

**BETWEEN SILENCE AND SPEECH: A COMPARATIVE PRAGMATIC  
STUDY OF EMOTIVE MEANS IN ERKIN A'ZAM'S PAKANANING OSHIQ  
KO'NGLI AND KHALED HOSSEINI'S A THOUSAND SPLENDID SUNS**

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**Annotation:** This article examines how emotional meaning is conveyed in literary texts from distinct cultural traditions: *Pakananing oshiq ko'ngli* (2001) and *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (2007). It focuses on the ways characters express feelings such as guilt, sorrow, and emotional restraint or release. In the Uzbek narrative, emotional content is often conveyed through metaphor and bodily response, whereas in the Afghan-English novel, direct dialogue and explicit verbalization are more prominent. These differences reflect deeper communicative preferences embedded within the respective cultures.

**Keywords:** emotive means, cultural pragmatics, expressive strategies, comparative analysis, narrative emotion

### **Introduction**

Language is a medium for both transmitting facts and conveying emotional undertones. In literature, the way characters express emotion can reveal underlying cultural values. This study explores how two works—*Pakananing oshiq ko'ngli* by Erkin A'zam and *A Thousand Splendid Suns* by Khaled Hosseini—use different linguistic and narrative strategies to express emotional content. Though both stories deal with hardship and sacrifice, they reflect different norms of emotional communication. This contrast offers insights into how emotion is shaped and shared in literary discourse across cultures.

Numerous scholars have examined the cultural encoding of emotion. Wierzbicka (1999) emphasizes that emotional expression is culture-specific and deeply tied to language norms. Similarly, Pavlenko (2005) highlights that narrative styles in multilingual and multicultural texts reflect distinct emotional repertoires. These perspectives support the relevance of a comparative analysis grounded in pragmatics.

### **Research Questions:**

1. What linguistic tools do characters use to express emotional states?
2. How do cultural expectations influence how emotions are communicated?
3. What pragmatic purposes are served by silence, speech, or metaphor in these texts?

### **Methods**

Using comparative textual analysis, this study closely examines selected scenes from both texts. Each excerpt was chosen for its clear representation of emotional response. The analysis identifies pragmatic tools such as metaphor, indirectness, gesture, and speech acts. These are interpreted through the lens of Brown and Levinson's politeness theory and Searle's theory of speech acts. The study also draws upon Wierzbicka's (1999) semantic approach to emotion and Pavlenko's (2005) cross-cultural discourse analysis.

### **Results**

#### **Emotive Means in *Pakananing oshiq ko'ngli***

U gapni eshitgach, quvonchli yuragi bir nima bo'lganday jim qoldi. Qo'llari qaltiradi. U kulishga urindi, ammo lablari qimirlamadi. (A'zam, 2001)

This passage illustrates emotional suppression. The character's internal turmoil is not spoken aloud but shown through physical reactions. The silence of the "heart" and trembling hands convey anxiety and self-restraint, highlighting a cultural norm of managing one's emotional display.

Quloqlariga "Pakanasan, senga yetmagan odam ko'p" degan gap chalinib turardi. (A'zam, 2001)

Here, the memory of a painful remark echoes in the character's mind. It suggests enduring social judgment and internalized inferiority. The insult is not actively voiced, demonstrating how emotions linger and influence behavior through memory.

Ko'cha boshida yelkalari cho'kkanday bukilib ketdi... (A'zam, 2001)

Physical posture is used as a narrative device. The drooping shoulders suggest emotional defeat without dialogue. This approach emphasizes indirect but highly expressive communication.

Gap orasida yana kulib yubordi, lekin bu kulgi avvalgidek emasdi. (A'zam, 2001)

Smiling becomes a social mask here. Although the character attempts to laugh, it is described as different—forced or hollow—hinting at unspoken discomfort or emotional exhaustion.

Oqshom tushganda, u go'yo butun kunini behuda o'tkazgandek o'zini aybdor his qildi. (A'zam, 2001)

In this scene, guilt is conveyed not through confession but reflection. The day is described as "wasted," and the character feels responsible, though the feeling is private. Emotional restraint is emphasized through introspection.

### **Emotive Means in A Thousand Splendid Suns**

"Tell Aziza she was the noor of my life. And Zalmai... that I'm sorry. For everything." (Hosseini, 2007, p. 329)

This plea is emotionally charged and context-specific. The speaker uses direct speech to protect others, and her feelings are immediately visible.

"Sleeping on the street like a stray dog..." (Hosseini, 2007, p. 148)

A metaphor is used here to show self-pity and loss of dignity. The character's suffering is narrated without reservation.

"You'll get used to it," Rasheed said. "This is your home now." (Hosseini, 2007, p. 113)

Rasheed's words reflect emotional detachment. While the speech may appear calm, it contains an undertone of control and finality.

"I can't breathe," she said. "It hurts to breathe." (Hosseini, 2007, p. 253)

In this moment, raw pain is verbalized. The physical metaphor underscores the emotional intensity, and the repetition gives weight to her suffering.

### **Discussion**

The findings reveal different emotional economies across the two literary works. In *Pakananing oshiq ko'ngli*, emotions are often conveyed through indirect means such as metaphor, gesture, and silence. Characters tend to internalize their feelings, showing restraint and reflecting broader cultural expectations of dignity and emotional control. This aligns with what Wierzbicka (1999) describes as a "cultural script of emotional moderation," common in collectivist societies.

In contrast, *A Thousand Splendid Suns* illustrates a more open and verbal style of emotional expression. Characters use direct language, metaphors, and confessions to articulate

their feelings. As Pavlenko (2005) suggests, multilingual authors often use emotive language to create resonance and solidarity with readers, particularly in contexts of suffering and trauma.

While both texts use metaphor effectively, the Uzbek story embeds it in narrative introspection, whereas the Afghan-English novel places it in dialogue. Thus, each narrative demonstrates how culture shapes the pragmatics of emotional expression. This contrast can be summarized as ambiguity, face-saving, and emotional control in the Uzbek story versus clarity, catharsis, and resolution in the Afghan-English novel.

The findings reveal different emotional economies. In the Uzbek story, emotions are often felt deeply but expressed through quiet actions and reflections. In contrast, Hosseini's characters speak their pain aloud, often seeking response or forgiveness. These contrasting patterns illustrate how language, culture, and emotion are interwoven.

### Conclusion

This comparison sheds light on the pragmatic use of emotive means in literature. Both authors portray emotional hardship, but through different strategies: A'zam relies on restraint, while Hosseini highlights direct speech. Understanding such distinctions helps uncover how different linguistic cultures express human experience.

These insights also hold pedagogical value, especially in multicultural classrooms where students encounter diverse narrative voices. Recognizing the role of cultural norms in emotional communication enhances not only literary appreciation but also cross-cultural empathy. Moreover, this study contributes to broader discussions in comparative literature and pragmatics, encouraging future research that bridges linguistic analysis with cultural interpretation.

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