretical Background**

#### **Blessings and Curses as Speech Acts**

From the perspective of pragmatics, blessings and curses can be viewed as performative speech acts. According to speech act theory, such utterances do not merely describe reality but attempt to influence it. When a speaker utters a blessing, they express goodwill and hope for positive outcomes; when uttering a curse, they express negative evaluation and a desire for misfortune.

Stylistically, these expressions belong to emotionally colored vocabulary. They often carry connotative meaning that reflects the speaker's attitude rather than objective information. As a result, blessings and curses are powerful tools for expressing emotions such as love, gratitude, anger, or resentment.

#### **Stylistic Features of Expressive Language**

In stylistics, expressive language is characterized by:

- Emotional intensity
- Figurative meaning



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- Evaluative connotations
- Cultural and contextual dependence

Blessings and curses often include metaphors, hyperbole, religious references, and symbolic imagery, which enhance their stylistic impact.

### Blessings in the Uzbek Language

#### Linguistic and Cultural Characteristics

Uzbek blessings, known as *olqish soʻzlari*, are deeply rooted in national traditions, religion, and collective values. They are commonly used by elders, parents, and respected members of society. Many Uzbek blessings invoke God (Alloh) or destiny, reflecting the strong influence of Islam and traditional beliefs.

Examples include:

- Alloh umrini uzun qilsin (May God grant you a long life)
- Yoling ochiq boʻlsin (May your path be open)
- Baxting kulib tursin (May fortune smile upon you)

These expressions are stylistically elevated and often used in formal or semi-formal contexts such as weddings, farewells, and public speeches.

### Stylistic Functions

Uzbek blessings perform several stylistic functions:

- Emotive function: expressing sincere goodwill and affection
- Etiquette function: maintaining politeness and respect
- Cultural function: reinforcing social norms and values

The frequent use of optative constructions (expressing wishes) and modal meanings enhances their stylistic richness.

### Curses in the Uzbek Language

#### Structural and Semantic Features



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Uzbek curses (qarg‘ish so‘zlari) are also emotionally intense but convey negative evaluation. They are often metaphorical and hyperbolic, aiming to express anger or condemnation rather than literal intent.

Examples include:

- Joning jaxannamga tushsin (May your soul fall into hell)
- Ko‘zing ko‘r bo‘lsin (May your eyes go blind)
- Xudo ursin (May God strike you)

Stylistically, such expressions are considered rude or taboo in polite communication and are mostly used in moments of extreme emotional tension.

### Cultural Restrictions

In Uzbek culture, curses are socially disapproved of, especially when used by younger people or in public settings. This social restriction adds to their stylistic markedness and emotional power.

### Blessings in the English Language

#### Common Features and Usage

English blessings are generally less religious and more metaphorical compared to Uzbek ones. While religious expressions exist, especially in older or formal contexts, modern English often uses secular or idiomatic blessings.

Examples include:

- Good luck!
- May all your dreams come true
- Bless you

English blessings tend to be shorter and less ceremonious, reflecting a more individualistic and pragmatic communication style.

### Stylistic Characteristics

Stylistically, English blessings are:

- Neutral or mildly positive in emotional coloring
- Frequently used in everyday speech
- Often idiomatic rather than literal



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The phrase Bless you, for instance, has lost much of its original religious meaning and functions as a conventional response to sneezing.

Curses in the English Language

Lexical and Stylistic Features

English curses are often indirect, euphemistic, or idiomatic. Instead of explicit wishes of harm, speakers may use swear words or sarcastic expressions.

Examples include:

- Damn you
- Go to hell
- Curse you

Modern English also uses profanity as a form of emotional release rather than a literal curse, which reduces the performative force of such expressions.

Social and Stylistic Constraints

English curses are highly context-dependent. Their stylistic value varies depending on intonation, relationship between speakers, and social setting. In formal contexts, they are considered inappropriate, while in informal speech they may function as markers of solidarity or emotional intensity.

Comparative Analysis of Uzbek and English Blessings and Curses

Similarities

Both languages:

- Use blessings and curses as expressive speech acts
- Rely on emotional and evaluative meaning
- Employ figurative language

In both cultures, blessings are socially approved, while curses are often restricted or taboo.



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### Differences

Aspect	Uzbek	English
Cultural basis	Religious, collective	Secular, individualistic
Length	Often long and formulaic	Usually short
Emotional intensity	High	Moderate
Use of religion	Frequent	Limited
Social restriction	Strong	Context-dependent

Uzbek expressions tend to be more emotionally intense and culturally loaded, while English expressions are more pragmatic and flexible.

### Translation and Stylistic Challenges

Translating blessings and curses poses significant challenges due to cultural and stylistic differences. Literal translation often fails to convey the original emotional force or cultural meaning. For example, translating *Alloh umrini uzun qilsin* as *May God make your life long* may sound unnatural in modern English. Therefore, translators must prioritize functional equivalence over literal accuracy, choosing expressions that match the stylistic and pragmatic effect in the target language.

### Conclusion

Blessings and curses are powerful stylistic devices that reflect the emotional, cultural, and social dimensions of language. The comparative analysis of Uzbek and English expressions demonstrates that while their communicative functions are similar, their stylistic realization differs significantly due to cultural values and linguistic traditions.

Uzbek blessings and curses are deeply embedded in religious belief and collective consciousness, resulting in emotionally rich and formalized expressions. In contrast, English expressions are more secular, concise, and pragmatically



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oriented. Understanding these differences is essential for linguists, translators, and language learners engaged in cross-cultural communication.

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