

NON-VERBAL SIGNS LINKED TO THE CONCEPT OF SHAME IN UZBEK LANGUAGE

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Annotation: *Shame is understood as the inner sting arising from one's own improper or poorly judged actions—an emotional bruise tied to honor and moral codes. From a cultural angle, shame grows inside the moral universe of a community; it is a psycho-paralinguistic emotion that appears when a person aligns themselves with ethical expectations. At the core of the shame concept lies a cognitive process that awakens differently in each individual, shaped by the customs and values of their people. The text explores how the idea of shame—counted among modality-related categories—takes shape through non-verbal expression.*

Key words: *Concept, shame, non-verbal signals, Uzbek, gaze, distance, movement, paralinguistics, communication, language.*

Nonverbal means are tightly interwoven with our speech and can even, in some cases, take the place of communication carried out through language. Professor V. Wundt noted that, at the beginning, two forms of language existed: the language of sound (physical movements of the tongue and lips) and the language of gestures (movements of the hands, head, body, facial muscles). Albert Mehrabian stated that information is conveyed 7 percent through words, 37 percent through vocal quality, and 55 percent through gesture; meanwhile, research conducted by Professor Birdwhistell during his study of communication showed that at least 35 percent of information in interaction is verbal, while more than 65 percent is transmitted through nonverbal means. Paralinguistic tools are defined not only by their capacity to convey information but also by their ability to communicate emotion. Physiologists have found that more than 250 characteristic combinations that never repeat even among twins can be noted in the iris of the eye.

In a broad sense, phonation encompasses articulation as well as volume, timbre, pitch, and other features; it examines intonation as something tied to a person's nature and individual traits and as something arising from their psychological condition. The physical properties of voice are viewed as key units through which the hearer receives information about the speaker. For example: He raised the whip handle above his head. He spoke in a ringing voice. (T. Malik) Those unruly men shouted to one another, though they themselves could not be seen. (T. Murad)





The main phonational means for expressing various subjective-modal meanings is intonation. Intonation serves as a universal device for reflecting the wide range of such meanings. With intonation, the content of a sentence gains expressive, evaluative, emphatic, and similar shades. Intonation is the sum of the features of spoken sound – pitch pattern, tempo and rhythm, loudness, timbre, pauses, and logical stresses. Speech melody is created through rises and falls of pitch. Speech tempo shifts through speeding up or slowing down, allowing information distribution within the text. Rhythm is rooted in breathing patterns and maintains order in speech, helping express deviations used to convey added meaning. Loudness reflects the nature of the situation. Timbre, the individual coloring of the voice, delivers emotional and expressive nuances. Pauses, together with other intonational elements, contribute to semantic selection and to dividing speech into meaningful segments. Logical stress is marked by rises, falls, and pauses, allowing the key word of a sentence to be semantically highlighted. Thus, intonation expresses various semantic properties of an utterance in both logical and emotional-expressive ways.

Intonation reflects how a speaker treats others and shows their attitude toward the listener. Through intonation, speech gains emotional and expressive force. In spoken language it emerges through changes in pitch, while in written language it is marked by punctuation and italics.

In works of literature, different kinds of intonation appear: interrogative, exclamatory, declarative, ironic, flattering, angry, emphatic, resentful, fearful, shame-filled, surprised, and others. Among intonational devices – tempo, timbre, and stress – each helps convey the speaker's general condition, excitement, and mood.

Depending on its purpose, speech tempo varies: slow (dictation, oaths), medium (lessons, lectures, speech of radio and television hosts), fast (agitation, urgent messages). In oral communication, subtle shades of meaning are expressed through intonation combined with facial expression and gesture. Stress appears when a syllable or a word is singled out by increasing volume or heightening the sound, thus making it prominent. Stress carries a semantic-stylistic role: the speaker emphasizes the word they consider important and draws the listener's attention to it.

Nonverbal means serve to supplement speech during communication, sometimes replacing it entirely, and to reflect the emotional state of the participants. Nonverbal signs not only add to the content of verbal information but also reveal details such as the speaker's age, character, and other traits.

A person's nonverbal communicative system is a secondary system subordinate to language; despite their different origins, nonverbal means function as tools adjacent to language. Among kinetic nonverbal forms, hand movement is widely used and performs





various meanings. T. M. Nikolayeva states that although the expressive capacity of the human face and eyes is broad, it is functionally more limited than hand movement.

The concept of shame belongs to the evaluative and emotional section of subjective modality and is expressed through various verbal and nonverbal means. It includes the conceptual core, emotional elements, culture-specific evaluative forms, associations, and images. The shame concept unites diverse components around itself. Some of these are discussed below.

The hand may appear in different moments of thought expression: it can support an idea, add further meaning, heighten impact, convey emotion, explain, or depict.

Paralinguistic means expressing the concept of shame do not always form a single paradigm with it. In nonverbal form, the emergence of shame is connected to the person's actions during the speech moment – their behavior, posture, and manner. These appear in situations such as distance, lowering the head, avoiding eye contact, changes in movement speed, raising or lowering the voice, covering the face, and more.

Paralinguistic means take shape from childhood among all nations and become part of everyday behavior. Since the concepts of shame and flattery are tied directly to human personality, their nonverbal expression among Uzbeks shows distinctive, individual features.

Emotion appears in humans from infancy; its nonverbal expression is gradually learned through life experience. In conclusion, emotions – especially concepts such as shame – are expressed not only through verbal signs but also through nonverbal means.

Frames that help express this concept – blushing, embarrassment, awkwardness, discomfort, modesty, disgrace – bring forward several underlying meanings:

1. The central emotional pulse;
2. The trigger (admitting one's misstep or improper behavior);
3. The force of the feeling (deep embarrassment);
4. Its opposite quality;
5. The emotion's physical trace in the body.

Shame, as it appears across many cultures, carries several broad features:

1. A moral marker for the individual;
2. A psychological weight that can wound more sharply than material loss;
3. A factor capable of disturbing a person's everyday life.

Alongside verbal expressions, Uzbek communication relies on non-verbal signals to convey shame. In interaction, these signals hold considerable power – they enrich spoken words, sometimes replace them, and reflect the speaker's emotional state. Since non-verbal cues routinely expose inner feeling, discussing shame through these cues is entirely fitting.





Paralinguistic signs tied to shame do not always align neatly with verbal expressions. Shame often appears in the lived moment—in a person’s posture, movement, or behavior. Distance, bowed head, averted gaze, speed of motion, lowered voice, hiding one’s face—each of these may surface when shame is present.

For example: “Oyisha begim, shy and uneasy, sat down at the farthest edge of the table from Bobur” (P. Qodirov). Here, physical distance becomes a carrier of the shame concept.

At the peak of shame, a person tends to hide swiftly—turning the body away, shielding the face. “The girl suddenly came to herself, slipped behind the wall in a blink, and disappeared from sight” (P. Qodirov). This quick retreat signals her modesty—an expected trait of Uzbek girls, as the writer suggests. Lowering the head between the shoulders or covering the face with one’s hands likewise expresses shame: “The child drew his head into his shoulders. He hid his face behind his muddy palms” (T. Murod).

The angle of the head communicates much. A bowed head often reveals embarrassment: “Not wishing to show her discomfort, she lowered her head and fixed her gaze on her knees” (P. Qodirov).

The eyes, too, betray shame. Someone who feels at fault or ill at ease often avoids the other’s gaze, keeping their eyes lowered:

“Bobur, ashamed to have ignored his mother’s words, tried not to meet Qutlug‘ Nigor’s eyes” (P. Qodirov). “Polvon did not grow angry; instead, humiliation washed over him... he couldn’t bring himself to look her in the face; he felt ashamed and unworthy” (M. Muhammad Do‘st). “Qosimbek had been avoiding the sight of Bobur’s bare feet the entire time” (P. Qodirov).

A softened, lowered voice is another clear marker. Among Uzbek women especially, speaking quietly often signals modesty or embarrassment:

“My lord, this is why they brought us from Kabul to Qunduz,’ Mohim begim said, lowering her voice, ‘they wish to return home soon.’” (P. Qodirov)

Actions also give shame away—pulling away from others, retreating quickly, moving with sudden speed:

Did he see me last night? Did I turn away quickly out of embarrassment?” (T. Murod)
“Matluba said this, shut the door, and hurried down the stairs” (T. Malik).

“He steadied himself and covered his bare feet with the hem of his coat” (P. Qodirov).
“Not wanting them to see him barefoot, Bobur stepped aside into the shade of a tall juniper tree” (P. Qodirov).

The verb to step back carries a hint of discomfort as well:

“My prince, I did not recognize you!” said Yor Husaynbek, stepping one pace back, sword in hand” (P. Qodirov).





Paralinguistic habits form from childhood and settle into daily behavior. Since shame is closely tied to personal identity, its non-verbal manifestations among Uzbeks also bear a distinctive, culturally shaped character. In short, the emotion of shame emerges not only through speech but also through a wide range of non-verbal signs.

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