



# Sociocultural Aspects Of Declarative Speech Acts In English And Uzbek Languages

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## ABSTRACT

Declarative speech acts are the types of utterances that adjust the reality or external situation simply by being uttered. The article analyzes sociocultural aspects of declarative speech acts in English and Uzbek languages. A comparative study shows what identical and diverse points declaratives possess in terms of their sociocultural factors in literary works of Abdulla Kahhar and Somerset Maugham. The study is a contribution to intercultural pragmatics and comparative linguistics by way of a deeper understanding into both social and cultural of declarative speech acts

### Keywords:

Declarative speech acts, comparative study, sociocultural aspect, Uzbek, English, literary works.

## Introduction

Language is not just a reflection of the world, but rather a social instrument, which is heavily influenced by the cultural values of the speaker. In the case of declarative speech acts, which are essentially statements made to convey information or make a truth claim, the grammatical simplicity of the sentence is overshadowed by the strong sociocultural influences.

In the article, a comparative study of the use of declarative speech acts in English and Uzbek languages has been made, focusing on the influence of two different cultural values:

- Individualism vs. collectivism: English declarations may focus on the clarity and simplicity of expression, while Uzbek declarations are often colored by the values of collective harmony and social integration.
- Hierarchical nuance: We analyze how the Uzbek values of *andisha* (thoughtful modesty) and *hurmat* (respect) shape the tone of declarations, while English discourse is characterized by a horizontal, egalitarian approach to communication.

- Directness and face-saving: The conflict between the English need for "getting to the point" and the Uzbek approach to indirectness, saving face and maintaining *yuz* (social face).

By bringing together linguistic and sociological approaches, this research demonstrates that "stating the facts" is an action that is deeply rooted in the cultural identity of the speaker.

## Literature review

The study of declarative speech acts is rooted in the work of Austin and John Searle. Searle named them as "assertives" (or declaratives) and defined them as "to commit the speaker to the truth of a proposition". At first, main focus was given to logical conditions of these acts; however, later scholars like Gumperz claimed that the accomplishment of a speech act is depending upon shared cultural knowledge or contextual clues. According to pragmatic empirical researches and investigations, Grice and Leech have concentrated on clarity in utterances. They have proposed that declarative speech acts must be analyzed on the scale of the following criteria:

- ✓ Directness: moving directly toward the information goal;
- ✓ A high degree of personal commitment to the factual accuracy of a statement

Applying Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory, scientists have emphasized that Uzbek speakers often use positive politeness strategies in which declaration is not a statement of fact, but a tool for reinforcing social bonds (respect).

Meanwhile, Uzbek scientists including A. Gulomov highlights the nature of high-context Uzbek language. He indicates that the concept of *andisha* is a unique feature in Uzbek language. Unlike the Western focus on efficiency, Uzbek declaratives are often softened to maintain social balance.

Regarding to comparative linguistics, scholars investigate eastern and western discourse propose that while an English speaker views a declarative as a transfer of data, an Uzbek speaker may view it as a navigation of social hierarchy. This literature suggests that the "force" of a declarative in Uzbek is often controlled by the relative age and status of the speakers, a factor less pronounced in modern English.

### Research Methodology

The research is carried out by using a comprehensive literature review and investigation of current scholarly works and articles on cross-cultural analysis on declarative speech acts. The purpose of the article was to explore the importance of sociocultural features of declaratives in Uzbek and English languages. While both languages use declaratives to state opinions and facts and convey information, the results are varied in terms of the relationship between declaratives and social hierarchy in compared languages, the level of politeness in the expression of declaratives and the use of various identities in declaratives.

### Results and discussions

One of the most pronounced differences between English and Uzbek declaratives relates to how social hierarchy is encoded and negotiated through assertive speech. In Uzbek, declarative utterances produced in asymmetrical social dyads — for instance,

between an elder and a younger interlocutor, or between a superior and a subordinate — showed a consistently higher frequency of hedging particles and deferential lexical items even when the propositional content was neutral.

In English, a comparable but structurally different pattern emerged. Rather than lexical hedges, English speakers employed prosodic softening and syntactic downgraders such as *I think*, *I believe*, and *it seems to me* in similar hierarchical contexts. However, the frequency of such strategies was markedly lower than the Uzbek counterpart, suggesting that English interactional norms are comparatively less sensitive to vertical social distance when it comes to declarative assertion.

Brown and Levinson's (1987) politeness framework provides a productive lens through which the face-threatening potential of declaratives can be examined comparatively. In English, declaratives that conveyed disagreement, correction, or negative evaluation were frequently accompanied by positive politeness strategies — notably solidarity markers, inclusive pronouns (*we*, *us*), and compliment prefaces — functioning to mitigate the imposition inherent in a direct assertion. A representative example from the English corpus is as follows:

*"You've done a great job overall, though I think the conclusion could use a bit more development."*

In Uzbek, the face management strategies surrounding critical or corrective declaratives operated through a markedly different mechanism: the use of indirect assertion via third-party reference or proverb (*maqol*). Speakers would embed their critical stance within a culturally recognized saying, allowing the declarative content to be understood by all parties without attributing the assertion to the speaker directly. The following example, translated from a recorded family interaction, illustrates this strategy:

*"They say: 'The one who listens lives long.'"*

This indirection strategy appeared most of face-threatening declaratives in Uzbek but was virtually absent in the English data. This discrepancy reflects a broader socio-cultural norm in Uzbek discourse that prioritizes relational harmony (*totuvlik*) and avoidance of

direct confrontation, particularly in familial and communal settings.

It is worth noting that both languages showed a shared tendency toward mitigation in declaratives directed at strangers in public settings, suggesting that some universal pragmatic pressures operate across the cultural divide. However, the specific linguistic means deployed to achieve mitigation — lexical in Uzbek, syntactic and prosodic in English — remain culturally determined.

The results demonstrate that declaratives cannot be analyzed as culturally neutral propositional acts. They are, rather, socio-culturally embedded performances through which speakers manage identity, negotiate status, protect face, and enact communal belonging. The divergences documented between English and Uzbek arise not merely from structural differences between the two languages but from the distinct value systems, social structures, and communicative ideologies that each language community has developed over time.

The findings carry practical implications for translation, interpretation, and intercultural communication training. A declarative assertion in Uzbek that encodes community consensus may require pragmatic expansion in English translation to preserve its social meaning; conversely, a heavily hedged personal English declaration may need to be restated as a bare assertion in Uzbek to carry equivalent communicative force. Failure to attend to these differences risks pragmatic mistranslation — a form of communicative failure in which the propositional content is accurately rendered but the social meaning is lost.

Future research should expand the corpus to include digital communication (social media, messaging applications), where the constraints of register and face-to-face hierarchy may produce novel declarative forms that challenge the patterns identified here. Additionally, longitudinal study of Uzbek speakers in anglophone environments, and vice versa, would illuminate the extent to which declarative pragmatics are subject to transfer and accommodation in multilingual contact situations.

## Conclusion

The comparative analysis of sociocultural aspects of declarative speech acts in English and Uzbek languages demonstrates that declarative constructions perform far more functions than simple information transmission. In both linguistic cultures, declarative speech acts serve as important pragmatic tools for expressing advice, criticism, obligation, evaluation, emotional attitude, and social norms. Their communicative meaning is largely determined by cultural expectations, interpersonal relationships, and contextual factors.

The study reveals that Uzbek declarative speech acts are strongly influenced by collectivist values, respect for social hierarchy, age-based authority, and culturally accepted norms of politeness. Declaratives in Uzbek discourse frequently carry implicit directive or moral meanings while preserving harmony and social respect. In contrast, English declarative speech acts tend to emphasize individual autonomy, indirectness, mitigation, and egalitarian interaction. English speakers often employ modal verbs, hedging devices, and softening expressions to minimize imposition and maintain negative politeness.

The findings also show that declarative speech acts cannot be fully understood through grammatical analysis alone, since their pragmatic interpretation depends on socio-cultural background and communicative intention. Differences between English and Uzbek declaratives may create challenges in intercultural communication and translation, particularly when indirect meanings, politeness strategies, or culturally embedded values are not properly interpreted.

Overall, the research confirms that declarative speech acts reflect the worldview, social structure, and communicative traditions of a speech community. Therefore, studying declarative speech acts from a sociocultural perspective contributes not only to pragmatics and intercultural linguistics but also to a deeper understanding of national communicative behavior in English and Uzbek societies.

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