



IMPERATIVE REACTIVE REPLICAS AS COMMUNICATIVE UNITS IN UZBEK DRAMATIC TEXTS

Gulhida Ikromova

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Philological Sciences

Senior Lecturer at FerSU

Abstract

This article examines the linguistic nature of replicas in dramatic discourse and analyzes their communicative, semantic, pragmatic, and discursive characteristics. Particular attention is paid to the role of replicas in the development of dramatic action, the revelation of character traits, and the construction of interpersonal conflict. The study reviews major theoretical approaches to the concept of replica and discusses its classification into stimulating and reactive types. Special emphasis is placed on imperative reactive replicas and their semantic subtypes, including argument-closing, mild prohibitive, and emotive imperative reactive replicas. Drawing on examples from Uzbek dramatic texts, the article demonstrates how these speech units function in regulating dialogue, expressing interpersonal attitudes, managing communicative strategies, and enhancing dramatic dynamism. The findings highlight the significance of replicas as multifunctional discourse units and contribute to the linguistic study of dramatic texts within the framework of modern discourse analysis and pragmatics.

Keywords: Dramatic discourse, dramatic text, replica, stimulating replica, reactive replica, imperative reactive replica, dialogue, speech act, pragmatics, discourse analysis, communicative strategy, character speech, dramatic conflict, drama linguistics.



Introduction

In the linguistic study of dramatic texts, it is important first to identify the interrelationship among their constituent elements, namely monologue, dialogue, replica (utterance), and stage direction (remark). Among these units, the most fundamental communication-oriented element is the replica, which plays a central role in the semantic development of a dramatic text, in revealing the characters' personalities, in expressing their inner states and psychological moods, and in the formation and intensification of conflict. As theatre scholar P. Pavis emphasizes, every word spoken on stage serves "not as ordinary speech, but as action itself" [1, p. 66]; that is, it constitutes a dramatic phenomenon that directly reflects a character's activity, intention, and inner world.

A replica is the direct verbal expression of a character, and a sequence of replicas forms the basic structure of dialogue in a dramatic work [2, p. 192]. It is well known that character speech occupies a leading position in the dramatic genre, and it is precisely this speech that functions as the principal means for the formation and development of dramatic action. Although drama is inherently based on dialogic speech, a dramatic text is not limited to dialogue alone. In this regard, the European linguist Berkner notes the following: "The speech of characters manifests itself in two main forms: dialogue—a form of communication consisting of the rapid exchange of short or somewhat longer replicas between two or more characters; and monologue—a relatively extended and coherent speech delivered by a character when left alone on stage" [3, p. 128]. According to researchers, these two forms of speech serve both as the driving force of dramatic action and as the primary means of revealing character traits.

In linguistics, the concept of replica has been examined through various theoretical approaches, and its meaning has been interpreted in several scholarly ways. First, a replica is regarded as a syntactic unit, that is, a segment of speech formed as a sentence or a combination of sentences. Such an interpretation makes it possible to determine the grammatical structure, syntactic nature, and constructive features of the replica. Second, a replica is described as a semantic unit, whereby it is studied as a component that conveys a complete meaning, idea, or message [4, p. 240]. Third, a replica is interpreted as a pragmatic unit because it expresses a particular communicative purpose, such as asking a question,



issuing a command, denying, affirming, or evaluating something [5, p. 312]. Furthermore, it is necessary to analyze the replica as a discursive unit, since it is not merely a one-time speech event but also a discourse element connected to other utterances within the sequence of dialogue. As M. N. Kozhina points out, each element of dialogic speech is closely linked with other elements, and it is precisely this interconnectedness that shapes the communicative strategy between characters [6, p. 180]. Therefore, in a dramatic text, a replica should not be studied as an isolated and independent unit but rather within the framework of contextual relations, the overall flow of communication, the stage situation, and interpersonal relationships among characters.

In general, the replica is a multifaceted unit constituting a dramatic text, and its investigation from a linguistic perspective serves as an important source for the field of drama linguistics. The multilayered and complex nature of the concept of replica explains why it has been interpreted differently across various scholarly traditions, being evaluated through the perspectives of syntax, semantics, pragmatics, discourse analysis, stylistics, and communicative approaches.

In world linguistics, scholarly studies devoted to the linguistic investigation of replicas classify these speech units into the following two types:

- 1. Stimulating replica (stimulus utterance);**
- 2. Reactive replica.**

II. Reactive replica is a response-type speech unit that is formed in semantic relation to a preceding stimulating replica and serves to continue the conversational turn within a dialogue. Such replicas ensure the semantic coherence of communication, determine the direction of the conversation, and shape the subsequent stage of dialogue by expressing a response corresponding to the request, question, command, or evaluation contained in the stimulating replica. Therefore, reactive replicas are semantically divided into several types:

- 1. Declarative reactive replica;**
- 2. Interrogative reactive replica;**
- 3. Imperative reactive replica.**



An imperative reactive replica is a reactive speech unit that emerges in response to a preceding stimulating replica and semantically conveys meanings such as command, appeal, prohibition, warning, or exhortation. It expresses a communicative intention directed toward stopping, continuing, modifying, or regulating an action in relation to the interlocutor's utterance. In such replicas, the speaker demonstrates an active stance toward the communicative situation and guides the subsequent course of the interaction through contextual pressure. Imperative reactive replicas play an important role in communication, as they provide a normatively, emotionally, or socially conditioned response to the interlocutor's statement, request, or action, thereby accelerating the rhythm of dialogue and enhancing dramatic dynamism.

Semantically, imperative reactive replicas are divided into the following types:

- 1. Imperative reactive replicas expressing the closure of an argument;**
- 2. Imperative reactive replicas conveying mild prohibition;**
- 3. Emotive imperative reactive replicas.**

Imperative Reactive Replicas Expressing the Closure of an Argument

1. An imperative reactive replica expressing the closure of an argument is a reactive speech form used to stop, conclude, or reject the continuation of a dispute, argument, or heated discussion that has arisen during a conversation. Formally expressed through imperative sentences, such replicas restrict the further development of the conversation, terminate the dispute at a particular point, and compel the interlocutor either to withdraw from communication or to end the topic immediately.

Qalimbet (laughing): Just that!.. If it were up to you, the whole world would consist of the Aral Sea...

Grandfather Orol: Get up, leave!

(Ekin A'zam, "The Lonely Boat")

In this dialogue, Grandfather Orol's sharply delivered response to Qalimbet's humorous and ironic remark functions as an imperative reactive replica expressing the closure of an argument. Through this replica, the speaker demonstrates an unwillingness to continue the conversation, prevents the dispute



from escalating, and openly expresses the intention to terminate the interaction by force. The replica conveys the rejection of further argument, the exclusion of the interlocutor from the communicative space, and the desire to end the conversation unilaterally. As a result, the conflictual dynamics of the dialogue are abruptly interrupted, while the tension on stage is elevated to a new level.

2. Imperative Reactive Replicas Conveying Mild Prohibition

An imperative reactive replica conveying mild prohibition is a reactive speech unit that responds to an interlocutor's proposal, command, desire, or intended action not through a direct and categorical rejection (i.e., an explicit "no"), but rather through a softened form of refusal or restriction. Instead of imposing a harsh prohibition, this type of replica seeks to preserve communicative politeness by expressing a gentle warning, a cautious refusal, or an indirect indication that the situation is inappropriate.

For example:

Qo'chqor (reaching toward Alomat's neck): Right away, sir!...

Suvon: "Hey, hey, hey, Qo'chqorbek! Be patient; at least let me perform the marriage ceremony first!..."

(Sharof Boshbekov, "The Iron Woman")

In this dialogue, Suvon's utterance, "Hey, hey, hey, Qo'chqorbek! Be patient; at least let me perform the marriage ceremony first!...", functions as an **imperative reactive replica conveying mild prohibition**. This is because it is not expressed through a direct prohibitive command such as "Don't do that" or "Stop"; rather, through polite expressions such as "be patient" and "at least...", Suvon attempts to gently restrain and limit Qo'chqor's inappropriate and hasty action. Although the replica is formally structured as an imperative sentence, semantically it serves the function of halting an action and restoring the situation to a normative order. In this example, Suvon's communicative goal is to dissuade Qo'chqor from his intended action, but he accomplishes this not through a harsh command but through a courteous and tactful manner that maintains social distance. Such a mild prohibition serves to stop Qo'chqor's action, prevent the situation from escalating, and mitigate potential tension on stage. In this way, Suvon manages



the situation without directly intensifying the conflict and redirects the rhythm of communication toward a more socially acceptable and regulated course.

3. Emotive Imperative Reactive Replicas

An **emotive imperative reactive replica** is a reactive speech unit in which the meaning of a strict command is not foregrounded; instead, the utterance is softened by emotional-semantic connotations such as affection, tenderness, hesitation, embarrassment, or discomfort. Formed as a response to a preceding stimulating utterance, this type of replica guides the course of communication through the speaker's emotional attitude. In dramatic texts, its primary function is to divert attention from the topic, gently interrupt the conversation, or provide an emotional response that preserves the socio-psychological balance of the interaction.

For example:

Qo'chqor (excitedly): Don't switch it off, don't switch it off! (To the robot.)
Alomatkhon!.. Speak, Alomatkhon!.. Say things like that!..

Alomat: Oh my, that husband of mine!.. Go on, now!..
(Sharof Boshbekov, "The Iron Woman")

In this dialogue, Alomat's utterance, "Oh my, that husband of mine!.. Go on, now!..", represents an **emotive imperative reactive replica**. This replica functions as an emotional-reactive response to Qo'chqor's successive emotionally charged appeals, namely, "Don't switch it off, don't switch it off!.. Speak, Alomatkhon!.. Say things like that!..", which constitute demanding stimulating replicas.

The feelings of discomfort, surprise, hesitation, and gentle refusal reflected in Alomat's speech indicate its semantically softened nature. The expression "Oh my, that husband of mine!" conveys an internal emotional reaction within the context and emerges as a direct response to Qo'chqor's excessively insistent demands. At the same time, the replica functions as a form of gentle resistance and emotionally coloured self-protection, softening Qo'chqor's pressure, reducing the emotional tension within the dialogue, and redirecting the subsequent course of communication.



As a result, the replica implicitly conveys the meaning of “Please stop talking like this; do not put so much pressure on me,” without expressing this message directly. Through such indirect emotional expression, the speaker preserves interpersonal harmony while simultaneously regulating the communicative situation.

In conclusion, the analysis of imperative reactive replicas in dramatic discourse demonstrates that these speech units play a significant role in regulating dialogue, expressing interpersonal relations, and shaping the dynamics of dramatic action. Functioning as responses to preceding stimulating replicas, imperative reactive replicas contribute to the development of conflict, the management of communicative interaction, and the revelation of characters’ emotional and psychological states. The study shows that argument-closing, mild prohibitive, and emotive imperative reactive replicas differ in their semantic and pragmatic functions, yet all serve to influence the course of communication and maintain the coherence of dramatic discourse. Therefore, the linguistic investigation of imperative reactive replicas provides valuable insights into the communicative mechanisms of dramatic texts and enriches contemporary studies in discourse analysis, pragmatics, and drama linguistics.

References

1. Pavis, P. Dictionary of the Theatre: Terms, Concepts, and Analysis. – Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998. – 438 p.
2. Pfister, M. The Theory and Analysis of Drama. – Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988. – 347 p.
3. Berkner, H. Drama und Dialog: Linguistische Untersuchungen zur dramatischen Kommunikation. – Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1984. – 256 p.
4. Crystal, D. A Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics. 6th ed. – Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2008. – 529 p.
5. Levinson, S.C. Pragmatics. – Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983. – 420 p.
6. Kojina, M.N. Stilistika russkogo yazyka. – Moskva: Prosveshchenie, 1993. – 224 s.



*Modern American Journal of Social Sciences
and Humanities*

ISSN (E): 3067-8153

Volume 2, Issue 5, May, 2026

Website: usajournals.org

*This work is Licensed under CC BY 4.0 a Creative Commons Attribution
4.0 International License.*

-
7. Austin, J.L. How to Do Things with Words. – Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962. – 168 p.
 8. Searle, J.R. Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language. – Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969. – 203 p.