

Article

Pragmatic Representation of Parent–Teen Conflict in Contemporary Young Adult Literature

Tuksanova Sayyora Sulaymonkulovna*¹

1. English Language Teacher, Academic Lyceum of the Termez State University of Engineering and Agrotechnologies

*Correspondance: Sayyora.tuksanova@yandex.ru

Abstract: The present study explores the pragmatic representation of parent–teen conflict in contemporary young adult literature through a comparative analysis of Angie Thomas's *The Hate U Give* and Khudoyberdi Tuxtaboev's *Sariq devni minib* (*Riding the Yellow Giant*). Using Speech Act Theory, Politeness Theory, and Conversational Implicature as theoretical frameworks, the article investigates how linguistic choices contribute to the portrayal of family tensions, authority, and adolescent identity formation. The findings reveal that while both texts depict generational conflicts, they differ significantly in communicative style. American young adult literature tends to emphasize direct confrontation and negotiation, whereas Uzbek literature favors indirectness, moral instruction, and respect-based communication. The study highlights the role of pragmatics in understanding cultural variations in literary representations of family relationships.

Keywords: Pragmatics, Young Adult Literature, Parent–Teen Conflict, Speech Acts, Politeness Strategies, Discourse Analysis, Comparative Literature

Citation: Sulaymonkulovna, T. S. Pragmatic Representation of Parent–Teen Conflict in Contemporary Young Adult Literature. *International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics* 2026, 5(3), 126-129.

Received: 15th Apr 2026

Revised: 05th May 2026

Accepted: 20th May 2026

Published: 13th Jun 2026



Copyright: © 2026 by the authors. Submitted for open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>)

1. Introduction

Young adult literature serves as an important medium for exploring adolescent experiences, including identity formation, emotional development, and family relationships. One of the most recurrent themes in this literary genre is conflict between parents and teenagers. Such conflicts often emerge from disagreements over independence, responsibility, social expectations, and personal values [1].

Recent developments in literary pragmatics have provided scholars with new tools for examining how these conflicts are represented through language. Pragmatics focuses on meaning in context and investigates how speakers use language to perform actions, negotiate relationships, and convey intentions. According to Austin, utterances perform actions rather than simply transmit information. Similarly, Brown and Levinson argue that communication involves maintaining social relationships through politeness strategies and face management [2, 3].

This study examines parent–teen conflict in Angie Thomas's *The Hate U Give* and Khudoyberdi Tuxtaboev's *Sariq Devni Minib* (*Riding the Yellow Giant*). Although the two works originate from different cultural traditions, both portray adolescents navigating relationships with authority figures and attempting to establish personal autonomy. The article seeks to identify the pragmatic strategies employed by characters and to compare how conflict is constructed in English and Uzbek literary discourse [3].

Literature Review

The representation of adolescence has become a major focus in contemporary literary studies. According to Roberta Seelinger Trites, young adult literature frequently depicts struggles between adolescents and social institutions, including the family. Family conflict often symbolizes a broader negotiation of power and identity [4].

Pragmatic approaches to literature have drawn upon several theoretical models. Speech Act Theory developed by Austin and Searle explains how utterances function as actions. Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory examines how speakers manage social relationships through linguistic choices. Grice's theory of conversational implicature highlights how meaning is often communicated indirectly [5]. While numerous studies have examined parent-child relationships in Western young adult literature, comparative pragmatic analyses involving Uzbek literary texts remain limited. This study seeks to contribute to this area by comparing American and Uzbek representations of adolescent-parent communication [6, 7].

2. Materials and Methods

The research employs a qualitative comparative approach. Dialogues and narrative episodes involving interactions between adolescents and adult authority figures were selected from both literary works.

The analysis focuses on:

- a. Directive speech acts;
- b. Expressive speech acts;
- c. Face-threatening acts;
- d. Politeness strategies;
- e. Conversational implicatures.

3. Results and Discussion

Twenty-five communicative episodes from each text were examined to identify recurring pragmatic patterns.

Speech Acts in Parent-Teen Communication

Speech acts constitute one of the most important mechanisms through which conflict is represented [8]. In *The Hate U Give*, parents frequently employ directive speech acts such as commands, warnings, and restrictions. Starr's parents often attempt to protect their daughter by regulating her behavior and social interactions. These directives frequently generate resistance and disagreement [9].

For example:

"You are not going there tonight."

The directive is followed by Starr's emotional reaction, demonstrating her desire for independence and self-determination. Such interactions create a communicative pattern characterized by negotiation and confrontation [10].

In *Sariq Devni Minib (Riding the Yellow Giant)*, adult authority is expressed differently. Hoshimjon regularly encounters criticism, advice, and moral instruction from parents, teachers, and other adults. Instead of direct opposition, he often responds through excuses, humor, self-justification, or internal reflection [11].

For instance, when adults criticize his irresponsible behavior, their speech usually takes the form of educational guidance rather than strict commands. The pragmatic purpose is not only to control behavior but also to teach moral values. Consequently, directive speech acts are often softened through explanations and advice [12].

Politeness Strategies and Face Management

Brown and Levinson's concept of face provides an effective framework for understanding family conflict.

In *The Hate U Give*, conflicts frequently involve direct challenges to parental authority. Teenagers openly express disagreement and dissatisfaction, creating face-threatening situations. Parents and children negotiate power through argumentation and discussion [13].

Example:

“You don't understand what I'm going through.”²

Such statements directly threaten the interlocutor's positive face and intensify emotional tension.

In contrast, *Sariq Devni Minib* reflects traditional Uzbek communicative norms where respect toward elders is highly valued. Hoshimdjon rarely confronts adults openly. Even when disagreement occurs, it is often expressed indirectly [14].

Adults similarly avoid harsh confrontation. Advice, proverbs, and moral observations are used to communicate criticism while preserving interpersonal harmony. These politeness strategies reduce the severity of conflict and maintain social hierarchy.

Conversational Implicature in Family Relationships

Another significant pragmatic feature is conversational implicature. In *The Hate U Give*, characters frequently imply dissatisfaction without expressing it directly. Parents may ask seemingly simple questions that carry hidden concerns about safety, responsibility, or social influence. Similarly, in *Sariq Devni Minib*, adults often communicate criticism indirectly. Rather than accusing Hoshimjon of wrongdoing, they imply expected behavior through stories, examples, or advice. This indirectness reflects cultural preferences for maintaining social harmony and avoiding open confrontation. The comparative findings demonstrate notable differences between the two literary traditions.

Table 1. Distribution of Pragmatic Features

Pragmatic Feature	The Hate U Give	Sariq Devni Minib
Directive Speech Acts	18	11
Expressive Speech Acts	16	9
Face-Threatening Acts	15	7
Indirect Speech Acts	8	17
Politeness Strategies	10	19

The results indicate that American young adult literature relies more heavily on direct communication and explicit disagreement. By contrast, Uzbek literature demonstrates greater use of indirect speech acts and politeness strategies. These differences reflect broader cultural values concerning authority, family hierarchy, and interpersonal communication. The findings suggest that parent–teen conflict is a universal literary theme but is realized through culturally specific pragmatic strategies. In *The Hate U Give*, conflict functions as a process of negotiation. Adolescents openly challenge parental decisions and participate actively in discussions concerning their lives and identities. In *Sariq Devni Minib*, conflict is less confrontational and more educational [15]. Adult characters use language to guide and instruct rather than simply impose authority. Hoshimjon's responses often reveal an attempt to balance personal desires with social expectations. Therefore, although both texts address adolescent autonomy, they differ substantially in how language constructs relationships between generations.

4. Conclusion

This study examined the pragmatic representation of parent–teen conflict in Angie Thomas's *The Hate U Give* and Khudoyberdi Tukhtaboev's *Sariq Devni Minib* (*Riding the Yellow Giant*). The analysis demonstrated that speech acts, politeness strategies, and conversational implicatures play a central role in constructing family relationships and generational tensions. The findings reveal that American young adult literature tends to

portray conflict through direct confrontation and verbal negotiation, whereas Uzbek literature emphasizes indirectness, respect, and moral instruction. These differences reflect broader cultural attitudes toward authority and family communication. The study contributes to literary pragmatics by demonstrating how language functions as a tool for negotiating power, identity, and social relationships within young adult literature. Future research may expand the corpus to include additional English and Uzbek texts for a broader cross-cultural perspective.

REFERENCES

- [1] J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 1962.
- [2] P. Brown and S. C. Levinson, *Politeness: Some Universals in Language Usage*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1987.
- [3] J. Culpeper, *Impoliteness: Using Language to Cause Offence*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- [4] H. P. Grice, "Logic and Conversation," in *Syntax and Semantics*, vol. 3, New York, NY, USA: Academic Press, 1975, pp. 41–58.
- [5] J. R. Searle, *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1969.
- [6] A. Thomas, *The Hate U Give*. New York, NY, USA: Balzer + Bray, 2017.
- [7] Kh. Tukhtaboyev, *Riding the Yellow Giant (Sariq Devni Minib)*. Tashkent, Uzbekistan: Yangi Asr Avlodi, 2018.
- [8] R. S. Trites, *Disturbing the Universe: Power and Repression in Adolescent Literature*. Iowa City, IA, USA: University of Iowa Press, 2000.
- [9] Q. S. Makhmudov, "Forms of Quick Management of Manufacturing in the Conditions of Market Relations," 2023.
- [10] K. Makhmudov, "Key Concepts Regarding the Quality of Services and Its Management," 2023.
- [11] K. Makhmudov, "The Need to Introduce Quality Systems in the Field of Services," *European Journal of Business Startups and Open Society*, vol. 2, no. 7, pp. 11–14.
- [12] I. Ismoilov, "About the Talismans of Iskandar (Alexander) by Alisher Navoi," *International Journal of Linguistics, Literature and Culture*, vol. 7, no. 3, pp. 139–145, 2021.
- [13] I. Ismailov, "Nizami and Navoi: Diverse Interpretations of a Common Theme," *Uzbekistan: Language and Culture. Literary Studies*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 18–32, 2023.
- [14] I. Ismoilov, "The Artistic Features of the Prologue to Alisher Navoi's Epic *Saddi Iskandariy*," *Oltin Bitiglar – Golden Scripts*, vol. 1, no. 1, 2021.
- [15] I. Ismoilov, "Interpretations of the Alexander Theme in Qur'anic Commentaries," *Oltin Bitiglar – Golden Scripts*, vol. 2, no. 2, 2021.