

## MULTIMODAL ASPECTS OF CONGRATULATORY AND WISH SPEECH ACTS IN MODERN COMMUNICATION

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**Abstract.** *Congratulations and wishes are everyday expressions that are used in all languages. This article examines the differences between the multimodal aspects of speech acts according to Searle's theories and finds that Uzbek expressions are generally longer and more emotional. In comparison, English expressions are shorter and more direct. However, in digital communication, both languages show similar patterns due to the use of emojis and informal style. The study concludes that speech act theory should be adapted to modern communication, where language is not only verbal but also multimodal.*

**Keywords:** *speech act theory, expressive speech acts, congratulations, wish expressions, multimodality, digital communication.*

**Аннотация.** *Поздравления и пожелания — это повседневные выражения, используемые во всех языках. В данной статье рассматривается различие между мультимодальными аспектами обоих речевых актов в соответствии с теориями Сёрла, и установлено, что узбекские выражения, как правило, длиннее и более эмоциональны, в то время как английские выражения короче и более прямолинейны. Однако в цифровой коммуникации оба языка демонстрируют схожие закономерности благодаря использованию эмодзи и неформальному стилю. Исследование приводит к выводу, что теорию речевых актов следует адаптировать к современной коммуникации, где язык является не только вербальным, но и мультимодальным.*

**Ключевые слова:** *теория речевых актов, экспрессивные речевые акты, поздравления, пожелания, мультимодальность, цифровая коммуникация.*

**Annotatsiya.** *Tabriklar va tilaklar barcha tillarda qo'llaniladigan kundalik iboralardir. Ushbu maqolada Searl nazariyasiga ko'ra har ikkala nutqiy harakatning multimodal jihatlari o'rtasidagi farq ko'rib chiqiladi va o'zbekcha iboralar odatda uzunroq va ko'proq emotsional, inglizcha iboralar esa qisqaroq va to'g'ridan-to'g'ri ekanligini aniqlaydi. Biroq, raqamli aloqada ikkala til ham kulgichlar va norasmiy uslubdan foydalanish tufayli o'xshash naqshlarni ko'rsatadi. Tadqiqot shuni ko'rsatadiki, nutq akti nazariyasi zamonaviy muloqotga moslashtirilishi kerak, bu erda til nafaqat og'zaki, balki multimodaldir.*

**Kalit so'zlar:** *nutq akti nazariyasi, ekspressiv nutq aktlari, tabriklar, tilaklar ifodasi, multimodallik, raqamli aloqa.*

### Introduction

In modern communication, people do not use only words to express their ideas and feelings. Today, communication often includes emojis, images, voice messages, and other visual elements. This type of communication is called multimodal communication. It is especially important in expressing emotions such as

congratulations and wishes, which are common in everyday interaction and help people build social connections.

From a pragmatic point of view, congratulations and wishes belong to expressive speech acts. They show the speaker's feelings, attitudes, and intentions. However, in real-life communication, especially in online environments, these speech acts are not always expressed in a direct way. People often use indirect expressions, symbols, or visual elements to deliver their message. Because of this, traditional speech act theory needs to be reconsidered in the context of modern communication.

Recent research confirms that digital communication has changed the way people use language. In particular, Murotova, G. N., studies the role of multimodal discourse in online communication between English and Uzbek speakers. The author explains that in digital diplomacy and online negotiations, communication is not only based on words but also supported by visual and contextual elements. The study shows that emojis, formatting, and other non-verbal tools help to express politeness, emotions, and intentions more clearly. It also highlights that speakers choose different strategies depending on culture, situation, and communication goals [1].

These ideas are important for understanding how congratulations and wishes function in modern communication. In Uzbek culture, such expressions are often longer, more emotional, and may include blessings. In English, they are usually shorter and more direct. However, in digital communication, both languages show new patterns, where visual elements and short forms play an important role. This article aims to analyze how congratulatory and wish speech acts are realized in multimodal communication. The study focuses on English and Uzbek languages and examines how verbal and non-verbal elements work together to express meaning and emotion in modern communication.

### **Literature Review**

Speech act theory is one of the main frameworks for understanding how people use language to express their intentions. The basic ideas of this theory were developed by J. L. Austin and later expanded by John Searle. They explained that when people speak, they do not only say words, but also perform actions such as apologizing, requesting, congratulating, or wishing. These actions are called speech acts. Among them, expressive speech acts are used to show feelings, emotions, and attitudes. Congratulations and wishes belong to this group because they reflect the positive emotions of the speaker. A more detailed and modern explanation of speech act theory is given by Björgvinsson, L. Á., who provides a critical overview of the theory and its development. The author explains that speech acts should not be studied only as fixed categories, but also in relation to context, culture, and real communication. This idea is important for the present study because congratulatory and wish expressions can change depending on the situation and communication environment [2]. Recent research shows that speech acts are now studied more broadly and practically. Noor et al. (2025) focus on how speech acts and implicatures work in real-life communication. They highlight that meaning is often not direct and depends on context, shared knowledge, and the speaker's intention. This is especially true for expressive speech acts, where emotions can be expressed both directly and indirectly. Their study shows that modern pragmatics pays more attention to how language is actually used in different situations, rather than only theoretical classification [3]. At the same time, communication today is strongly influenced by digital technologies. Abduganiyeva (2025) studies multimodal

communication in social media and compares English and Uzbek discourse. The author shows that people use not only words, but also emojis, images, and other visual tools to express meaning. These elements help to make communication more expressive and emotional. For example, congratulations and wishes in social media often include emojis or visual symbols, which support or even replace verbal expressions. This proves that speech acts in modern communication are often multimodal in nature [4]. Cross-cultural differences are also important in understanding speech acts. Ganiev (2024) analyzes how speech acts vary between Uzbek and English speakers. Although the study focuses on complaints, it clearly shows that cultural norms influence how people express their intentions. Uzbek communication is often more indirect and polite, while English communication can be more direct. These differences are also relevant for congratulatory and wish expressions, which may vary in length, emotional tone, and form depending on cultural background [5]. Overall, the reviewed studies show that speech act theory remains important, but it needs to be adapted to modern communication. Researchers agree that speech acts should be studied in context, taking into account culture, digital communication, and multimodal elements. However, there is still a lack of research that focuses specifically on congratulatory and wish speech acts from a multimodal and cross-cultural perspective. This gap forms the basis for the present study.

### **Methodology**

This study uses a qualitative approach to analyze how congratulatory and wish speech acts are expressed in modern communication. The research focuses on English and Uzbek languages and pays special attention to multimodal elements such as emojis, images, and text combinations.

The data for this study were collected from social media platforms such as Telegram, Instagram, and Facebook. These platforms were chosen because they are widely used for everyday communication and include many examples of congratulations and wishes. A total of around 50–70 examples were selected in both English and Uzbek. The examples include:

- birthday wishes
- Congratulations on achievements
- holiday greetings
- informal and formal messages

Both text-only and multimodal messages (with emojis, images, or symbols) were included in the data.

The collected data were analyzed using principles of speech act theory developed by John Searle. The analysis focused on identifying:

- types of speech acts (direct/indirect)
- expressive functions (emotion, politeness, support)
- use of multimodal elements (emoji, punctuation, visuals)

In addition, a comparative method was used to identify similarities and differences between English and Uzbek expressions. The study aims to answer the following questions:

1. How are congratulatory and wish speech acts expressed in English and Uzbek?
2. What role do multimodal elements play in these expressions?
3. What are the main differences between English and Uzbek communication styles?

## Results

This section presents the analysis of congratulatory and wish speech acts in English and Uzbek, with attention to both verbal and multimodal features.

1. Types of congratulatory and wish speech acts. The analysis shows that both English and Uzbek use direct and indirect speech acts to express congratulations and wishes. Direct expressions are clear and explicit:

- English: “Congratulations!”, “Happy Birthday!”
- Uzbek: “Tabriklayman!”, “Tug‘ilgan kuningiz bilan!”

These forms are short and easy to understand. They are commonly used in both formal and informal communication. Indirect forms are more expressive and often show deeper emotional involvement, and they are less direct and often include additional meaning:

- English: “That’s amazing news!”, “I’m really happy for you.”
- Uzbek: “Yutuqlaringiz bardavom bo‘lsin”, “Omad sizni tark etmasin.”

2. Expressive Functions According to John Searle, expressive speech acts show the speaker’s feelings. The data confirm that congratulatory and wish expressions mainly perform the following functions:

- showing happiness (“I’m so happy for you!”)
- expressing support (“Wishing you success!”)
- strengthening relationships (“Always proud of you!”)

In Uzbek, these functions are often stronger and more emotional, with longer expressions and blessings.

3. Multimodal Features in Communication. One of the most important findings is the active use of multimodal elements. In English messages, emojis are frequently used, and short forms (HBD, Congrats) appear often, and repetition of punctuation adds emotion. In Uzbek messages, emojis are also widely used, and text is often longer and more detailed. Blessings and kind wishes are combined with visuals

## Discussion

The results of this study show that congratulatory and wish expressions are not only simple phrases, but complex communicative actions that depend on context, culture, and communication form. From the perspective of speech act theory developed by John Searle, these expressions clearly belong to expressive speech acts because they reflect the speaker’s emotions and attitudes. However, the findings of this study show that in modern communication, their realization is more flexible and dynamic than traditional theory suggests.

One important point is the use of both direct and indirect forms. While traditional theory explains speech acts as clear categories, the data show that real communication often combines different functions. For example, a congratulatory message may also include elements of support, politeness, or even encouragement. This idea supports the view that speech acts should be studied in context, as suggested in modern pragmatic research [3].

Another important finding is the role of multimodality. The study confirms that communication today is not only verbal. As shown in the work of Abduganiyeva, M., multimodal elements such as emojis and visual signs play an important role in expressing meaning. The results of this research support this idea and show that emojis often strengthen emotional meaning or even replace words in congratulatory and wish

expressions. This means that traditional speech act theory should be expanded to include non-verbal elements.

Cultural differences also play a key role. The findings are in line with the research of Ganiev, A., which shows that communication styles vary between English and Uzbek speakers. In this study, Uzbek expressions were found to be longer, more emotional, and more focused on relationships. English expressions, on the other hand, were shorter and more direct. However, in digital communication, these differences become less clear, as both languages use similar multimodal tools such as emojis and informal expressions.

### **Conclusion**

This study examined how congratulatory and wish speech acts are expressed in modern communication in English and Uzbek. The results show that these expressions belong to expressive speech acts, as they mainly reflect the speaker's emotions and attitudes. However, the study also shows that their use is more flexible and context-dependent than traditional speech act theory explains.

The analysis revealed that both direct and indirect forms are actively used in communication. Direct expressions are short and clear, while indirect ones are more expressive and often include additional meanings such as support or politeness. In Uzbek, expressions tend to be longer and more emotional, often including blessings, while in English they are usually shorter and more direct. An important finding of this study is the role of multimodal elements. Emojis, punctuation, and visual symbols are widely used in both languages to express emotions and strengthen meaning. In many cases, these elements support or even replace words. This shows that modern communication cannot be fully understood without considering multimodality.

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