



GRAMMATICAL REALIZATION OF BLESSINGS, CURSES AND WISHES IN ENGLISH AND UZBEK LANGUAGES

Jurabekova Feruza Jura kizi

Master Student of Asian University of Technologies, Karshi, Kashkadarya;

Tel: +998978259290;

e-mail: feruza.jurabekova@gmail.com

Abstract

This article explores the grammatical structures that underpin the expression of blessings, curses, and wishes in English and Uzbek languages. By analyzing sentence mood, verb forms, syntactic construction, and morphological features, the study identifies the typological and functional parallels and divergences between these two languages. Blessings and wishes are often realized through optative and imperative moods, while curses frequently involve negation and intensified modality. The study highlights how culturally embedded ritual expressions rely on distinct grammatical choices that reflect each language's communicative norms and socio-cultural values.

Keywords: blessings, curses, wishes, grammar, syntax, sentence mood, modality, Uzbek, English, typology, ritual speech acts

1. Introduction

Blessings, curses, and wishes represent a class of ritual speech acts that reflect deep-seated cultural and linguistic values. These expressions are not merely semantic but are structurally distinct and culturally loaded. As performative utterances (Austin, 1962), they invoke or invoke against a desired reality. This paper investigates the grammatical realization of such expressions in English and Uzbek, focusing on their sentence types, mood, verb usage, and morphological markers.



While blessings tend to project positivity and well-being (e.g., May you live long!), curses impose negative outcomes (May your plans fail!), and wishes often hover between hope and intent (I wish you success). Each of these is framed differently across languages, revealing both linguistic universals and cultural specifics.

2. Theoretical Framework

This research draws from several theoretical perspectives:

Speech Act Theory (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1975): Ritual utterances are acts in themselves, not mere descriptions.

Modality and Mood (Palmer, 2001): Focuses on how languages encode possibility, necessity, and desirability.

Linguistic Typology (Comrie, 1981): Analyzes morphosyntactic variation across languages.

Ethnolinguistics and Cultural Semantics (Wierzbicka, 1992): Explores how language encodes culturally shaped values and norms.

These frameworks enable a comparative exploration of how English and Uzbek employ grammatical resources to encode expressive intentions.

3. Sentence Mood and Modality

3.1 English Realizations English expresses blessings and wishes mainly through the optative mood using modal auxiliaries such as may, might, let, or should. These modals often appear in formalized expressions or ritual speech:

May your dreams come true.

Let us pray for peace.

Curses, though less commonly structured in ritual contexts in modern English, often use conditionals or emphatic modals:

May he suffer for what he did!

You should rot in jail!

3.2 Uzbek Realizations Uzbek frequently employs the optative mood via morphological markers such as -sin, -li, and -chi suffixes:

Omading ochiq bo'lsin! (May your luck be open!)

Do'stlaring sodiq bo'lsin! (May your friends be loyal!)



In curses, the language often uses intensified expressions with verbs in imperative or optative forms:

Ko‘zing ochilmasin! (May your eyes never open!)

Boshingga kul yog‘sin! (May ashes fall upon your head!)

Modality in Uzbek is also marked by verb endings and auxiliary particles that intensify or soften the utterance depending on social context.

4. Morphological Features

4.1 English English morphology in blessings and wishes relies largely on auxiliary modal verbs. These verbs do not inflect for person or number, maintaining a fixed form:

May she be happy.

Let them prosper.

There are occasional uses of archaic forms or fixed verb structures in literary or religious contexts (Blessed be the name of the Lord).

4.2 Uzbek

Uzbek makes extensive use of suffixation. Blessings and curses rely on agglutinative morphology:

Optative mood: -sin (third person), -li, -chi (adjectival or exclamatory emphasis)

Verb combinations: duo qil- (to bless), la‘natla- (to curse)

Examples:

Yaxshi yashang! (Live well!)

Baraka toping! (May you gain blessings!)

These suffixes encode mood, politeness, and emotional weight, and are key to understanding the communicative intent.

5. Syntactic Structure

5.1 English Syntax The typical sentence pattern in English for such expressions is Subject + Modal + Verb. The subject can be explicit or implied:

I wish you success.

May you never fail.

English also permits inversion for emphasis:

Blessed be the children of tomorrow.



5.2 Uzbek Syntax

Uzbek follows a Subject-Object-Verb (SOV) word order, with the verb typically placed at the end of the sentence. However, in blessings and curses, variations may occur for rhetorical or emotional emphasis:

Baxting baland bo‘lsin! (Lit. Your luck high may be.)

Tilang topilmasin! (Lit. Your tongue may not be found!)

The syntactic positioning often reflects the cultural preference for rhythm, memorability, and oral tradition in expressive speech acts.

6. Lexico-Grammatical Formulae

Blessings and wishes in both languages often use fixed expressions or idiomatic phrases. These formulae are shaped by religion, tradition, and folklore.

6.1 English Examples:

God bless you.(Xudo seni asrasin.)

Peace be upon you.(Tinchlik senga yor bo‘lsin.)

Heaven help us!(Tangri o‘zi madadkor bo‘lsin!)

6.2 Uzbek Examples:

Omad yo‘ldoshing bo‘lsin! (May luck accompany you.)

Tog‘dek baxt tilayman! (I wish you happiness as strong as a mountain.)

Ilohim umr yo‘ldoshing bilan baxtli bo‘l! (May you be happy with your life partner.)

These expressions show little structural variation and often appear in greetings, ceremonies, or public speeches.

7. Curses and Negative Polarity

7.1 English Curses English curses, though less frequent in polite speech, use negation and conditional clauses:

May your plans fail! (Rejalaring amalga oshmasin!)

I hope you never succeed! (Hech qachon omading chopmasin!)

These expressions often employ future tense or modals with negative polarity items (never, nothing, fail, etc.).

7.2 Uzbek Curses



Uzbek curses are more direct and often culturally bound. Common structures include imperative verbs and metaphorical constructions:

Yomg'irga qol! (Be left in the rain!)

Do'zaxda yon! (Burn in hell!)

Some curses have double functions – as insults or warnings – and are syntactically concise but emotionally strong.

8. Cultural and Functional Observations

In English, formality and politeness strategies often shape how blessings or wishes are expressed. Euphemisms and conditional forms are used to avoid direct cursing.

Uzbek, however, allows more direct emotional expression, particularly in folk speech. The grammatical richness of Uzbek supports nuanced expressive layers through suffixation and rhythm.

Additionally, many blessings and curses in Uzbek stem from religious and poetic traditions, often preserving archaic grammatical forms that still carry prestige and emotional impact.

9. Conclusion

The grammatical realization of blessings, curses, and wishes in English and Uzbek reveals both shared functions and distinct linguistic implementations. English relies on modal verbs and word order, whereas Uzbek draws on a rich system of suffixation and verb morphology.

This typological comparison underscores how each language channels social intentions into distinct grammatical forms, reflecting deeper cultural and communicative values. Further research could expand into prosody, intonation, and non-verbal cues that accompany these speech acts.

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