

The Effect of the Silent Language on the Psychological State of the Individuals : A Study into Psychological and Social Dimension of Silence

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Summary:

In a world that often values safety, and vocal expression, it's easy to forget the power and importance of silence. Whether in personal relationships, professional contexts, or even in oneself. The ability to remain silent can be a strategic tool with deep psychological implications. This study examines the psychology behind the power of silence and explores how embracing silence can lead to personal growth, effective communication, and better decision-making.

The article also highlights that silence can stem from either external or internal sources. The external process views silence as a reaction to the social environment, whereas the internal process sees it as a personal decision. The study suggests that silence has a sociological aspect. When an individual remains silent and conveys a message, such as displaying resistance or a feeling of alienation, they are not only sharing their own perspective but also representing the views of others.

What is Silence

Historically, silence and the various perspectives on it have been widely debated, and studied in academic circles. This has shed light on how silence can be utilized as a form of both verbal and non-verbal communication, or even as an indication of complete communication breakdown. In 1958, Trager coined the term "prelanguage," referring to vocal qualities such as pitch control, rhythm, and tempo. Resonance, vocalizations, vocal traits (such as laughter, crying, giggling, moaning), vocal attributes (including intensity, pitch, and duration), and pauses (like ".uh." or ".um.") were all included in this classification. However, silence itself does not appear to be addressed in their categorization.

It seems that "silence" is not included in their classification. As a linguist, Crystal (1969) provides an in-depth analysis of prosodic and paralinguistic features. In his 1969 work *Prosodic Systems. And. Intonation in English*, he defines prelinguistic features as "combinations of physiological parameters, including pitch, intensity, duration, and silence, that vary based on their identification." For example, different levels of intensity distinguish 'ordinary' whispering from 'phasic' whispering and separate two distinct phonetic categories, 'voice qualifiers' and 'voice qualifiers'.

Crystal illustrates that vocal effects are formed by variations in pitch, loudness, duration, and silence, excluding those vocal effects that stem primarily from physiological mechanisms other, than the vocal cords (1969, p. 128). Meanwhile, Jakobson (2011) and de Saussure (1993) treat sitting still as a "zero sign". Silence has often been interpreted as a sign of loneliness, isolation, or embarrassment, and can also signify rejection or even punishment. Throughout life, individuals encounter various situations that may require them to exercise wisdom and remain silent. Silence is both a skill and an art, one that not everyone can master. It is a challenging skill to acquire, requiring ongoing practice. Generally, silence is not viewed as a sign of weakness; in fact, it can be one of the most powerful and appropriate responses to certain situations an individual may face.

Silence can often be one of the most powerful and fitting responses to certain situations. It is the kind of silence, that protects its possessor from harm and errors, helping them avoid negative outcomes. However, silence becomes reprehensible when a person should speak up. In other words, it is inappropriate for an individual to remain silent when it comes to important facts or necessary matters that require attention.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/reith2006/lecture1.shtml>.

The view of Silence in Psychology

In recent literature, silence does not simply refer to complete quiet, but rather. often signifies minimal verbal interaction during classroom discussions. In cultures where silence is valued, it holds equal importance to speaking, as it allows time for reflection on what has been communicated. Silence in these societies is associated with respect, harmony, attentive listening, and active thinking. In many instances, silence can even serve as a form of communication itself. Sometimes, speech is described as externalized or interactive. According to Alan Davies, silence can provide a space for articulatory rehearsal, internalized speech, sub-vocal articulation, and the internalization of speech patterns, as noted by Derrida (1975).

Scholarly efforts have increasingly focused on exploring silence and discourse in more sophisticated ways, moving beyond the simple combination of sound and silence. In the context of education, silence is understood as a complex blend of voices. Recent research has also sought to engage with discourse prior to studies on silence. For example, silence has recently been classified into various modes and functions, such as confirmation, discussion, debate, group conversations, lectures, negotiations, criticism, inquiry, negation, and more. Speech can be classified into meaningful, irrelevant, high-quality, and low-quality, and similarly, silence can also be meaningful, irrelevant, or of varying qualities. Gurevich, Z. (1989) defines appropriate speech as "the speech of educated people." For seventy years, scholars have called for the inclusion of silence in educational research. However, it is only in the past two decades that proactive research on silence has emerged. Since the 2000s, there has been a growing, and more focused interest in silence, accompanied by practical proposals for exploring its role in social communication.

In recent decades, there has been an increasing interest in gaining a deeper understanding of silence. Recent research has contributed to this knowledge by examining topics such as the misperception of silence in communication, the reinterpreting of silent behaviors in multicultural settings, the dynamics of

frustration caused by silence in intercultural. communication, and the process of negotiating multiple identities.

3.The multi-views of Silence

3.1 Silence as human nature

Human beings are creatures of habit, and the balance between solitude and social interaction is something. Richard L. (1974) values. There are many valid reasons why we may choose not to share our thoughts and emotions. The need for personal space, away from crowds and distractions, mirrors the need for a break from others' conversations in order to create mental space, recharge our minds, and foster new ideas.

The majority of us spend more time in silence, remaining mentally engaged, than we do expressing our thoughts. As both private and social beings, there are many valid reasons why we choose not to disclose our thoughts and emotions. Though silence is often seen as the absence of sound, it is still connected to spoken words. Even when a person isn't speaking, there can be an inner voice at work, audible only to the thinker, even though it remains inaudible to others. Kelly (1966) suggests that this inner voice is not separate from silence. Silence and speech are intertwined, which makes it challenging to define and understand silence as an independent concept.

What occurs within the silent . space adds to its complexity. Silence can be deeply interpersonal. Individuals trying to immerse themselves in a new culture, but who are observed by members of their own culture, may feel intimidated and choose to withdraw. Petrey and Sandy (1990) examine a case in which a Japanese person, attempting to adapt to the Australian context, became self-conscious upon being watched by other Japanese individuals and ultimately abandoned their effort to integrate. This highlights the significant role of situational silence.

The cognitive demands of communication and the personality of the communicator can influence how much someone relies on silence. Individuals who are highly verbal in their native language may become quite silent when speaking in a foreign language. Silence, much like speech, is not context-independent. As an element of language, silence also carries the need to be welcomed, accepted, valued, and understood, rather than leading to confusion or misinterpretation.

3.2. Silence as a personal decision

Evidence suggests that silence can be a conscious, self-made choice. Some individuals choose silence as a way to practice self-control, self-discipline, and caution (Turner, Ralph H., Killian, Lewis M., 1987). Others may withhold their thoughts, particularly when sharing personal opinions or details could be perceived as risky or unappealing. When confronted with conflicting cultural influences, the Japanese often choose a silent "safe zone," as observed in a study by Szuchewycz and Bohdan (1997). Research on Japanese students studying abroad revealed that these individuals sometimes become silent because they struggle to express their true selves.

An example from the study highlights that, in many instances, children rely on non-verbal communication to express their voices and make choices. Offering feedback, whether verbal or nonverbal, can be seen as empowering children, particularly in early childhood education. By choosing silence, individuals can protect their privacy or steer clear of potential conflict or negative repercussions. In some instances, silence can be used as a strategic tool to communicate a message or express dissent, as Austin (1962) suggests. By withholding verbal communication, individuals can signal disagreement or disapproval, prompting others to reconsider their perspectives or acknowledge their viewpoints in a different way.

4. Features of silence as social element

.Silence offers several benefits, both personally and socially. It enables individuals to focus on their thinking abilities, allowing them to direct their thoughts toward .rational interactions and deeply consider their surroundings. By respecting, others during difficult moments and avoiding arguments that lead to resentment, silence also fosters better listening and communication .etiquette.

Silence can be an effective solution to resolving minor marital issues and disputes. It often evokes a sense of caution and even anger from the person initiating the conflict. Silence can act as a subtle form of resistance, making it more powerful than speech. By remaining silent and using non-verbal cues, you can influence the other person, prompting them to reveal more information or speak more than they initially intended. This approach can lead to them disclosing more than they would otherwise, providing insight into their thoughts or emotions.

Silence helps prevent an individual from engaging in excessive talking or spreading misinformation, which could lead to negative consequences. By embracing silence, a person gains qualities such as dignity, wisdom, and tranquility. It allows them to reflect on themselves and their solitude, expanding their inner understanding and providing an opportunity to focus on personal growth.

Some people perceive individuals who prefer silence most of the time as mysterious, believing they conceal their emotions such as joy, sadness, anger, fear, or love. They may be seen as shy, withdrawn, or unsociable. There is a common view that these individuals fear rejection and may want to engage with others, but hesitate to speak or socialize at the last moment Austin (1962).

5. The benefits of Silence as a Psychological Element

1. Silence provides inner peace.

In a world overwhelmed by constant noise and distractions, the value of silence is often overlooked. Solitude offers a chance to embrace this silence, allowing us to experience its deep impact on our well-being. By consciously seeking quiet

moments, we create space to recharge, refresh, and find peace. Silence gives our minds a chance to rest, our thoughts to calm, and our creativity to thrive. It is in these moments of stillness that we discover inspiration and tap into our inner wisdom.

Silence is not merely the absence of sound; it is a conscious decision to listen, reflect, show respect, and safeguard our well-being. It should not be used as a means to silence our voices but as a thoughtful reaction to the circumstances we face. Ultimately, embracing silence, should foster peace and well-being within our, selves, not just for others. It allows us to feel a deep sense of inner calm, experiencing the healing power of solitude. (Osho, 2006)

2. Silence helps to communicate on a different level.

Silence can have both positive and negative effects in communication, influencing an individual's relationships with others (Louis, 1994). It can be a strategic tool in power dynamics and negotiations. By choosing silence during discussions or confrontations, we can assert control and foster an air of mystery. This tactic often unsettles others, prompting them to disclose more information or make concessions. Silence creates tension, making the other party feel compelled to fill the void. Additionally, remaining silent in response to criticism or provocations can showcase composure and strength, ultimately shifting the power balance in our favor (Louis, 1994).

I was always amazed by how my dad could spend hours fishing with his best friend without exchanging a single word. To me, it felt like the silence needed to be broken, or else the situation would become awkward and uncomfortable. It wasn't until years later that I realized there are different forms of communication. Words allow us to share information and occasionally express emotions, but silence is a form of communication between souls . There is something truly magical about sitting quietly with another person, fully immersed in the present moment, and

experiencing a deep sense of harmony both within yourself and with the world around you.

3. Silence promotes self-discovery.

The goal of cultivating external silence is to nurture internal silence. Yet, many people let their, inner voice be overwhelmed by the constant noise around them. The benefits of silence go beyond just attaining, inner peace and calm; it creates space for mindfulness and acceptance. Through silence, we come to understand ,that everything we seek in the universe already exists within us (Bilmes 1994).

4.Silence energizes you.

External noise can be exhausting for both our mind and body. Consider the constant barrage of stimuli, we encounter every second, the countless bits of information our brain must process, filter, memorize, and store. Add to, that the energy spent on thinking, speaking, and acting. The most effective way to replenish our energy is to take a few moments of silence, allowing both our mind and body to rest and recharge.

5. Silence boosts creativity

Creative insights often don't emerge when we're forcing ourselves to think hard. Creativity thrives in solitude, concentration, and especially the quiet of a "non-thinking" mind. By letting thoughts flow freely, inspiration can naturally surface. Solutions to both current and long-standing problems may suddenly appear, or a new, innovative approach may seem possible. Ideas for taking a different direction may come together, sparking momentum and excitement, leading to even more potential paths to explore.

6. Silence enhances focus and mental clarity

Once you become. comfortable with silence, you'll experience a noticeable shift in your ability to be more self-aware. In 2009, the Centre for Compassion and Altruism, Research and Education was established at Stanford University. The Centre's mission

is to explore and understand the neurobiological connections behind human emotions such as compassion, affection, and sympathy. The Center's team includes neuroscientists, influential corporate investors from Silicon Valley, and even the Dalai Lama.

They all share a common goal: to understand how meditation fosters these emotions in individuals. Following these studies, mental training gyms were introduced. These gyms function like traditional gyms, but instead of building physical strength, they help individuals cultivate strong, positive, and beneficial emotions (Abdul Alim, 2021).

7-Silence as an Act of Self-Control

Silence can be a conscious decision, demonstrating an individual's self-control and emotional intelligence. By choosing to remain silent, we can manage our emotions and avoid impulsive reactions that might escalate conflicts or cause harm. It provides an opportunity to pause, reflect, and develop inner calmness and perspective. In this sense, silence becomes an act of self-discipline, allowing us to respond thoughtfully rather than react instinctively (Littler, William, 2002).

8-Silence is Powerful

For some individuals, silence is linked to feelings of loneliness, isolation, or unease. It can be used as a means of emotional withdrawal, expressing disapproval, or even as a form of punishment. In many languages, the word "silence" often carries negative associations, evident in phrases like "a conspiracy of silence," "being given the silent treatment," or "lifting the veil of silence." In our fast-paced, noisy world, silence is often feared by many, as it can be perceived as uncomfortable or unsettling. <https://www.thepositivepsychologypeople.com>

Silence is much more than the mere absence of sound, and research is increasingly revealing its physical and psychological benefits. Spending time in silence has been associated with various health advantages, such as lower blood pressure, a stronger

immune system, reduced cortisol levels, improved hormone regulation, and a lower risk of plaque buildup in the arteries.

Conclusion:

While thinking aloud is often encouraged to solve problems and boost creativity, cognitive and social psychological research suggests that thinking in silence can actually lead to more creative ideas. Silence holds a profound psychological power that is often overlooked in our fast-paced, noisy world. By embracing silence as a tool for self-control, active listening, nonverbal communication, and strategic maneuvering, we can tap into its transformative potential.

The ability to remain silent helps us develop emotional intelligence, strengthen relationships, navigate power dynamics, and improve decision-making. By understanding the psychology behind the power of silence, we unlock a valuable resource for personal growth, effective communication, and overall well-being. Embracing silence allows us to respond thoughtfully, fostering deeper connections and enhancing our ability to navigate life's challenges.

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أثر لغة الصمت على الحالة النفسية للأفراد: دراسة في البعد النفسي والاجتماعي للصمت

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الكلمات المفتاحية: الصمت ، البعد النفسي، التواصل

الملخص:

في عالم غالبا ما يقدر السلامة والتعبير الصوتي ، من السهل نسيان قوة الصمت وأهميته. سواء في العلاقات الشخصية أو السياقات المهنية أو حتى في الذات، يمكن أن تكون القدرة على التزام الصمت أداة استراتيجية ذات آثار نفسية عميقة. تبحث هذه الدراسة في علم النفس وراء قوة الصمت وتستكشف كيف يمكن أن يؤدي تبني الصمت إلى النمو الشخصي والتواصل الفعال واتخاذ قرارات أفضل. يوضح المقال أيضا أنه يمكن توليد الصمت خارجيا أو داخليا. تتعامل العملية الخارجية مع الصمت كاستجابة للبيئة الاجتماعية، بينما تتعامل العملية الداخلية مع الصمت كخيار فردي. تجادل الدراسة بأن الصمت له طبيعة اجتماعية. عندما يرسل شخص صامت رسالة صامتة إلى الجمهور (على سبيل المثال إظهار المقاومة أو الشعور بالاغتراب)، فإن هذا الشخص لا يعبر فقط عن وجهة نظره الشخصية، ولكن أيضا يتصرف نيابة عن الآخرين.