

FUNCTIONS OF PARALINGUISTIC MEANS IN THE SPEECH PROCESS

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Abstract: This article discusses the interest of paralinguistic phenomena among scientists, their study, and focuses on the functions performed by paralinguistics. Based on the theoretical views of a number of scientists, a personal attitude is also expressed. The high importance of paralinguistic units in speech is substantiated by well-founded arguments.

Keywords: paralinguistics, gesture, communication act, linguistic means, non-linguistic means, internal and external goals.

Аннотация: В статье рассматривается интерес учёных к паралингвистическим явлениям, их изучение, а также функции паралингвистики. Опираясь на теоретические взгляды ряда учёных, высказывается и личностное отношение. Аргументированно обосновывается высокая значимость паралингвистических единиц в речи.

Ключевые слова: паралингвистика, жест, акт коммуникации, языковые средства, неязыковые средства, внутренние и внешние цели.

Introduction. Language is a social phenomenon. This aspect of it is clearly manifested in its role as a means of communication and exchange of ideas among members of a particular society. For language to fulfill this function, there arises a necessity to appropriately employ two interrelated components: linguistic means and language-related means. Although linguistic means are undoubtedly the most essential and primary tools in the process of information exchange, they are not the only ones. Through linguistic means, a speaker's thoughts can be conveyed to the listener quickly and comprehensibly. However, in this process, not only linguistic units but also nonverbal means participate simultaneously.

Any form of live communication is built upon the relationship between the addresser and the addressee, and in speech interaction, speakers not only express thoughts but also convey emotions and feelings through gestures, body movements, facial expressions, tone variations, and other means [1]. This process serves to enhance the precision and emotional impact of communication. From this perspective, it is not appropriate to study verbal and nonverbal units separately when examining the communication process in its entirety. The field of **paralinguistics** focuses precisely on these aspects and currently occupies a central position in modern linguistics.

Literature review. To date, significant research has been conducted in the field of paralinguistics within world linguistics. In particular, **G.V. Kolshanskiy** was among the first to present his views on paralinguistic means, their objects of study, and classification [5]. Nonverbal means of communication, their functions, and experimental data about them can be found in **I.N. Gorelov's** work *"Nonverbal Components of Communication"* [4]. **G.E. Kreydlin**, emphasizing the crucial role of human behavior and various gestures in spoken communication, regards them as part of nonverbal semiotics and classifies nonverbal means specific to Russian culture [6, p.592]. **S.A. Garkavets**, in his book *"The Tactile-Kinetic System of a Human Being and Its Role in Interpersonal Communication,"* discusses the socio-psychological problems related to the functioning of the human tactile-kinetic system in interpersonal communication, analyzes the various practical aspects of personal manifestation, the extent of their influence on



communication effectiveness, and the tactile and kinematic forms of information transmission [3, p.184]. **M.L. Butovskaya**, in her work *“Body Language: Nature and Culture,”* provides general information about the foundations of human nonverbal communication development [2, p.440].

As mentioned above, although the national characteristics of nonverbal means, their role, significance, application in speech processes, and their verbal equivalents have been extensively studied, systematized, and described by scholars, the features of Uzbek paralinguistic means specific to male and female speech, as well as their pragmatic characteristics in relation to speech situations, have not been thoroughly investigated. Since human speech is an inherently complex phenomenon and it is impossible to fully represent all its characteristics in written form, there naturally arises a need for its comprehensive study. Therefore, in linguistics, alongside traditional linguistic research — namely **microlinguistics**, which studies the smallest segmentable units of speech such as phonemes, morphemes, words, word combinations, sentences, and their internal structures — attention is increasingly being paid to external factors, particularly to various intonational systems of voice, speech tempo, timbre, gestures, facial expressions, and interlocutors’ manners.

When a person uses language to express their thoughts in the process of speech, they rely not only on linguistic means but also on auxiliary tools associated with language to convey specific information to the listener. **Paralinguistic means** serve as one of the essential elements that naturally accompany and complement speech within the communicative process of any human society. Paralinguistics is a branch of linguistics that studies such elements as gestures, tone, facial expressions, and body movements that accompany verbal communication and contribute to the expression of thought, message, and specific intention. Depending on the communicative situation, paralinguistic means help shape the speech process in a certain way — for example, by simplifying expression or clarifying the speaker’s intended meaning.

In the process of making meaning clearer and emphasizing communicative purpose, speech often contains “redundant” linguistic elements that could be omitted. Through the elimination of such redundant units, **extralinguistic means** — those that match the context and convey the same meaning — are introduced into speech. The communicative necessity of reducing redundancy in expression may reach a point where the continuation of interaction without these auxiliary means becomes impossible. In such cases, extralinguistic means compensate for verbal expressions in a different yet functionally equivalent way.

Therefore, paralinguistic means help to **smooth out linguistically unnecessary or stylistically awkward elements** in speech; that is, through the use of appropriate gestures and nonverbal signals, the speech process attains its natural norm. In these situations, the verbal components actively participating in communication — such as words, phrases, and sentences — can perform the same communicative function as gestures that substitute for them within a given context.

Main part. The combined use of verbal and nonverbal means in speech communication makes the interaction clearer and more expressive. This constitutes one of the primary distinguishing features of verbal communication. Unlike ordinary speech, which represents linguistic potential in its material form, communicative speech is characterized by its complexity and integrity, which stem from the **harmonious interaction of verbal and nonverbal elements**. Indeed, nonverbal means are an integral part of communicative speech: they emerge due to various communicative needs and fulfill specific functions within the speech process.



Scholars have expressed various opinions regarding the role and functions of paralinguistic means in the process of verbal communication. In particular, Professor **A. Nurmonov** notes the following:

1. Such elements are directly related to the functioning of the communication channel. The greater the communicative barrier, the more paralinguistic means (including gestures) are employed. These barriers can arise from both external and internal factors. For example, if communication takes place in an open space and the interlocutors are far apart, or if there is strong background noise that interferes with the conversation despite close distance, the need for additional nonverbal means—gestures and facial expressions—increases. Internal factors, on the other hand, are associated with the subjective states of the speaker and the listener. For instance, the addressee may have difficulty hearing properly. In such situations, gestures come to aid.
2. The use of gestures is also connected with speech styles. In formal or ceremonial styles, gestures accompanying speech help ensure expressiveness and emotional impact. The consistent and appropriate integration of verbal and nonverbal means during the speech process is considered a sign of the speaker's high communicative competence.
3. The use of gestures is also determined by the communicative situation. When the addresser wants to share information with the addressee without revealing it to nearby interlocutors, the need for kinetic means arises.
4. When communication occurs in an open area and the distance between the addresser and the addressee is too large for the voice to reach effectively, gestures are again used as supplementary means [7, p. 228].

M. Saidxonov provides several observations concerning the use of nonverbal means in communication among Uzbeks. According to him, nonverbal means are employed:

- a) when the participants in communication do not share a common or mutually intelligible language;
- b) when obstacles hinder the process of communication;
- c) when interlocutors wish to exchange information without being noticed by others;
- d) when one of the participants is unable to express thoughts verbally due to subjective conditions such as illness, inability to speak, disregard for the interlocutor, or other factors;
- e) to ensure that speech becomes more convincing, expressive, and emotionally colored [8, pp. 33–36].

We also support the view that the use of nonverbal means in speech communication arises from specific communicative needs. Nonverbal means perform the following functions within the process of verbal interaction:

- they **support verbal means**;
- they **substitute for verbal expression**;
- they **express inner emotions and feelings** [1].

In conclusion, it can be stated that analyzing paralinguistic means separately from speech does not allow for a comprehensive understanding or evaluation of communication. Therefore, the functions of these means within the speech process are multifaceted, and their proper analysis can bring significant advancements to the field of applied linguistics.



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