



# Onomatopoeia and Interjections

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**Abstract:** This study explores the differences between interjections and onomatopoeic units in English and Uzbek. Though both are expressive linguistic elements, they serve distinct roles in language. Using descriptive and comparative methods, this paper highlights their structural, functional, and semantic distinctions, supported by examples from English and Uzbek. Findings reveal that while interjections primarily express emotion or reaction, onomatopoeic units imitate natural sounds, with clear divergence in form, function, and syntactic behavior. Literary texts also demonstrate that both forms serve to enhance emotion and imagery, though in different stylistic ways.

**Keywords:** Onomatopoeia, interjections, part of speech, main differences, expressive means.

**Introduction:** Interjection is considered in many grammars and dictionaries a part of speech into which a great diversity of words are ranked, including fillers, primary and secondary interjections, exclamations of all kinds and onomatopoeias. The aim of this article is to distinguish onomatopoeias from interjections on a semantic and grammatical standpoint. Indeed, the definitions of interjections that are given in the specialized literature do not match at all with the concept of onomatopoeia. Whether or not interjection can be considered a part of speech will also be discussed: even though part of speech is a prevailing concept in linguistics, its definition is as vague as essential. Expressive language units such as interjections and onomatopoeic words hold a significant place in everyday communication. At first glance, these elements appear similar due to their emotional and sensory impact. However, a deeper linguistic analysis shows that they are fundamentally different in terms of their structure, meaning, and communicative function.

Interjections are spontaneous utterances that express emotions such as surprise, pain, joy, or fear (e.g., Oh! Wow! Ouch!), while onomatopoeic units are words that imitate real-world sounds (e.g., buzz, crash, meow). Despite occasional overlap, these two categories fulfill different roles in language. This study aims to clearly define and distinguish them within a comparative linguistic framework.

## METHODS

A qualitative and comparative linguistic analysis was conducted to examine interjections and onomatopoeic units in English. Data were collected from: Academic sources and linguistic databases, English and Uzbek literary texts. Spoken discourse and media (e.g., films, dialogue) Online dictionaries and grammar references.

## RESULTS

The first issue is to isolate interjections from other types of words. Because they are uninflected (Ameka, 1992), they have been mixed up with adverbs and because they are syntactically isolated, they have been confused with routines, fillers and onomatopoeias. Adverbs directly influence the meaning of the verb or the adjective they are attached to: "It is very painful" versus "Ouch! It is painful!" When investigating on the status and definition of interjections and

onomatopoeias, one is confronted to a recurrent problem: are interjections parts of speech? This question cannot be avoided here, since all the kinds of words that I have evoked until now share this in common that there are labels as "interjection", in the sense "the category13 interjection". If i2 are sentence-equivalents and contain an implied predicative relation, then they do not constitute a grammatical category. Thus, onomatopoeias should not be ranked into the category of interjections at least because interjections do not even constitute a grammatical category. Onomatopoeias, on the contrary, being both oriented toward an object of conceptualization and a subject of conceptualization. Interjections are often standalone words, syntactically independent (e.g., Oh no!, Aha!). Onomatopoeic units can function as verbs, nouns, or modifiers (e.g., The clock ticked, a loud bang). This highlights their syntactic function as part of speech and make it easy to establish relationship with other speech parts in the sentence. Interjections convey emotion or spontaneous reaction. Onomatopoeic words convey sound imitation, often tied to sensory perception. From this point of view, they are interpreted as the object of cognitive linguistics which make them totally separate from interjections. In the table below the main differences between interjection and onomatopoeic units are expressed generally:

Feature	Interjections	Onomatopoeic Units
Function	Express emotion or mental reaction	Mimic real-world sounds
Examples	Wow! Ouch! Huh? Voy! Eh! Uff!	Buzz, bang, splash, click G'uvillamoq, shaldiramoq, miyov.
Syntactic Role	Independent or parenthetical	Part of a sentence grammar(e.g.verb/noun)

## DISCUSSION

The analysis clearly shows that although interjections and onomatopoeic units both contribute to expressiveness in language, they differ in origin, function, and grammar. Interjections are primarily affective and situational, often lacking grammatical relationships with other sentence parts. In contrast, onomatopoeic units are more descriptive and often become fully integrated into sentence structure. In English and Uzbek, similar patterns exist. For example, "Wow!" in English and "Voy!" in Uzbek are both interjections, while "buzz" and "g'uvillamoq" represent onomatopoeia in their respective languages. This confirms that the distinction is cross-linguistically valid, although the inventory of sounds and expressions may differ. Both interjections and onomatopoeic units are stylistically important in literary works. They help writers express emotion,

intensify scenes, and build atmosphere. Here are some examples from English literature: interjections: "O Romeo, Romeo! wherefore art thou Romeo?"(Shakespeare, in Romeo and Juliet) "O" expresses deep emotional longing.

Charles Dickens, in Oliver Twist: frequent use of "Oh!", "Hah!", and "Ugh!" in dialogues shows real-time reactions. Edgar Allan Poe, in The Bells:

"How they clang, and clash, and roar!" Evokes an intense auditory scene using multiple sound-based words. Beatrix Potter, in The Tale of Peter Rabbit: "Flop," "snip-snap," "patter" — playful sound imitation for children's engagement.

Examples from Uzbek literature shows that interjection can be served to describe the expressiveness of the speech. Abdulla Qodiriy, in O'tkan kunlar: "Voy dod!", "Eh, bechora!" — in these examples interjections heighten emotional tension. In other examples they

may be used to express regret, affection, or moral shock.

“Shamol g’uvillaydi, daraxtlar shitirlaydi...” G’afur G’ulom

Vividly creates the sound of a stormy setting through sound-imitating verb: shitirlaydi. Apart from literary works many children’s books include different types of both onomatopoeia and interjections like “vov-vov”, “miyov”, “qiyq” for dogs, cats, birds respectively — both educational and aesthetic.

## CONCLUSION

Interjections and onomatopoeic units represent two distinct yet expressive components of language. While interjections express immediate emotional responses and exist outside regular syntax, onomatopoeic units mimic sounds and function grammatically. Although their function is sometimes equal when enter mainly literary speech, morphologically they have certain contrary features. When analyzed from cognitive point of view, onomatopoeia can come close to sound symbolism while interjections have no any connection between form and meaning relations. In literary contexts, both enhance emotional tone and imagery, yet they do so through different linguistic channels. Recognizing their distinctions not only deepens our understanding of expressive language but also benefits literary analysis, language teaching, and translation studies.

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