

An Analysis of Speech Acts in Quranic Citations from Safavid Era Sources (A Case Study of Tarikh-e Jahanara-ye Abbasi)

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Introduction

The Safavid era is considered one of the most important periods in Iranian history. Understanding the characteristics of this era's history is possible through the remaining texts. Some frequently used concepts in these texts strongly align with the dominant religious approaches in the power structure. The frequent use of Quranic verses and hadiths, especially in cases that emphasize Shi'a rituals, is evident in these writings. One of the prominent sources from this period is the book *Tarikh-e Jahangoshay-e Abbasi*. This article aims to analyze the speech acts and Quranic citations in this book using both quantitative and qualitative data. The key question is: How are the Quranic citations in this book used, and what is the frequency of each type of speech act?

Theory and Methodology

Speech act theory is one of the most important linguistic theories, developed by Austin and expanded by John Searle. This theory examines the relationship between language and social actions, emphasizing that linguistic expressions are more than just symbols and structures; they hold social and cultural significance. John R. Searle, one of the key theorists of speech act theory, identifies five basic types of speech acts, each with distinct characteristics:

۱. Assertive Acts: The speaker expresses their belief about the truth or falsehood of a matter.
۲. Directive Acts: The goal is to persuade the listener to do something and place them under obligation to perform an action.
۳. Commissive Acts: The speaker commits themselves to performing an action in the future.
۴. Expressive Acts: These acts convey the speaker's emotions and feelings, such as gratitude, apologies, congratulations, or insults.

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Δ. Declarative Acts: These acts declare new conditions for the listener. The speaker creates changes through their declarations, and this act relies on the speaker's authority to bring about new events ([Abedini, 2019, pp. 52-53](#)).

Research Findings

As mentioned, speech act theory does not merely focus on the literal meaning of phrases but also considers the contextual, temporal, cultural, and political factors referred to as the "context," which includes the unspoken elements of a text ([Yarmohammadi, 2006, p. 35](#)). Therefore, since the context of the cited Quranic verses is of special importance, we must examine the context of the referenced verses. Due to the large number of verses, only one example is discussed.

Verse 25 of Surah Al-Baqarah, "Gardens beneath which rivers flow," is frequently cited in *Tarikh-e Jahangoshay-e Abbasi* ([Qazvini, 2004, pp. 24, 307, 714](#)). This verse describes paradise, making its direct speech act assertive in nature. It is referenced in Shah Abbas II's letter to Aurangzeb, the emperor of India, concerning his determination to capture Qandahar. Shah Abbas fought over Qandahar with the Indian army several times between 1059 and 1068 AH. Aside from a six-month period (in 1068 AH) when Qandahar was occupied by the Indians, the Safavids were consistently victorious. In the Safavid era, Qandahar was valued not only for its pleasant climate and abundance of gardens, fruit, and agricultural products ([Barhman, 2006, p. 143](#)), but also because it was a central point for land trade between India and Iran. Located along the trade routes of Ghazni-Kabul-Central Asia, as well as the sole land route between Multan-Lahore and northern India, Qandahar generated significant customs revenue for the Safavid or Indian governments. A large volume of trade between these countries passed through Qandahar ([Mansuri-Moghadam et al., 2021, p. 125](#)).

Total	declarations()	expressives()	commissives()	directives()	assertive()	
50	-	1	-	13	36	Number
100	-	2	-	26	72	Percent

Conclusion

The central question of this study was: How are Quranic citations used in *Tarikh-e Jahangoshay-e Abbasi*, and what is the frequency of each type of speech act? As shown, the most common type of speech act in Quranic citations within *Tarikh-e Jahangoshay-e Abbasi* is assertive, with 36 out of 50 instances (72%).

These acts are typically used in news, scientific, or historical texts where the writer intends to convey information rather than personal opinion. Thus, the author of *Tarikh-e Jahangoshay-e Abbasi* aimed primarily to explain and convey the conditions of his time.

As demonstrated, the most common indirect speech acts are directive acts, used to encourage or persuade the audience to take a specific action. Given the frequency of indirect directive speech acts in the text, the author sought to motivate the audience regarding Safavid societal issues, particularly military matters. Ultimately, these two types of speech acts in the Quran serve as guidance for humanity, helping them to better understand divine concepts and moral values. Therefore, when these two types of speech acts are used in the Quranic citations of Safavid-era texts, particularly in *Tarikh-e Jahangoshay-e Abbasi*, they reflect the author's intent. In other words, the combination of these two types of acts creates a complete educational system, providing both knowledge and motivation for the audience.

Keywords: Speech Act Theory, John Searle, Quranic Citations, Safavid Era, Tarikh-e Jahanara-ye Abbasi.



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