



NONVERBAL AND VERBAL MEANS IN THE FORMATION OF SPEECH

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Abstract

The present study examines the role of verbal and nonverbal means in the formation of speech from a cognitive-communicative perspective. While traditional structural linguistics predominantly viewed language as an autonomous and self-contained system, contemporary linguistic paradigms increasingly recognize the importance of extralinguistic factors in speech production and interpretation. The article argues that speech is not solely a linguistic phenomenon but rather an integrated system in which verbal and nonverbal codes interact dynamically. Special attention is paid to the psychophysiological mechanisms underlying speech production, the role of motivation in initiating communicative activity, and the manifestation of the speaker's individuality through linguistic and nonlinguistic resources. Drawing upon theoretical insights from cognitive linguistics, psycholinguistics, and communication studies, the paper analyzes the functions of intonation, facial expressions, gestures, prosodic features, and other nonverbal devices in shaping communicative intentions. The study demonstrates that verbal means establish the logical and semantic framework of speech, whereas nonverbal means provide emotional, pragmatic, and evaluative dimensions. Consequently, speech formation should be understood as a multidimensional cognitive process in which verbal and nonverbal resources function complementarily to facilitate effective human interaction.

Keywords: Speech formation; nonverbal communication; verbal means; psychophysiological processes; cognitive linguistics; kinesics; prosody; communicative intention; speaker individuality; cognitive-communicative approach.



Introduction

For many decades, linguistic research was dominated by structural approaches that conceptualized language as an autonomous system independent of external influences. Within this framework, primary attention was devoted to the internal organization of linguistic structures, while the speaker, the listener, and the communicative conditions of language use remained largely outside the scope of investigation. However, developments in cognitive linguistics, pragmatics, discourse analysis, and psycholinguistics have shifted scholarly attention toward language users and the processes through which meaning is constructed and interpreted.

Speech production constitutes one of the most complex manifestations of human cognition and communication. It involves not only linguistic competence but also various psychophysiological, emotional, and sociocultural factors. The emergence of speech is preceded by motivational and cognitive processes that stimulate communicative activity and determine the selection of appropriate expressive means. Consequently, speech cannot be reduced merely to the realization of grammatical structures; rather, it should be viewed as the product of interaction between verbal and nonverbal resources.

Nonverbal means – including intonation, facial expressions, gestures, body movements, gaze behavior, and prosodic features – perform essential communicative functions alongside linguistic forms. They intensify emotional expression, regulate interpersonal relations, reinforce communicative intentions, and, in certain contexts, independently convey complete messages. Despite their significance, the role of nonverbal factors in speech formation has not received sufficient attention in Uzbek linguistics from an integrated cognitive-communicative perspective.

The present study aims to investigate the relationship between verbal and nonverbal means involved in speech formation, to identify their respective functions within the communicative process, and to demonstrate how their interaction contributes to the realization of the speaker's intentions and individuality.



Literature Review

The theoretical foundations of the present study derive from several complementary linguistic traditions. Structural linguistics, represented by scholars who emphasized the immanent nature of language, regarded linguistic systems as independent entities whose functioning was largely detached from extralinguistic influences. In Uzbek linguistics, A. Nurmonov critically reassessed this perspective and highlighted the transition from immanent approaches toward cognitive paradigms emphasizing the role of the language user.

Psycholinguistic studies have further demonstrated that speech production cannot be separated from psychological motivation and cognitive processing. L. V. Shcherba emphasized the individual character of speech activity and distinguished between the language system and speech realization, arguing that every speaker reconstructs linguistic experience in a unique manner.

The relationship between consciousness and speech has also attracted scholarly attention. Researchers have argued that consciousness reflects reality, while speech externalizes those cognitive representations. Consequently, communicative activity emerges through the interaction of subjective experience and objective reality.

Nonverbal communication has been investigated extensively in communication studies and psychology. Formanovskaya emphasized the substantial role of nonverbal means in interpersonal communication, demonstrating that tone, intonation, and gestures significantly contribute to meaning transmission. Labunskaya proposed a comprehensive classification of nonverbal behavior, distinguishing among extralinguistic, prosodic, kinesic, and tactile resources. These classifications have expanded understanding of communication as a multimodal phenomenon.

Although these studies provide valuable theoretical insights, research integrating verbal and nonverbal means within a unified framework of speech formation remains limited, particularly within Uzbek linguistics. The present article attempts to bridge this gap by examining speech formation as a holistic cognitive-communicative process.



Methodology and Methods

The study employs an interdisciplinary methodology combining principles of cognitive linguistics, psycholinguistics, communication theory, and discourse analysis.

Several research methods were utilized:

The descriptive method was employed to characterize verbal and nonverbal means involved in speech production and communication.

The cognitive-interpretative method facilitated the analysis of the psychophysiological mechanisms underlying speech formation and the role of motivation in communicative behavior.

The discourse-analytical method was used to investigate the interaction of linguistic and nonlinguistic elements within communicative contexts.

The classification method enabled the systematic categorization of nonverbal means based on Labunskaya's typology, including extralinguistic, prosodic, kinesic, and tactile components.

The textual analysis method was applied to literary examples in order to identify the manifestation of speaker individuality through both verbal and nonverbal markers.

The empirical material consisted of theoretical sources in linguistics and psychology, as well as illustrative textual examples drawn from Uzbek literary discourse. The analysis focused on identifying the complementary functions of verbal and nonverbal resources in expressing communicative intentions and constructing meaning.

The main part

For many years, linguistics investigated language as a closed and self-sufficient system. Within this approach, primary attention was devoted to the essential characteristics of language as an autonomous structure. The prevailing view held that “the language system exists independently of external factors. The realization of communication does not require any auxiliary means” [1]. This perspective constituted the essence of structural linguistics.



Consequently, structural linguistics focused predominantly on the immanent study of language, treating it as a phenomenon detached from transcendent and extralinguistic factors. As a result, the speaker and the listener—the principal participants in speech activity—remained largely outside the scope of linguistic inquiry. Discussions concerning speech activity were conducted without sufficient consideration of those who actually produce and perceive speech. However, no language can be adequately or comprehensively studied in isolation from its users, since traces of the speaker's personality are inevitably manifested in every speech act [2].

The imprint of the speaker's personality is reflected not only in verbal utterances but also in intonation, facial expressions, gestures, and other nonverbal means of communication. Like verbal means, nonverbal devices possess the capacity to express the speaker's identity, thoughts, emotions, and attitudes, thereby occupying a significant place in the communicative process.

According to N.I. Formanovskaya, during interpersonal communication individuals convey only approximately 7% of the intended message through words, whereas 38% is transmitted through vocal characteristics such as tone and intonation, and 55% through gestures and other nonverbal cues [3]. These findings demonstrate that successful communication cannot be explained solely through linguistic forms and that nonverbal resources play an indispensable role in the transmission and interpretation of meaning.

This phenomenon may also be explained from the perspective of cognitive processes. As noted by scholars, “whenever the element of the ‘object’ emerges, the element of the ‘subject’ simultaneously arises in consciousness; conversely, the appearance of the ‘subject’ immediately evokes the ‘object’, thereby activating the mechanism through which objective reality undergoes subjective processing” [4]. Thus, communication is not merely a process of encoding and decoding linguistic signs; it also involves the interaction of subjective experience, cognitive interpretation, and various verbal and nonverbal expressive means.

Therefore, contemporary linguistics increasingly recognizes that speech formation is a multidimensional process shaped by the interplay of linguistic structures and extralinguistic factors. The integration of verbal and nonverbal means contributes to the effective realization of communicative intentions,



facilitates the transmission of emotional and evaluative meanings, and enables a more comprehensive understanding of human interaction.

The speech process, by its very nature, constitutes a subjective phenomenon, and this subjectivity is manifested primarily through nonverbal means. This is because psychophysiological processes reveal themselves even before speech is produced, during the pre-speech stage of communicative activity.

Motivation plays a decisive role in speech production. In the absence of motivation, speech cannot emerge. The speaker's intention to convey information, obtain knowledge about a particular issue, express an attitude, or reveal inner emotions serves as the driving force behind the formation of speech.

All these factors function as nonverbal means that stimulate the process of speech formation. They directly constitute a component of the speech mechanism and leave discernible traces in speech expressed through verbal means:

“Yes, nephew? Why are you sitting here all alone like a melon-field watchman?” asked Jaku Barlos, returning from a night hunt and expressing surprise at finding not a single soul around the camp.

“I suppose even the watchman guarding the fields is in a better condition than I am, uncle,” replied Temur Ota, rising to his feet out of respect for the elderly Barlos nobleman, a representative of his maternal lineage.

The elderly hunter stood bewildered, clutching a bundle of partridges and coots tied together by their legs.

“I do not understand, my lord. Where are our men? Why are you sitting here alone? Did you send the troops somewhere on an errand?” Jaku Barlos remained astonished, his eyebrows knitted in confusion.

(Nurali Qobul, Yeti Iqlim Xoqoni yoxud Ahd va Taxt)

Motivation [5], the speaker's desire to engage in communication, is fundamentally a psychological phenomenon and, consequently, an individual and subjective one. Therefore, the personality of the speaker (the subject), as well as the speaker's attitude toward the content of speech, is manifested first and foremost through nonverbal means. These signs subsequently find confirmation through verbal expression.

Within the shared communicative space, the speaker and the listener perform different communicative functions, and traces of the speaker's individuality are



conveyed through linguistic means. During the speech process, however, such linguistically expressed features are often supplemented by nonlinguistic means. Nevertheless, nonlinguistic means possess a facultative character: they can fulfill their communicative functions fully only in conjunction with linguistic means. When employed independently, their informative value becomes blurred or may even disappear altogether.

At the same time, the speech process itself cannot perform its functions adequately without nonlinguistic means. This is because "the emergence of consciousness is directly connected with the emergence of speech. Speech is an activity realized through language and through a particular system of communicative means. Consciousness and speech are inseparably linked. Consciousness reflects reality, whereas speech expresses that reality as it is represented in consciousness" [6].

Thus, verbal and nonverbal means should not be regarded as isolated phenomena. Rather, they constitute complementary components of a unified communicative mechanism through which human thought, emotional experience, subjective attitudes, and cognitive representations are externalized in the process of interaction.

Speech, on the one hand, represents the realization of the language system, while, on the other hand, it constitutes an independent system with its own elements. In the process of speech production, the systems of language and speech interact with one another. However, "humanity's accumulated experience of speech production and comprehension cannot simply be equated with the speech construction process of a particular individual. Each individual processes this experience in his or her own way. A person's experience of speech production is merely a physiological, or more precisely, a psychophysiological process" [7].

This naturally raises the following question: what relationship exists between the psychophysiological process underlying speech production, the user of a particular language, and the language system itself? Interestingly, this process manifests itself at the individual level. Theoretically, it should correspond to the psychophysiological mechanisms responsible for speech production. In practice, however, this process acquires unique characteristics in each individual, differing from one person to another [7].



Such differentiation is manifested primarily in speech (or text), since nonlinguistic means, in comparison with speech, possess a more general character. The markers of this individuality are linguistic means. It is therefore appropriate to refer to them as linguistic means expressing the speaker's personality. Within the hierarchical organization of language, these means may be classified into phonetic, morphemic, lexical, morphological, and syntactic categories.

In this sense, every individual's speech, as a unique phenomenon, carries features specific to that person. Likewise, nonlinguistic means are also individual in nature and express characteristics inherent to a particular speaker. This, in turn, gives rise to the question: what exactly is meant by the concept of the nonverbal factor? The semantic scope of the concept of the nonverbal factor is extremely broad. Lexically, it denotes "expressive behavior" or "expressive actions." Nonverbal factors encompass those human actions that serve the transmission of information, including movements of the hands, feet, head, face, and body, as well as gestures and facial expressions.

In her work *Nonverbal Behavior*, the Russian psychologist V. A. Labunskaya classifies the means employed by individuals during communicative acts into categories, types, components, and elements. According to her classification, nonverbal means are initially divided into such major categories as extralinguistics, prosody, kinesics, and takesics. These categories are further subdivided into specific types:

1. Extralinguistics: pauses, coughing, sighing, laughter, and crying.
2. Prosody: pronunciation, voice quality, tempo, and timbre.
3. Kinesics: expressive manifestations, a verbal movements, gaze behavior, movements and expressions of the lips, face and forehead, hand gestures, facial expressions, and body movements.
4. Takesics: static and dynamic forms of physical contact and touch.

The classification proposed by Labunskaya demonstrates that nonverbal communication is a multidimensional phenomenon encompassing diverse semiotic resources. These resources not only accompany verbal expression but also enrich, regulate, and sometimes even substitute linguistic forms in the realization of communicative intentions.



Nonverbal factors facilitate the complete expression of meaning in communication and information exchange. For example, on a football field, when the referee raises and rotates both hands, or lowers and raises them in a specific manner, these gestures indicate the substitution of a player or the need for medical assistance. Such actions are readily understood by the players on the field as well as by the spectators. Thus, nonverbal signs are capable of conveying clear and unambiguous information within a particular communicative context.

The concept of the nonverbal factor encompasses all forms of human behavior and gestures expressed outside the linguistic system. Nonverbal factors may accompany and supplement speech to a certain extent, while in some cases they may independently convey an entire message. In written discourse, nonverbal factors are represented through words, phrases, idiomatic expressions, and sentences describing these actions and gestures.

Therefore, speech should not be regarded solely as a linguistic phenomenon; rather, it constitutes an integrated system of verbal and nonverbal codes. Human thought initially emerges in consciousness as a semantic unity—a fusion of words and mental images—and subsequently manifests itself in speech activity. Within this process, verbal means establish the logical and semantic foundation of speech, whereas nonverbal means, such as intonation, facial expressions, and gestures, provide its emotional and pragmatic dimensions.

Accordingly, the means involved in speech formation may be divided into two principal categories. The first category comprises psychophysiological phenomena that arise during the pre-speech stage and include the nonverbal factors that stimulate the emergence of speech. The second category consists of verbal factors directly associated with the production of speech itself.

Taken together, these factors regulate the process of speech generation and ensure its individual character. Through their interaction, the personality of the speaker becomes manifested in speech and textual discourse. Consequently, the formation of speech should be viewed as a complex cognitive-communicative process in which verbal and nonverbal resources function in a complementary and interdependent manner, contributing jointly to the expression of meaning, intention, and subjectivity.



Conclusion

The findings of the study confirm that speech formation represents a multidimensional cognitive and communicative phenomenon shaped by the interaction of verbal and nonverbal means. The traditional view of speech as a purely linguistic process fails to account for the significant contribution of psychophysiological and extralinguistic factors involved in human communication.

Verbal means provide the structural, logical, and semantic framework of speech, whereas nonverbal means enrich communication by conveying emotional, evaluative, and pragmatic meanings. Motivation, intention, and individual cognitive experience serve as essential prerequisites for the emergence of speech and influence the selection of expressive resources.

Furthermore, the study demonstrates that nonverbal means are not merely auxiliary elements accompanying speech. Rather, they constitute integral components of the communicative mechanism and, under specific conditions, may independently transmit information. The interaction between verbal and nonverbal resources ensures the effectiveness of communication and contributes to the manifestation of speaker individuality.

Therefore, future linguistic research should continue to investigate speech as an integrated cognitive-communicative system and explore the role of multimodal resources in diverse discourse types and sociocultural contexts. Such an approach will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the nature of human communication and the mechanisms underlying speech production.

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