



# Seasonal Vocabulary & Constructive Disagreements

Talking about Halloween and Navigating Conflicts in English Communication

# Structure

## Halloween

Origins  
Vocabulary

## Dracula

Bram Stoker  
Vampires through time

## Saying No

How to say no  
Softening the message  
How to leave the door open

## Complaints

How to make a complaint  
How to deal with a complaint

## Apologising

Ways to say sorry  
How to give the perfect apology  
How to avoid the non-apology

# Halloween

What is it?

All Hallows eve → Hallowe'en → Halloween

Hallow = Santificar

# Halloween

Origins

## Samhain

Celtic celebration of the line between the living and the dead breaking down





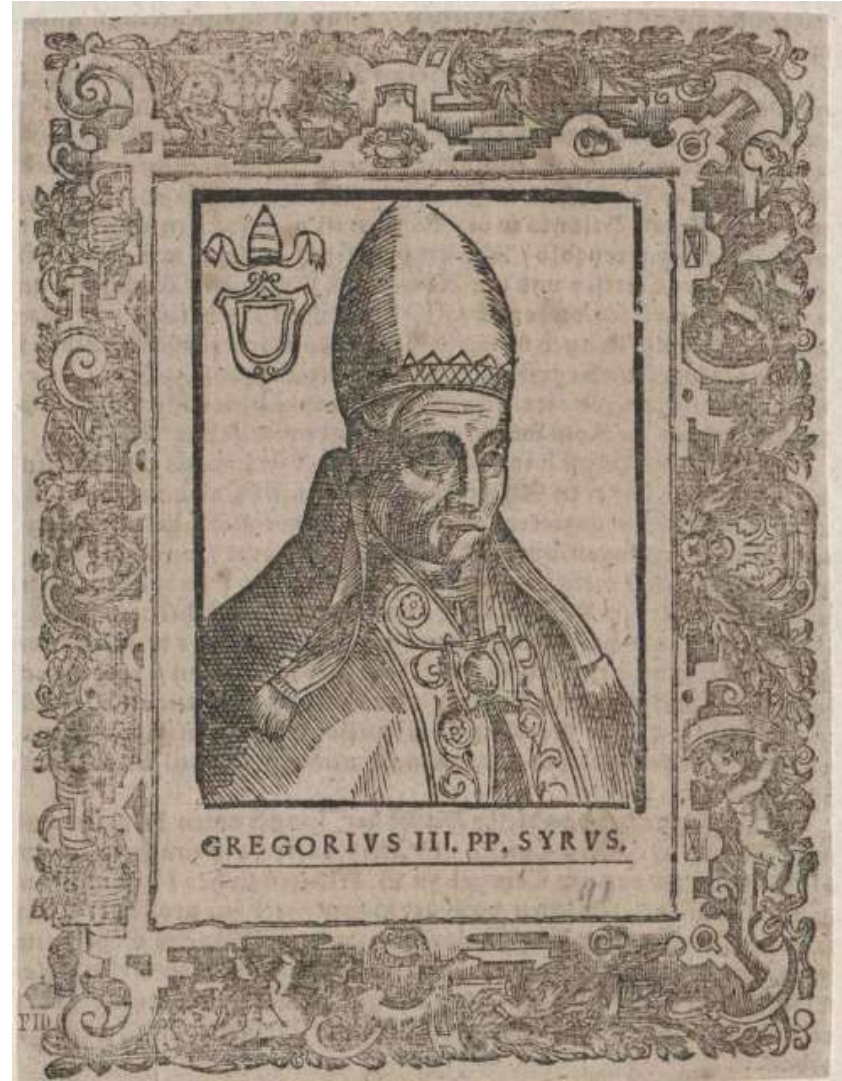
# Halloween

Origins

9th Century

Pope Gregory III

All Hallow's Day



# Halloween

## Origins



Why is Halloween big in America?

# To dress up as something To wear a costume



# Jack O' Lantern



to carve a pumpkin







TRICK  
O RO  
TREAT

Travesura o regalo

Dracula

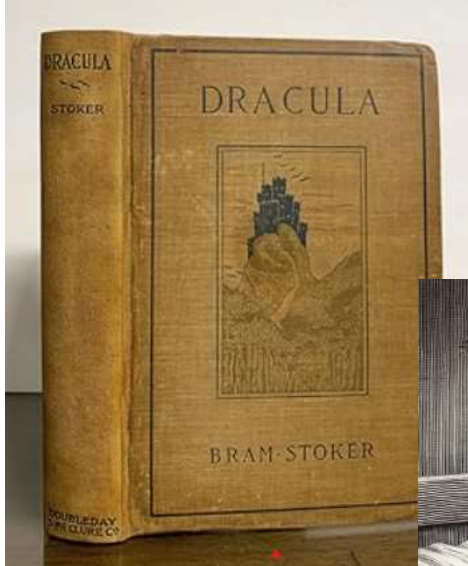
## Origins and Evolution

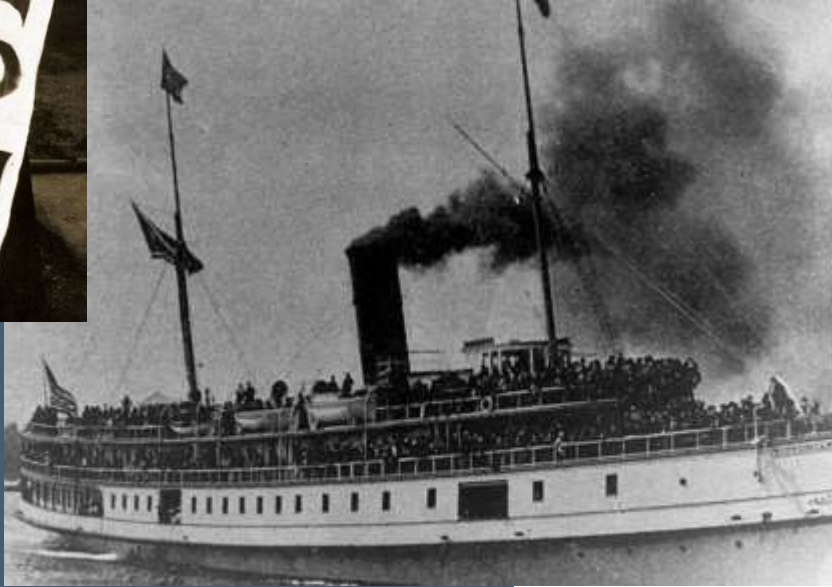


# Bram Stoker's Dracula

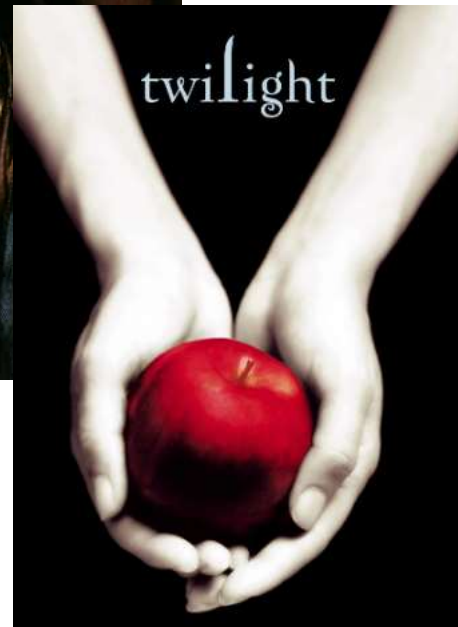
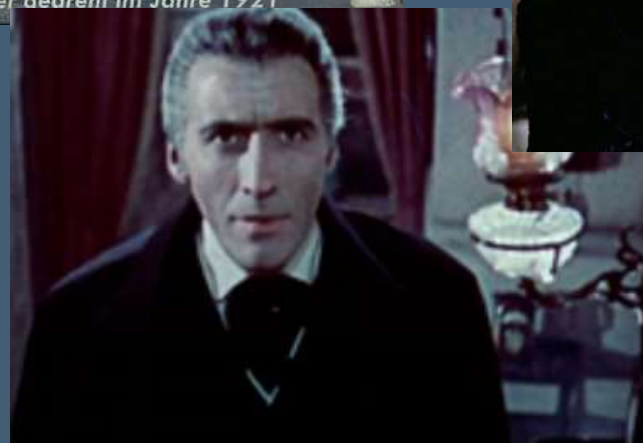


1897









# Constructive Disagreements –

## Navigating conflicts in English Communication



# Saying No



**Thanks, but I think I'm  
going to hang out here  
tonight. It's been a long  
day.**

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**Oh, I wish I could, but I  
don't want to**



**It's been a long day.**

**It's been a hectic week.**

**I have a lot on my plate.**

**I have a lot on this week**

**I have my hands full with...**

**Oh, I wish I could, but I  
don't want to**

**It's not my cup of tea**

**It's not my area of  
expertise**

**I wouldn't feel comfortable**

A close-up photograph of light-colored, wavy hair, possibly a wig or a person's hair, with a soft, textured appearance. The hair is light beige or off-white with subtle variations in tone and texture, creating a soft, flowing background.

# **Softening Language**

# Softening Language



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**I'm sorry,**

**I'm afraid,**

**Unfortunately,**

**To be honest,**



# No,....

- **But** I could do this instead
- **But** let me connect you with someone who can help  
or

**Yes**, after...

**Yes**, if...





# Making Complaints

# Making a complaint

I'm **afraid** / **sorry** I have a complaint.

or

Actually, there's **an issue** / **a problem**.

I **ordered/asked for** 200 blue t-shirts, but the ones you sent are black

Can you get the right ones to me **by** / **before** the end of the week?

or

Look, I really **need** / **want** the blue t-shirts as soon as possible



# Making a complaint

I'm **afraid** I have a complaint.

I **ordered** 200 blue t-shirts, but the ones you sent are black

Look, I really **need** the blue t-shirts as soon as possible



# Dealing with a complaint





# Dealing with a complaint

Find out what the problem is

If there is a problem, apologise

Investigate the problem

Say what you're doing to solve the problem



# Dealing with a complaint

Find out what the problem is

I see, what exactly is the problem?

If there is a problem, apologise

I'm so sorry about that

Investigate the problem

Let me check your order

Say what you're doing to solve the problem

Yes of course, I'll get the correct order sent to you by the end of the day



# Apologising

The apology  
vs  
The non-apology



# Genuine apologies



1. Express regret & acknowledge the mistake
2. Understand the impact
3. Take responsibility
4. Show a willingness to make things right

# Genuine apologies

## 1. Express regret:

I'm sorry for + ing

I'm sorry for what I did

I want to apologise for + ing

I want to apologise for my mistake





# Genuine apologies

## 2. Understand the impact:

I understand that my mistake made things difficult for you.

I realize I upset you, and I'm truly sorry.

I know this caused you a lot of inconvenience.



# Genuine apologies



## 3. Take responsibility :

It was my responsibility and I should have been more careful

I made a mistake and I take full responsibility

There's no excuse for what I did

What I did wasn't OK

# Genuine apologies

4. Show a willingness to make things right:

I'll make sure this doesn't happen again.

I'm happy to redo the work to meet your expectations

Please let me know how I can fix this.



# Non-Apology features:

- Lack of responsibility
- Blame Shifting
- Conditional Language
- False Empathy



It was 2 in the morning and I  
was ambien tweeting.

(then later)


I apologize to anyone who  
thought, or felt offended and  
who thought that I meant  
something that I, in fact, did  
not mean.





If I did behave then as he describes, I owe him the sincerest apology for what would have been deeply inappropriate drunken behavior, and I am sorry for the feelings he describes having carried with him all these years.



A black and white photograph of Bill Clinton speaking. He is shown from the chest up, wearing a dark suit and a white shirt. He is looking slightly to his right and has his mouth open as if in the middle of speaking. Two microphones are visible in the foreground, partially obscuring his chest. The background is out of focus, showing what appears to be an American flag on the right side.

It is important to be me everybody who has been hurt know that the sorrow I feel is genuine: First and most important, my family; also my friends, my staff, my Cabinet, Monica Lewinsky and her family, and the American people. I have asked all for their forgiveness

# Diplomatic Language



## WHAT THE BRITISH SAY

- I hear what you say
- With the greatest respect
- That's not bad
- That is a very brave proposal
- Quite good
- I would suggest
- Oh, incidentally/by the way
- I was a bit disappointed that
- Very interesting
- I'll bear it in mind
- I'm sure it's my fault
- You must come for dinner
- I almost agree
- I only have a few minor comments

## WHAT THE BRITISH MEAN

- I disagree and do not want to discuss it further
- You are an idiot
- That's good
- You are insane
- A bit disappointing
- Do it or be prepared to justify yourself
- The primary purpose of our discussion is
- I am annoyed that
- That is clearly nonsense
- I've forgotten it already
- It's your fault
- It's not an invitation, I'm just being polite
- I don't agree at all
- Please rewrite completely

## WHAT OTHERS UNDERSTAND

- He accepts my point of view
- He is listening to me
- That's poor
- He thinks I have courage
- Quite good
- Think about the idea, but do what you like
- That is not very important
- It doesn't really matter
- They are impressed
- They will probably do it
- Why do they think it was their fault?
- I will get an invitation soon
- He's not far from agreement
- He has found a few typos

## Diplomatic Language

### Softeners

**To be honest,** I think we need to rethink our strategy.

**With all due respect,** I don't agree with that.

**I'm afraid,** We can't do that.

**I'm sorry, but** I don't think that's going to work.

**I was wondering if** We should try something else.

Softening language will make your message sound less harsh or aggressive



Diplomatic Language

Qualifying Language

That's not what we had in mind

That might be ambitious

The conditions are restrictive

That is more than we have budgeted for

We're getting off track here

Qualifying language allows you to reduce the intensity of a message

## Diplomatic Language

### Qualifying Language

That's not **really** what we had in mind

That might be **a bit** ambitious

The conditions are **quite** restrictive

That is **slightly** more than we have budgeted for

We're getting **kind of** off track now

Qualifying language allows you to reduce the intensity of your message

## Diplomatic Language

### Giving Feedback

"You didn't follow the guidelines, and your analysis lacks detail. You need to add more examples to make your points clearer."

"I noticed that **some** parts of the analysis could use **a bit** more detail. **I was wondering if** adding **a few** more examples **might** help clarify your points and strengthen the overall impact."

## Diplomatic Language

### Showing Openness

**"I'm not entirely sure, but maybe..."**

**"This is just a thought, but we might want to..."**

**"I'd love to hear your perspective on this."**

This can make your message seem more like a starting point for discussion

Can you make these  
sentences sound more  
diplomatic?

**It's a bad idea**



Can you make these  
sentences sound more  
diplomatic?

**You made a mistake on  
the invoice**





Can you make these  
sentences sound more  
diplomatic?

**We need more time**



Can you make these  
sentences sound more  
diplomatic?

**I don't understand what  
you're trying to say**



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# Thanks!

Does anyone have any questions?