PSYCHOLINGUISTIC FUNCTIONS OF SILENCE IN UZBEK LITERARY DISCOURSE

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Abstract. This article focuses on the role of silence in Uzbek literature from a psycholinguistic point of view. It explains that silence is not simply the absence of speech, but a meaningful form of communication. Silence can express emotions, respect, politeness, social status, and inner thoughts. The study analyzes selected Uzbek literary texts to see how silence is expressed through pauses, unspoken reactions, hidden meanings, and narrative tension. Using psycholinguistic and pragmatic approaches, the paper shows that silence is an important expressive tool in Uzbek literature. It helps reveal the psychological state of characters and culturally specific communication styles. The findings show that silence has an important place in Uzbek literary expression and speech traditions.

Key words: *silence, psycholinguistics, Uzbek literature, pragmatics, discourse, cognition, communication.*

Аннотация. Данная статья посвящена роли молчания в узбекской литературе с психолингвистической точки зрения. В ней объясняется, что молчание является не просто отсутствием речи, а значимой формой коммуникации. Молчание может выражать эмоции, уважение, вежливость, социальный статус и внутренние переживания. В исследовании анализируются избранные узбекские литературные тексты с целью показать, как молчание проявляется через паузы, невысказанные реакции, скрытые смыслы и повествовательное напряжение. Используя психолингвистический и прагматический подходы, статья показывает, что молчание является важным выразительным средством в узбекской литературе. Оно помогает раскрыть психологическое состояние персонажей и культурно-специфические особенности общения. Результаты исследования показывают, что молчание занимает важное место в узбекской литературной выразительности и речевых традициях.

Ключевые слова: *молчание, психолингвистика, узбекская литература, прагматика, дискурс, когниция, коммуникация.*

Annotatsiya. Ushbu maqola o‘zbek adabiyotida sukutning rolini psixolingvistik nuqtai nazardan o‘rganadi. Unda sukut shunchaki nutqning yo‘qligi emas, balki mazmunli muloqot shakli ekani tushuntiriladi. Sukut his-tuyg‘ularni, hurmatni, xushmuomalalikni, ijtimoiy mavqeni va ichki kechinmalarni ifodalashi mumkin. Tadqiqotda tanlangan o‘zbek adabiy matnlari tahlil qilinib, sukutning pauzalar, aytilmagan munosabatlar, yashirin ma’nolar va rivoyatdagi taranglik orqali qanday ifodalanishi ko‘rib chiqiladi. Psixolingvistik va pragmatik yondashuvlar asosida maqola sukut o‘zbek adabiyotida muhim ifoda vositasi ekanini ko‘rsatadi. U qahramonlarning ruhiy holatini hamda madaniyatga xos muloqot uslublarini ochib berishga yordam beradi. Tadqiqot natijalari shuni ko‘rsatadiki, sukut o‘zbek adabiy ifodasi va nutq an’analarida muhim o‘rin tutadi.

Kalit so‘zlar: *sukut, psixolingvistika, o‘zbek adabiyoti, pragmatika, diskurs, kognitsiya, kommunikatsiya.*

Silence is usually understood as the absence of speech, but in literature and communication it often carries deep meaning. In many cultures, silence can express feelings, respect, tension, disagreement, wisdom, or emotional pain. In Uzbek society, silence has special communicative value because it is connected with politeness, family hierarchy, modesty, and

cultural traditions. Therefore, silence in Uzbek literature is not empty space; it is a meaningful psychological and linguistic phenomenon.

Psycholinguistics studies the relationship between language and the human mind. It focuses on how people understand, produce, and interpret language. Silence is also part of communication because listeners often understand meaning even when no words are spoken.

For example, when a mother remains silent after hearing bad news, her silence may express shock or sadness. When a student stays silent before a teacher, it may show respect or fear. Thus, silence communicates emotions and intentions without spoken language. In literature, authors use silence to allow readers to infer meaning. Readers psychologically interpret pauses, unfinished sentences, and moments of quietness.

In Uzbek culture, silence is often associated with respect and manners. Young people may remain silent in front of elders. Women in traditional families may use silence to show modesty. Silence can also avoid conflict and preserve harmony.

For instance, during family discussions, an elder may remain silent for some time before giving an opinion. That silence increases authority and seriousness. Similarly, a child who does not interrupt adults demonstrates politeness through silence.

Because literature reflects society, Uzbek writers often include such scenes where silence carries social meaning.

Example 1: Abdulla Qodiriy – O‘tkan Kunlar

In O‘tkan Kunlar, silence often appears in emotional scenes between characters. Kumush may remain silent when she feels pain or jealousy. Instead of openly expressing anger, her silence reveals inner suffering. Readers understand her emotions through behavior, facial expression, and context rather than direct speech.

This silence is psychologically powerful because hidden pain often affects readers more strongly than spoken complaint.

Example 2: Cho‘lpon – Kecha va Kunduz

In Kecha va Kunduz, silence is connected with social oppression and internal struggle. Some characters cannot freely speak because of social pressure. Their silence represents fear, helplessness, and suppressed identity.

From a psycholinguistic perspective, this silence reflects the mental conflict between thought and speech. Characters think deeply but cannot verbalize their feelings.

Example 3: O‘tkir Hoshimov – Dunyoning Ishlari

In Dunyoning Ishlari, silence often appears in family relationships, especially between mother and child. A mother may say nothing but express love through actions. Her quiet presence, waiting, or looking at her child communicates care more strongly than words.

This type of silence shows that communication is not always verbal. Emotional understanding often happens without speech.

Silence in Uzbek literature can be divided into several types:

1. **Emotional silence** – expresses grief, love, jealousy, disappointment.
2. **Respectful silence** – shows politeness toward elders or authority.
3. **Conflict silence** – avoids argument or hides disagreement.
4. **Psychological silence** – reveals internal struggle or trauma.
5. **Narrative silence** – creates suspense and tension in the story.

Each type requires readers to interpret hidden meanings, which activates cognitive processes.

Pragmatics studies meaning in context. Silence can mean different things depending on the situation.

For example:

- Silence after praise may mean modesty.
- Silence after insult may mean anger.

- Silence during a proposal may mean hesitation.
- Silence before answering may mean careful thinking.

Therefore, writers use silence strategically. They know readers will search for meaning in context.

When readers encounter silence in literature, they naturally ask:

- Why did the character remain silent?
- What emotion is hidden?
- What will happen next?

This process engages memory, imagination, and emotional intelligence. Silence encourages active reading because readers must complete the meaning themselves.

Thus, silence is not passive. It is cognitively dynamic.

In conclusion, silence plays an essential psycholinguistic role in Uzbek literature. It is not merely the absence of speech but a meaningful communicative act. Uzbek writers use silence to express emotions, respect, hidden conflict, and cultural values. Through works such as O‘tkan Kunlar, Kecha va Kunduz, and Dunyoning Ishlari, silence becomes a powerful literary device. From a psycholinguistic viewpoint, silence reveals how people think, feel, and communicate beyond words. Therefore, studying silence helps us better understand both Uzbek literature and human communication itself.

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