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**Araştırma Makalesi \* Research Article**

## Appraisals in Diplomatic Condolences Addressed to 2023 Earthquakes in Türkiye

### 2023'te Türkiye'deki Depremler ile İlgili Diplomatik Taziyelerde Değerlendirmeler

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**Abstract:** Diplomatic condolences involve appraisals, sympathy, and solidarity. Cultural norms influence the ways of expressing diplomatic condolences. On 6th February, 2023, Kahramanmaraş and 11 nearby cities in Türkiye and Syria were struck by two rampant earthquakes, which were labeled as the deadliest disaster of the century. In the aftermath of this disaster, national leaders across the world extended their condolences to Türkiye and Syria. The present study examined cultural variations in the use of appraisals in diplomatic condolences following the two catastrophic earthquakes that struck Kahramanmaraş, Türkiye, in 2023. The data of the study included 17 diplomatic condolences which were collected from the official websites of the governments and ministries of the counties. Following the appraisal taxonomy of Martin and White (2005), it was found that engagement was the most prevalent category of appraisals preferred by the national leaders. The attitude category of appraisal was also common in the data. Graduation was not a dominant aspect of diplomatic condolences. The results also probed cross-cultural differences in the diplomatic condolences. The sentimental analysis ran as a follow-up analysis revealed both positive and negative polarization in the diplomatic condolences. The themes derived from the sentimental analysis mostly carried identical items of appraisals found.

**Keywords:** Diplomatic discourse, condolences, culture and language, appraisals, sentiment polarization.

**Öz:** Diplomatik taziyeler değerlendirme, sempati ve dayanışma içerir. Kültürel normlar, diplomatik taziyele ifade etme yollarını belirler. 6 Şubat, 2023 tarihinde, Türkiye'de bulunan Kahramanmaraş ve 11 yakın şehir ile Suriye'deki bazı şehirler, yüzyılın en ölümcül felaketi olarak nitelendirilen iki büyük depremle sarsıldı. Bu felaketin ardından dünyanın dört bir yanındaki ulusal liderler Türkiye ve Suriye'ye başsağlığı diledi. Bu çalışma, 2023 yılında Kahramanmaraş'ta meydana gelen iki felaket depreminin ardından diplomatik taziyelerde değerlendirmelerin kullanımındaki kültürel farklılıkları incelemiştir. Çalışmanın verileri, hükümetlerin ve bakanlıkların resmi web sitelerinden toplanan 17 diplomatik taziye içerilmektedir. Martin ve White'ın (2005) değerlendirme taksonomisinin kullanılarak, ilişki belirleyicilerin ulusal liderler tarafından tercih edilen en yaygın değerlendirme kategorisi olduğu bulunmuştur. Değerleme tutum belirleyiciler kategorisinin de verilerde yaygın olarak kullanıldığı görülmüştür. Dereceleme kategorisi, diplomatik taziyelerde yaygın olarak kullanılmamıştır. Sonuçlar ayrıca diplomatik taziyelerdeki kültürler arası farklılıkların olduğunu da ortaya koymuştur. Duygu analizi, diplomatik taziyelerde hem olumlu hem de olumsuz kutuplaşmayı ortaya koymuştur. Duygu analizden türetilen temalar çoğunlukla bulunan benzer değerlendirme öğelerini taşımaktadır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Diplomatik söylem, taziyeler, kültür ve dil, değerlendirmeler, duygu analizi.

## INTRODUCTION

Diplomatic discourse has long been a question of great interest in the field of linguistics. It is easily distinguishable from other institutional discourses due to its specific communicative intentions and the linguistic devices used to maintain these intentions. In this context, conscious choice of lexis and structures is crucial to persuade the public and to regulate interstate relations. In tandem, such linguistic choices strategically applied in certain diplomatic contexts influence the position of a leader or a country through the lens of other nations. Diplomatic discourse is a specific discourse in its own right.

For McConnell and Dittmer (2016: 104), diplomacy could be defined as “the practice of conducting negotiations between representatives of distinct communities.” Hence, the culture exchange including “the promotion of particular ideas and values and the mediation of different values and political priorities” constitutes the core of it. In our century, diplomacy is a universal dimension of international societies but it requires estranged policies – different from one another. From this perspective, diplomacy is a means of negotiation between estranged members of the international communities. Kosovych et al. (2022: 157) define diplomatic discourse as “identifying the main characteristics of this type of institutional communication and its differences from other types of communication that are similar to diplomatic communication in certain parameters.” These parameters involve the specificity of the agent of social action and the intentional basis of discourse. In this sense, diplomatic discourse is closely associated with the speaker, the addressee, and the intention of the speaker.

In the context of diplomatic discourse, the intentions of the speakers who are mostly political leaders or highly-profiled politicians may be to inform or persuade the general public, to express views of the government, to reach an agreement on a national or international basis, and to maintain solidarity with other states. These intentions could be maintained through various genres of diplomatic discourse such as official diplomatic documents, national leaders’ speeches, interstate treaties, agreements, declarations, statements, condolences, and press conferences. Depending on the particular purposes of diplomatic communication, political leaders utilize different linguistic strategies and devices in these genres.

Among diplomatic discourse genres, diplomatic condolences are crucial due to the communication goals they carry out. The ultimate communication goal of this diplomatic genre is to establish solidarity with other states or nations. In other words, in diplomatic discourse, world leaders or politicians are members of the diplomatic community and condolences manifest a distinctive function, accomplishing solidarity and sharing the grief of other nations. The language of condolences is formed by and through a social purpose, and within a community and the linguistic performance of condolence statements signifies an important element of discourse analysis (Iqbal & Bilali, 2018). Accordingly, discursive and linguistic analysis of condolences has been a subject of studies in the field of discourse analysis.

Klass (2014: 6) explains the root of condolence, which is “dolere, to feel hurt or suffer pain, and con, with”. Condoling refers to “suffering together” and it is not used as a verb like to condole someone”. For Williams (2006), the act of giving condolences is difficult in many cultures. Being sensitive has different meanings depending on the situation and participants. In some cases, it is expressing involvement and asking questions, and in some cases, it refers not to prying and respecting an individual’s privacy.

In a sociolinguistic study, Williams (2006) analyzed condolences using the framework of linguistic politeness and identified three specific strategies in condolences: (1) acknowledgment of sympathy, (2) question of concern, and (3) inquiry for information. Twumasi (2022) focused on identity construction categories enacted for the deceased in condolences: role identity and social identity. In a corpus of condolences compiled from Jordanian newspapers, Al-Ali (2005) found that condolences reflected various information about the sociocultural norms and practices conveyed through rhetorical and organizational patterns. Kongo and Gyasi (2015) examined letters of condolences written in Arabic, English, French, and German in terms of schematic structure and linguistic features and found nine moves, six of which were compulsory.

Some studies in the literature on condolences pay particular attention to speech act properties of this specific genre. Lotfollahi and Eslami-Rasekh (2011) concentrated on the speech act of condolences in Persian and English. Persian condolences were more based on religious norms than English condolences and social distance had a big influence on the frequency of speech acts in the two cultures. In another study, Nurlianiingsih, and Imperiani (2020) identified strategies in condolence speech acts by Indonesians regarding the effect of power and distance. Seeking absolution from God and expression of sympathy was the most prevalent strategy following future-oriented remarks, offers of assistance, expressions of concern, related questions, and acknowledgment of the death.

In the literature, there have been some attempts to identify linguistic properties of diplomatic condolences. In a critical discourse study, Fenton-Smith (2007) attempted to identify the discursive strategies in the diplomatic condolences of world leaders due to the death of Yasser Arafat. Two major discursive strategies emerged from the analysis: describing the circumstances in which the news of the death has been received and giving condolence. In a recent study, Moghaddam and Tommerdahl (2023) investigated the syntactic and pragmatic aspects of condolence e-messages about the *Paris Attacks of 2015* and observed the impact of sociocultural factors in the variations in the production of condolence e-messages across different cultures. Considering the prominent role of translation and media in diplomatic communication, Karakoç (2017) analyzed the use of a translation strategy - the *calques* - in the Turkish translations of condolence messages after a terrorist attack and reported unconventional linguistic uses of this translation strategy in diplomatic register in Turkish media translations of condolence messages.

On 6 February 2023, at 4.17 a large earthquake (M 7.8 and Mercalli intensity of XII) struck Kahramanmaraş and its nearby provinces in Türkiye and some regions in Syria. It was followed by another huge earthquake (M 7.6) at 13.24 in the same region. There was widespread damage from the earthquakes in 11 cities of Türkiye particularly in Kahramanmaraş and Hatay. Within the earthquake zone, 53.537 deaths and 107.213 injuries were officially reported by the Ministry of Interior of Türkiye. Millions of people were left homeless. There were almost 40.000 aftershocks in the year that followed. According to the reports of USGS (2023), since 1900, these two earthquakes were the largest seismically documented earthquakes on the East Anatolian fault.

Within the space of 12 hours, the people in the region had experienced two catastrophic earthquakes, the impact of which will never be forgotten. As a citizen of Kahramanmaraş, I could say that we still live in the remains of these earthquakes even after a year. The world was shocked by the scale of the disaster and national leaders across the world released official statements of condolences stating their grief and readiness for help. These condolences were more than perfunctory grief statements or speeches – they represented unity in the international community in which each national leader formulated their appraisal of the prominence of these catastrophic earthquakes. At the cutting edge of this study is the analysis of appraisals of national leaders' condolences released after the catastrophic earthquakes in Türkiye on 6 February 2023. It also concentrates on the cross-cultural variations and the sentiment polarization of this diplomatic genre.

- How do national leaders formulate their appraisals in diplomatic condolences?
- How was the polarization of sentiments manifested in diplomatic condolences?

## METHODOLOGY

The present study is based on the assumptions of the international community which is created through diplomatic language constrained by the cultural and linguistic norms of a particular community. As a genre of diplomatic language, condolences have their own cultural and linguistic properties. For Fenton-Smith (2007: 698), "condolence messages are used to signify membership of the international community, but also that there is a certain global diplomatic etiquette that constrains what may or may not be said in them." Then, an analytical approach is required to view the cultural and linguistic norms of a particular community in the genre of condolences.

Martin and Wodak (2003) point out that discourse analysis does not consist of a specific theory but needs different methodologies to identify cultural and linguistic elements of certain discursive contexts. Thus, this study included different methodologies. The appraisal framework suggested by

Martin and White (2005) was employed to label the national leaders' strategies of conveying appraisals and constructing solidarity with the Turkish people and Government in their condolences. Additionally, sentiment analysis was run to calculate the sentiment polarization of the national leaders' condolences about these two devastating earthquakes.

## Data Collection

In the wake of two devastating earthquakes in Kahramanmaraş, Türkiye on 6 February 2023, national leaders held phone talks with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and expressed their condolences. Suffice it to add that they also sent humanitarian emergencies, responders, and rescue teams to the quake-stricken areas. Some of them visited the cities in which the earthquakes hit. Most of them also released condolence statements or speeches on the official websites of their governments and ministries, which constituted the data of the present study. Through a key phrase including "official (diplomatic) condolences for the earthquakes in Türkiye, 2023", official condolences of national leaders were searched on Google. Official condolences on the official web pages of the countries were gathered together to compile the data. The condolences were collected by the researcher verbatim.

The condolences studied here came from 17 countries, all originating from the official government websites of the relevant countries (See Appendix 1). All condolences were posted in English. Eight of the messages were authored (at least nominally) by the countries' national leaders while the others were issued by a government office on behalf of the national leaders and government or nations.

## Data Analysis

The ultimate concern of the present study was to reveal how national leaders articulated their appraisals in diplomatic condolences. To do this, the appraisal framework developed by Martin and White (2005) was utilized. The taxonomy includes three evaluative categories—attitude, engagement, and graduation—with each of which consists of specific sub-categories. Attitude conveys the feelings of writers. Engagement is concerned with writer's stance and grading is grading phenomena through strong presentation of feelings.

Data analysis performed by identifying and describing the system of appraisal categories consisting of attitude, engagement, and graduation and subsystems was done through CATMA 7 available at <https://catma.de>. It is a free online analysis tool that enables researchers employ different methodologies. In the present study, a taxonomy-guided approach was adapted with the use of the appraisal framework developed by Martin and White (2005). Firstly, the data were uploaded to CATMA 7 and the categories and subcategories of the appraisal taxonomy were identified in the system. To ensure the reliability of the analysis, the analysis of the three condolences selected randomly was done by an outsider who earned a doctoral degree in the field of English linguistics. All disagreements were discussed prior to the comprehensive implementation of the tagging. Then, the annotations of the appraisal categories were done by the researcher and presented in tables by indicating the total and categorical frequencies and percentages of the categories which were further illustrated by the examples drawn from the data.

According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary available at <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sentiment>, a sentiment is "an attitude, thought, or judgment prompted by feeling" and "the emotional significance of a passage or expression as distinguished from its verbal context". Liu (2020: 2) states that sentimental analysis concentrates on views that "express or imply positive or negative sentiments". He further uses the term opinion to refer to sentiment, evaluation, appraisal, and attitude. Thus, it is assumed that as a follow-up analysis, sentiment analysis was beneficial to further examine the degree of appraisals in diplomatic condolences. A free online sentiment analysis tool available at <https://text2data.com/> was utilized to run the sentiment analysis of the diplomatic condolences. Each condolence was uploaded to the application and the overall sentiment score (whether positive or negative) in addition to sentiment scores of detected themes for each condolence were calculated and the results were presented in a table.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

On 6 February 2023, Kahramanmaraş and nearby cities in Türkiye were struck by two devastating earthquakes, which also had a big impact in some regions of Syria. These earthquakes were not only the deadliest earthquakes of the century but also left psychological scars on the citizens of the affected cities. In the aftermath of these earthquakes, national leaders across the world released diplomatic condolences for the Government of Türkiye and its citizens. The main concern of the present study was to explore the properties of appraisals in these diplomatic condolences of the national leaders. Table 1 displays the overall and categorical distributions of the appraisals of 18 diplomatic condolences to the Government of Türkiye and the victims of the Kahramanmaraş earthquakes. Engagement was the most preferred appraisal category with a percentage of 49 %, which was followed by attitude (41 %). The percentage of 10 showed that graduation was the least employed category of appraisal. Regarding the subcategories engagement, heterogloss emerged more frequently compared to monogloss. The subcategories of attitude shared nearly the same percentages in this study. Force was more employed than focus as the subcategories of graduation.

**Table 1.** *Overall and Categorical Distributions of Appraisals*

Appraisal categories	F	%
<b>attitude</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>41</b>
affect	47	15
judgment	40	12
appreciation	46	14
<b>engagement</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>49</b>
monogloss	52	16
heterogloss	109	33
<b>graduation</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>10</b>
force	26	8
focus	7	2
	<b>327</b>	<b>100</b>

Diplomatic condolences map onto the articulation of solidarity which is conceptualized as a part of the engagement process. The appearance of engagement as the prevalent category of appraisals might demonstrate that the alignment of solidarity was closely associated with the engagement of the appraisee in diplomatic condolences. The underlying reason behind the dominant use of the attitude category is that national leaders' preferences for conveying their feelings in condolences are matched by their linguistic styles. In order to maintain engagement and solidarity, national leaders seemed to avoid amplifying the feelings through graduation. Additionally, feelings cannot be manipulated easily in diplomatic language.

As shown in Table 2 seven words emerged as the most frequently occurring lexical items in the data. Consistent with Moghaddam and Tommerdahl (2023), the word condolence was the most employed item of appraisals in this context. Condolences and saddened which belong to the category of affect were the expression of feelings or emotional responses of the national leaders. As examples of appreciation, victims and devastating were seen frequently. The rest of the most common words were three distinguishing illustrations of the force category. Deeply and immediately explicitly illustrated the process of intensification by maximizing the content while all was associated with quantification.



**Table 2.** *The Most Common Words for Appraisals*

	F
condolences	15
saddened	12
victims	12
deeply	9
all	9
devastating	9
immediately	7

We now turn to the analysis of engagement resources in the diplomatic condolences by exploring their dialogistic functionality with a specific focus on potential effects on putative audience construal and solidarity. Martin and White (2005, p. 36) define engagement as

how resources such as projection, modality, polarity, concession, and various comment adverbials position the speaker/writer concerning the value position being advanced and with respect to potential responses to that value position – by quoting or reporting, acknowledging a possibility, denying, countering, affirming and so on.

As can be understood from the definition, engagement can be maintained through various means. Martin and White (2005) explain that the taxonomy of appraisal is directed towards identifying two main positions of engagement: monogloss and heterogloss. Monoglossic utterances are taken for granted and make no reference to others' viewpoints or voices. These utterances are un-dialogized and present the current propositional content. Heteroglossic discourse is open to alternative viewpoints and anticipated responses and is positioned in four specific ways:

- disclaim: is the means of rejecting some positions.
- proclaim: represents the proposition as highly warrantable.
- entertain: presents the possible propositions explicitly.
- attribute: is associated with the subjectivity of an external voice.

In our analysis, engagement was the most applied appraisal strategy. Consistent with Li and Zhang (2021), monogloss was less preferred - with a percentage of 16 - than heterogloss (33 %). It is likely that national leaders tended to construe their condolences as dialogically engaged with an explicit intention to mitigate solidarity with Türkiye. Monoglossic utterances mostly explained the current circumstances in the earthquake regions and what was done to help those in those regions as seen in the following examples. Bolewski (2008) mentions a "can-do" approach grounded on the belief that the environment can be operated for specific purposes. An objective is set to improve a plan and the change is done following that plan. Strengthening the monoglossic utterances emphasized the certainty of the proposition and urgent actions to be taken.

(1) More than 47,000 people have lost their lives. Tens of thousands who were rescued from the ruins of their houses have suffered severe physical and psychological damage. (taken from the condolence of Germany)

(2) The aid provided by France corresponds to the request formulated by the Turkish authorities via the EU Civil Protection Mechanism (UCPM), which enables disaster-struck countries to seek help from Europe. (taken from the condolence of France)

Regarding the subcategories heterogloss, disclaim was not found in the data. Proclaim constituted 48 % of the heteroglossic utterances. Martin and White (2005, p. 127) explain that the category of pronounce as proclaim "covers formulations which involve authorial emphases or explicit authorial interventions or interpolations."

Proclaim as the explicit authorial stance was demonstrated in the following extract taken from a speech by US President Joe Biden in which he expressed his condolences to Türkiye. The formulation, of first-person pronouns, showed an overt intervention in the text by the authorial voice.

(3) Jill and I were deeply saddened by the news of the devastating earthquakes that have thus far claimed thousands of lives in Türkiye and Syria. (taken from the condolence of the USA)

The condolences of seven countries - The USA, Japan, Germany, the UK, Wales, Israel, and Kosovo – included explicit stances of the national leaders mitigated by the first person pronouns. The employment of proclaim could be explained by many factors of diplomatic culture, one of which is high and low context cultures. Low-context cultures are characterized by clear and direct communication whereas high-context cultures follow an implicit and indirect strategy in diplomacy. Bolewski (2008) explains that American diplomats appear to be direct and explicit in diplomacy. Regardless of the diversity in Europe, the countries in the region have developed a unity in diplomatic language since they have worked together in the organization of the European Union for a long time. In our case, the condolences of the USA, Germany, the UK, and Wales formulated by the use of first-person pronouns might exemplify low context cultures. According to Bolewski (2008), Japan is a high-context culture shaped by implicit linguistic strategies. Surprisingly, in our case, the condolence of Japan exhibited the employment of first-person pronouns, which is a clear indication of low-context culture as seen in the extract (4). Japan is a country that experiences earthquakes with a magnitude greater than or equal to 7.0. Hence, the Japanese national leader - Prime Minister Kishida Fumio – might have employed explicit language to create a sense of solidarity between the two countries who share the same destiny. Similarly, Kosovo and Türkiye have deep-rooted historical ties. Thus, the condolence of Kosovo was mitigated by the frequent use of explicit proclaim categories to emphasize historical and cultural ties between the two countries, as shown in (4). Burleson (2003) claims that social support requires a particular level of relational knowledge and history with the receiver. In our case, we see a certain level of relational knowledge in Japanese condolence and history the condolence of Kosovo.

(4) I am deeply grieved and saddened at the news of the large number of people who lost their lives or suffered injuries as a result of the earthquake that struck southern Turkey on February 6. (taken from the condolence of Kosovo)

Diplomats use language to navigate power dynamics (Baartman, 2023). The language used by the Israeli national leader in the condolence seemed to carry the weight of power. After the earthquakes, The Government of Türkiye requested emergency assistance from the countries to respond to the urgent needs of earthquake victims. However, only in the condolence of Israel, this request was highlighted, as seen in the extract (5). All the other national leaders expressed their condolences and willingness to do anything that help the victims of the earthquakes.

(5) At the request of the Turkish government, I have instructed all authorities to make immediate preparations to provide medical, and search and rescue assistance. (taken from the condolence of the Israel)

Attribute was another frequently preferred strategy, accounting for 43% of the total. It presents a proposition from the subjective perspective of an external voice. The textual voice creates a space for a range of possible positions and invokes dialogic alternatives. This category was observed more frequently in the nine condolences that were released on behalf of the national leaders (Hungary, China, France, Australia, Spain, Portugal, Qatar, Egypt, and Pakistan). It mostly appeared in the grammar of reported speech with the pervasive use of say and express reporting verbs. In the below examples, we can see the attribution by acknowledging the condolence of China and Spain.

(6) Xi said that upon learning of the earthquakes, which caused heavy casualties and property losses in Türkiye and Syria, he would like to express deep condolences to the victims and offer sincere sympathies to the bereaved families and the injured on behalf of the Chinese government and people. (taken from the condolence of the China)

(7) The Government of Spain expresses its condolences for the victims of the earthquakes that occurred this morning in Turkey, Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq.

Presenting the propositional content based on its contingent and subjectivity, entertain was the least employed category of heteroglossic discourse (9 %). National leaders rendered some utterances

into heterogloss by mostly adding the entertaining expression will. This high-intensity modality option is a means of high investment in the proposition. The employment of the modal will in (8) and (9) were the illustrations of a strong commitment to a viewpoint by the national leaders. They created sensitive utterances about their intentions to stand by the side of Türkiye (an expression of solidarity) and the recovery of Türkiye.

(8) Based on our capacities, we will help overcome this tragedy. (taken from the condolence of Kosovo)

(9) We will remain by your side. (taken from the condolence of Germany)

Diplomatic condolences seemed to be rich in attitudes (with a percentage of 41 of appraisals). As the second most frequent category of appraisal, attitude showed the mapping of feelings in diplomatic condolences. Affect is associated with intimating positive and negative feelings. Consider by way of example the following examples in which the feelings are construed as sad ones in the condolences through a range of grammatical structures: nouns (10, 11), a metaphor (12), and adjectives (13). Due to the circumstances and the features of the genre, affect was observed to convey negative feelings in the diplomatic condolences.

(10) On his behalf and on behalf of the people of Azerbaijan, President Ilham Aliyev extended his condolences to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the families of the deceased, and the people of Türkiye. (taken from the condolence of Azerbaijan)

(11) The government and people of Pakistan received the news of a massive earthquake in Southern Türkiye earlier today, with deep sorrow and anguish. (taken from the condolence of Pakistan)

(12) The news from the destroyed towns and cities leaves us speechless. (taken from the condolence of Germany)

(13) I am deeply grieved and saddened at the news of the large number of people who lost their lives or suffered injuries as a result of the earthquake that struck southern Turkey on February 6. (taken from the condolence of Japan)

Judgment is about the evaluation of one's attitude towards others and the realization of the behavior in a text. Judgment is divided into two categories: those related to social rewards and social sanctions. The latter is driven by cultural and social conventions. Judgment driven by social sanctions includes an evaluation of religious, moral, or legal rules or regulations. In the following example, the Syrian national leader's behavior – blocking humanitarian assistance – was evaluated negatively by Steinmeier. The words victims and rampant in (15) carried a heavy weight socially since thousands of people died, and millions of them lost their loved ones. These earthquakes were so devastating that they might only receive negative judgements.

(14) Nobody has the right to block humanitarian assistance! (taken from the condolence of Germany)

(15) Please convey words of sincere sympathy and support to the families and friends of the victims, as well as wishes for a speedy recovery to all those affected as a result of the rampant disaster (taken from the condolence of Russia)

The last category of attitude is defined as appreciation reflecting positive or negative assessments of the form, appearance, construction, presentation, or impact of objects and entities. The realization of the attitude of appreciation by the national leader of Kosovo on the death of thousands of people in the earthquakes is shown in (16). In (17), the bold phrases were the composition of the earthquake victims by the national leaders of the USA.

(16) May their memory be eternal! (taken from the condolence of Kosovo)

(17) Today, our hearts and our deepest condolences are with all those who have lost precious loved ones, those who are injured, and those who saw their homes and businesses destroyed. (taken from the condolence of the USA)

Martin and White (2005: 35) define graduation as a "grading phenomenon whereby feelings are amplified and categories blurred." The subcategories of graduation include force and focus. The first one is associated with the intensification of feelings and the latter one is about adjusting the boundaries as separate systems. In our data, the elements of force were more common than those of focus. In (18), we



see the employment of intensification (deepest) and quantification (numerous and large scale) which evaluates the degree of intensity and amount. The word deepest is an example of intensity realized via a superlative while numerous and large-scale are the illustrations of adjectives of maximizers at the upper-most end of the scale of intensification.

(18) Please accept our deepest condolences on the numerous human casualties and large-scale destruction caused by a powerful earthquake in your country. (taken from the condolence of Russia)

Diplomatic condolences were further examined in the current study using sentiment analysis through text2data, an online sentiment analysis application. Sentiments imply the polarity of discourse which could be positive, negative, and neutral. The polarity of discourse is between 0 to +1 and -1. The highest positive value is +1 while the lowest value is represented by -1. In our analysis, the examination of the polarity of condolences enabled us to identify the extent of the polarity of expressing opinions of the national leaders towards the two earthquakes and mitigating solidarity with the Turkish people and the Government. Table 4 shows the overall sentiment scores and the detected themes that made them positive or negative. The overall sentiment score of nine condolences (the USA, Russia, Japan, China, Germany, the UK, Egypt, Hungary, and Kosovo) was positive while the other half of the data (Japan, France, Wales, Australia, Spain, Portugal, Qatar, Israel, Azerbaijan, and Pakistan) represented negative sentiment scores. The results of the overall sentiment scores gave insights into each national leader's concern on the earthquakes. In this context, the polarity of the sentiments was carried by the aspects of the earthquakes emphasized not by the negative remarks. Nine national leaders' condolences were associated with recovery and humanitarian assistance, so the overall sentiment scores of their condolences were found positive. On the other hand, negative polarizations in the other condolences resulted from the focus on the devastating aspects of the earthquakes. Simply put, in the condolences examined, the positive or negative sentiment scores were not related to criticism or disapproval but the reaction of the national leaders to the earthquakes. Some national leaders provided emotional reactions in their condolences, which led to negative polarization but some of them expressed their condolences signaled a detachment from the emotional perspective and emphasized the ways of providing assistance to Türkiye. This detachment from the negative feelings and views like pain, grief, and the effects of the earthquakes brought about positive sentiment polarization.

**Table 3.** *Sentiment Analysis of Diplomatic Condolences*

		Detected Themes			
		Positive		Negative	
		Themes	SS	Themes	SS
The USA	+0.96	humanitarian partners	+0.611	devastating earthquakes	-0.519
		deploying quickly	+0.747		
Russia	+0.56	speedy recovery	+0.742		
		necessary assistance	+0.741		
		human casualties	+0.573		
		deepest condolences	+0.562		
Japan	+0.72	powerful earthquake	+0.504		-0.560
		greatest degree	+0.885	serious damage	
			+0.749		
			+0.741		

		heartfelt condolences swift recovery			
China	+0.47	deep condolences strong earthquakes sincere sympathies	+0.890 +0.732 +0.623	overcome the disaster	-0.507
Germany	+0.52	truly thankful	+1.00	burned themselves	-0.750
		local communities	+0.747	utter despair	-0.749
		relief deliveries	+0.735	disaster zone	-0.746
		wave of solidarity	+0.622	your suffering	-0.742
		enduring solidarity	+0.640	lost friends	-0.739
		courage hope and optimism	+0.627	no warm clothing	-0.678
		today I appeal	+0.514	worldly belongings	-0.659
		deliveries of assistance	+0.512	lost their homes	-0.655
				ruins of their houses	-0.643
				grief and pain	-0.546
				with no shelter	-0.527
				century disaster	-0.505
				no food no medical care	-0.503
				this disaster	-0.502
				will not abandon	-0.502
				your pain is our pain	-0.549
					-0.750
France	-0.64			double earthquake	-0.749
				grieving families	-0.689
				affected populations	-0.614
				enables disaster	-0.496
				provide urgent assistance	-0.493
The UK	+0.51	such a valiant respects and thoughts	+0.931 +0.732		

Wales	-0.64			soon	-0.749
				afterwards	
				another	-0.746
				earthquake	
				magnitude	-0.688
				earthquake	
				been	-0.630
				displaced	
				emergency	-0.622
				response	
				earthquake	-0.561
				zone	
				search and	-0.545
				rescue	
				teams	
				scale of	-0.504
				destruction	
Australia	-0.53	million	+0.659	first	-0.746
		people		earthquake	
				devastating	-0.547
				loss	
				life injury	-0.480
Spain	-0.63			the victims	-0.509
				of the	
				earthquakes	
				monitoring	0.460
				the	
				situation	
				emergency	-0.550
				calls	
Portugal	-0.61			this	-0.552
				catastrophe	
Qatar	-0.64			struck	-0.697
				several	
				provinces	
				wishing the	-0.645
				injured	
Egypt	+0.59	sincere	+0.938		
		condolence			
		s			
		speedy	+0.742		
		recovery			
		offer	+0.698		
		assistance			
Israel	-0.61	the coming	+0.573	difficult	-0.602
		hours		time	
Azerbaijan	-0.61	speedy	+0.742	earthquake	-0.527
		recovery		in Turkiye	
		extended	+0.733	great	-0.497
		his		disaster	
		condolence			
		s			
Hungary	+0.99	expressed	+0.739		
		her			
		condolence			
		s			
		immediate	+0.628		
		assistance			

Kosovo	+0.74	sincere condolence s loved ones speedy recovery security force solidarity and respect	+0.938  +0.743 +0.742  +0.684  +0.327
Pakistan	-0.61		operate in disaster massive earthquake tragic loss incomplete solidarity
			-0.891 -0.750 -0.749 -0.731

*SS: Sentiment Score*

The results display that cultural and linguistic contexts play a significant role in the expression and comprehension of sentiments. Meaning and emotional expression show variations across cultures; a positive sentiment in one culture may reflect negative connotations in another. Paying attention to these contextual differences lead to appropriate sentiment analysis results since these variations are not random. As Yang and Eisenstein (2017) suggest, they may be linked to social factors like age and gender, geography and some characteristics such as political and cultural attitudes.

Turning specifically to the themes that emerged from the sentimental analysis, we could see that the prevailing themes collocated with some of the elements of appraisals. The detected themes manifested the appraisals of the earthquakes, which revealed the effect of appraisals on sentiment polarization. For instance, themes such as human casualties, this catastrophe, ruins of their houses, and worldly belongings were the illustrations of the appreciation category while themes like sincere sympathies, respect and thoughts, and grief and pain displayed the existence of the affect category. Tragic loss, difficult time, and the victims of the earthquakes were the expressions of judgment category. Pronounce category was also observed in the emerged themes (Today I appeal). Heartfelt condolence represented the focus category. Deepest condolences and deploying quickly were the examples of the force category.

## CONCLUSION

Language use in diplomatic discourse influences international negotiations aiming to resolve conflicts and mitigate power. Diplomatic condolences represent a genre of diplomatic discourse but carry a different function from other diplomatic genres by assisting in expressing sympathy, condolence, and solidarity. The representation of this function is shaped by cultural and linguistic norms. Despite the wealth of studies on the linguistic features of diplomatic discourse, diplomatic condolences are not well-researched. Since there is not much at hand about the linguistic analysis of diplomatic condolences, this study intended to tackle the linguistic features of this genre with a specific focus on appraisals and the sentimental polarization of these linguistic features. Appraisals are the linguistic elements that convey the attitude of appraisers and maintain engagement and graduation.

The total data was 17 diplomatic condolences in English obtained from the official websites of the governments. The condolences were released after the two devastating earthquakes occurred on 6th February 2023 in Kahramanmaraş, Türkiye. The study was situated on Martin and White's (2005) taxonomy of appraisals. The categories of appraisals in the data were analyzed via a free online analysis tool called CATMA 7 available at <https://catma.de>. The sentimental analysis was run to calculate the sentimental polarization in the data. The results showed cultural nuances and linguistic variations in diplomatic condolences. All the national leaders constructed an international collective identity to extend their condolences. They tended to create an atmosphere of solidarity with the employment of the engagement category of appraisals. Nearly half of them adopted a more direct approach whereas the

other half preferred a distance approach in this engagement process. Another common feature of the diplomatic condolences was the dominant use of attitude category appraisals for the mapping of feelings. The graduation category was the least empathized one in the present study. Cultural variations in the use of appraisals were observed. Regarding the sentimental polarization, half of the condolences reflected positive polarization and the other half represented negative one. The attempt of national leaders to create solidarity led to positive polarization. When they concentrated on the current catastrophic circumstances after the earthquakes, negative polarization appeared in their condolences.

The findings reported here shed new light on the employment of appraisals in diplomatic genres which have a unique function. It showed that appraisals paved the way for creating engagement and solidarity and expressing feelings of diplomatic condolences. Being limited to one circumstance (two earthquakes occurred in Kahramanmaraş, on 6th February, 2023), the findings of the study are not generalizable to all diplomatic condolences. Therefore, more research focusing on the use of appraisals in diplomatic condolences of various circumstances such as the death of a person and a natural disaster is needed to determine situation-based and cultural norms of this diplomatic genre.

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## APPENDIX 1

### *Origin of diplomatic condolences*

Country	The website of	Author of message	Date
The USA	White House	authored by President Joe Biden	6 <sup>th</sup> February, 2023
Russia	Kremlin	authored by the President Vladimir Putin	6 <sup>th</sup> February, 2023
Japan	Prime Minister's Office of Japan	authored by the Prime Minister Kishida Fumio	6 <sup>th</sup> February, 2023
China	the Republic of China	on behalf of the President Xi Jinping	6 <sup>th</sup> February, 2023
Germany	Der Bundespräsident	authored by Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier	20 <sup>th</sup> February, 2023
France	Ministry of France Diplomacy	on behalf of President Emmanuel Macron	6 <sup>th</sup> February, 2023
The UK	The parliament of the UK	authored by Prime Minister Rushi Sunak	8 <sup>th</sup> February, 2023
Wales	Welsh Government	authored by Jane Hutt, Minister for Social Justice	7 <sup>th</sup> February, 2023
Australia	Australian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade official	on behalf of the Australian Government	6 <sup>th</sup> February, 2023
Spain	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	on behalf of the Government of Spain	6 <sup>th</sup> February, 2023
Portugal	Prime Minister	on behalf of the Prime Minister António Costa	6 <sup>th</sup> February, 2023
Qatar	the State of Qatar	on behalf of The Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani	6 <sup>th</sup> February, 2023

Egypt	the State of Information Service	on behalf of Egypt	2023	6 <sup>th</sup> February,
Israel	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	authored by the Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu	2023	6 <sup>th</sup> February,
Azerbaijan	the President	on behalf of President Ilham Aliyev	2023	6 <sup>th</sup> February,
Hungary	Novak's official website	on behalf of the President Katalin Novák	2023	6 <sup>th</sup> February,
Kosova	Prime Minister Office	authored by the Prime Minister Albin Kurti	2023	8 <sup>th</sup> February,
Pakistan	The Ministry of Foreign Affairs	on behalf of the Government of Pakistan	2023	6 <sup>th</sup> February,