

SILENCE IN COMMUNICATION

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Abstract: *This article sheds light on silence and its place in communication, presents the meanings that silence can convey, and represents examples of silence in written speech from novels. Silence is an integral part of communication and an integral element of speech and dialogue. Silence is an object of research in such areas of linguistics as paralinguistics and extralinguistics, which study nonverbal means.*

Keywords: *silence, communication, speech, dialogue, function*

Silence serves as a specific linguistic sign in communication and can be a means of expressing various speech acts. In addition to silence in communication, it is also an example of a purposeful action.

Taking the turn to speak, which is the starting point for the execution of a certain speech act, has its own rules of procedure. This turn is associated with the mutual consent of the interlocutors and the plan drawn up by the initiator of the conversation, as well as the way and actions chosen to specify this plan. Interlocutors usually signal to each other in a certain way that the turn to speak is over and that the other person should begin his speech act. There are also cases of violation of the turn (according to researchers, the number of these cases is 5%). Violation of the turn during a conversation indicates nervousness, haste, or a desire to “put the conversation on the right track”. In short, it is clear that silence before the turn of a speech act also expresses its own content.³⁸

Silence is a universal phenomenon that accompanies a person from birth to his last breath. Silence is as natural as speech, because, being part of society, we cannot speak or remain silent forever. This phenomenon, due to its universality across all peoples and regardless of age, gender, or social background, has become the subject of a number of disciplines, such as philosophy, theology, psychology, semiotics, ethnography, cultural studies, and linguistics. Based on this, we can say that silence today has an interdisciplinary nature. Judging by some facts, ethnographers were the first to show interest in this issue.

³⁸ Sh.Safarov “Pragmalingvistika” Toshkent 2008 p.p 159-160

The interest of linguists in this phenomenon is explained, first of all, by the general tendency of linguistics to significantly expand the material under study, to go beyond purely linguistic communication, consisting of verbal and non-verbal components.

It is very relevant to address the phenomenon of silence in the communicative act. Its nature and functions are still not sufficiently studied. Its functions are very many, and it can mean such meanings as consent and disapproval, asking a question, simple stubbornness or confidence, hatred, pleasure, hesitation, confusion.

The gap (shift) in the works is a kind of “graphic silence”, which points the reader to infinity or the unknown.

Silence as an interdisciplinary problem has a great future. We found it appropriate to quote M. Epstein’s thoughts on this topic in his article “From the Totalitarian Era to the Virtual”, dedicated to the opening of the “Book of Books” on the Internet. Epstein writes: “Linguistics is the queen of the humanities of the second half of the 20th century. But why does a science arise and develop about words and sounds that break silence, and not about the silence in which its objects appear? Silence gives language the boundaries of its activity and the semantic form by which it defines and divides itself. Thus, a new, alternative science emerges - silentics or linguistics of silence (alternative name - silentology; in Uzbek - it can be called "sukut"), the science of pauses, silence and forms of silence, "silences", the science that studies the units of silence that make up speech and determine its semantic transfers, metaphorical shifts and the depth of figurative meanings. Silence, as a non-verbal phenomenon, explains behavior, fills speech with emotional meaning. Silence is a powerful communication component, has psychological significance, is semantically loaded and is important for human communication. Silence is a break in verbal behavior, a replacement of prosodic pause components.”³⁹

The types of actions that make up the act of silence determine its structure. According to S.V. Krestinsky, the structure of the act of silence includes 5 levels:

- 1) presuppositional (assumption) content;
- 2) propositional (suggestion) content;
- 3) implicative (uncertain) content;
- 4) intrasilential (internal silence) content;

³⁹Svetlova A.I. Polifunksionalnist ta poli aspektnist komunikativnogo movchannya v anglo movnomu xudojnomudiskursi. – Visnik Sumskogo derjavnogo universitetu.-Seriya “Filologichnitraktati” –2010. – Tom2, №3.S.104-112.

5) postsilential (after silence) content.⁴⁰

N.K.Kaneva, considering the conditions for the success of a communicative act, believes that each specific communicative act is aimed at the listener's acceptance of the content of the proposal expressed during communication. If this does not happen, the speech act will not be successful, since it is not significant for the listener (Kaneva, 2011).⁴¹

The classification of the functions of silence by S.V. Krestinsky is considered the most promising, since it allows for the most complete and differentiated identification of the functional possibilities of this phenomenon. Based on the meaningful interpretation of silence in communication, he distinguishes eight functions: contact, discontact, emotional, informative, strategic, rhetorical, evaluative and stimulating (Krestinsky, 2010: 75). Let us consider these functions in more detail:

1. Contact function. It manifests itself under the condition of complete mutual identification of communicants; such silence is a sign of the closeness of people, their mutual understanding. In this case, silence performs the function of communication and influence and can express agreement or disagreement, humility, unwillingness to tell the truth, etc.

2. Discontact function. This occurs when there are no common interests between the speaker and the receiver, when people have nothing to talk about with each other. The silence of one of the interlocutors indicates the unwillingness to continue the conversation.

3. Emotive function. In this case, the speaker remains silent due to the inability or unwillingness to speak due to an emotional state: fear, surprise, amazement, joy.

4. Informative function. Silence can indicate agreement and disagreement, approval and rejection, willingness or unwillingness to perform an action.

5. Strategic function. This type of silence expresses unwillingness to speak when a specific goal is pursued: in order not to show one's incompetence, not to admit something, not to betray someone, etc.

6. Rhetorical function. Silence helps to attract the attention of the listener, interest him, and give special importance to the next statement.

7. Evaluational function. Silence can express an assessment of the actions, words, attitude of the interlocutor towards him, for example, hatred, disapproval, etc.

⁴⁰ Krestinskiy, S.V. Kommunikativnaya nagruzka molchaniya v dialoge / S.V. Krestinskiy. – M.: URSS, 2002. – 329 s.

⁴¹ K'neva, N.K. Usloviya uspekhnosti kommunikativnogo akta / N.K. K'neva // Yazyk i diskurs. – Tver: TGU, 2011. – S. 3-4.

8. Encouragement function. It is manifested in the silent performance of any action: apologizing, reconciliation, saying goodbye, etc. Such silence is often accompanied by paralinguistic means of communication - gestures and facial expressions (Krestinsky, 2010: 96-97).

Silence can serve many functions in a conversation. Here are some things to keep in mind about silence in a conversation:

1. Silence in a conversation can put pressure on the other person.

In the United States, it is customary to avoid long periods of silence in a conversation in order to "fill the time." Some interlocutors use this method, for example, to see reactions. It is often observed that a person says information that he did not intend to say.

2. Silence can indicate hostility.

"Resistance" and resentment during silence are ways that some people deal with anger. Such silence can be accompanied by negative emotions and provoke anger in the other person.

3. Silence can indicate disagreement.

Based on the above information, we have tried to cite examples of silence in selected novels:

Anxiety:

The guests **were silent not only because they understood that they had no right to break the silence**, but also because they were worried about the fate of their fate, wrapped in a tent of obscurity. The storm seemed to have forgotten that there were people in the room. (Tohir Malik "Talvasa" p. 62)

Consent:

"You will go and bring your brothers in the morning, my daughter," he said.

Dilfuza responded with **silence as a sign of consent**. (Tohir Malik "Talvasa" p. 289)

Fear:

After this, Jasur jumped up. He trembled as if his daughter was about to be raped, **he wanted to speak, but stammered and could not utter a word**. (Tohir Malik "Talvasa" p. 64)

Anger:

Mrs. Inglethorp came down last. **She still looked agitated, and during the meal there was a somewhat constrained silence. Inglethorp was unusually quiet**. (Agatha Christie The Mysterious Affair at Styles page 22)

Amazement:

I looked at Poirot in silent amazement. The colossal cheek of the little man! (Agatha Christie The Mysterious Affair at Styles page 199)

Thus, on the one hand, silence is undoubtedly nonverbal in its essence, but within the framework of a communicative act it has a greater expressive power than, for example, gestures or facial expressions. On the other hand, silence expresses such complex emotions that it is difficult to express them in words. In general, silence is so complex and ambiguous that we consider it correct to consider it as a separate component of communicative actions. It is very important to emphasize the importance of context in understanding and interpreting silent acts. Referring to context is the most important condition for analyzing the meaning of speech acts. The role of context cannot be overestimated, since it includes various aspects: verbal, historical, phatic, cultural, etc. "The context of language use is something that is not given in the utterances themselves" (Pavilenis, 2015: 5-6).⁴²

It can be concluded from this that the act of silence and the act of oral speech have similarities, which allows us to consider the act of silence, which has communicative significance, as a speech act. The difference between a normal speech act and a speech act in silence is that the latter does not contain lexical forms.

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