

# THE ROLE OF NONVERBAL MEANS IN EXPRESSING PSYCHOLOGICAL STATES IN LITERARY TEXTS

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**Abstract.** This study examines the integral role of nonverbal means in communication, emphasizing their significance alongside verbal tools. Nonverbal communication encompasses gestures, facial expressions, vocal tone, and body language, playing a critical role in enhancing the emotional impact, clarifying messages, and complementing verbal communication. The paper explores the classification, functions, and application of nonverbal tools in various contexts, including psycholinguistic studies and literary narratives. It highlights how nonverbal means are used to reflect emotions, psychological states, and situational nuances, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of communication dynamics.

**Keywords:** Nonverbal communication, verbal tools, paralinguistics, psycholinguistics, gestures, emotional expression, literary analysis, communication dynamics.

## Introduction

Communication, as a fundamental human activity, transcends verbal means to include a wide array of nonverbal tools. Nonverbal communication—encompassing gestures, facial expressions, vocal nuances, and body language—plays a crucial role in enhancing the clarity, emotional depth, and effectiveness of information exchange. While verbal tools facilitate the articulation of thoughts and ideas, nonverbal means provide the emotional and contextual layers that make communication more impactful and nuanced.

Studies in psycholinguistics and paralinguistics emphasize the complementary relationship between verbal and nonverbal communication. Linguists highlight the primacy of verbal tools for structuring and delivering information, while psychologists stress the importance of nonverbal elements in expressing emotions and intentions. Research by A. Mehrabian, for instance, reveals that 93% of a speaker's intended message is conveyed through nonverbal means, underscoring their dominance in interpersonal interaction.

This paper explores the dynamic interplay between verbal and nonverbal communication, focusing on their roles, classifications, and applications in both everyday interactions and literary narratives. By examining the voluntary and physiological dimensions of nonverbal tools, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of their functions and significance in enhancing communication effectiveness.

## Literature Review

Existing studies underline the complementary nature of nonverbal communication in relation to verbal means. Scholars such as G.V.Kolshansky and A. Mehrabian have provided foundational insights into the distribution of communication components, emphasizing the dominance of nonverbal means in conveying emotional and contextual cues. Uzbek researchers, including A. Nurmonov and Sh. Safarov, have contributed significantly to

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understanding the characteristics of nonverbal tools in the Uzbek language, focusing on their integration with linguistic elements in communication and literature.

### **Methods and Methodology**

The study employs a qualitative analysis of nonverbal communication's role in both practical and literary contexts. It integrates theoretical frameworks from psycholinguistics and paralinguistics, focusing on the functional classification of nonverbal means, as proposed by M. Kurbanov. Literary texts are analyzed to identify how authors utilize nonverbal tools to depict characters' emotions and psychological states. The study also incorporates a comparative approach, examining the alignment of verbal and nonverbal elements in communication.

#### **The main part**

Communication is not limited to verbal means alone. Alongside verbal tools, nonverbal means play an active role in exchanging thoughts and expressing emotions. As noted, "In the Uzbek language, like in all other languages, thoughts are conveyed not only through linguistic means but also through non-linguistic (extralinguistic or paralinguistic) tools, such as gestures and implicit (indivisible) sounds. These tools are closely intertwined with linguistics from the perspective of their participation in conveying information" [15, 163]. Verbal communication, which is carried out through language, is evaluated based on the use of linguistic tools, their role in expressing thoughts, and their significance. In contrast, nonverbal communication involves the use of prosodic, kinetic, and graphic means, characterized by their unique features and methods of application beyond the use of language.

In everyday communication, just as various words and expressions are used in different situations, diverse nonverbal means are also employed. Nonverbal tools serve to enhance emotional impact, add subtle nuances to the conveyed message, and clarify the intended thought, making them an integral part of daily interaction. "Verbal communication is considered the primary means of information exchange between individuals, facilitating the easy transmission and reception of information through the speaker's speech. Nonverbal communication, on the other hand, functions to capture additional information about the message, enabling the rapid, convenient, clear, and precise expression of the conveyed information. Alongside language, which is the central organ of speech production, nonverbal communication achieves its intended purpose through facial expressions such as smiles, gestures, vocal tone, body movements, hand gestures, and other methods" [10, 12]. The primary function of language is to facilitate communication, enabling the speaker to convey information, thoughts, and emotions to the listener. In this process, not only verbal but also nonverbal means are extensively utilized. Nonverbal tools are significant in ensuring the clarity and completeness of the conveyed message. For this reason, human communication can be described as a synthesis of verbal and nonverbal means:

"All units not dependent on verbal communication are considered auxiliary tools in the process of interaction. It is appropriate to interpret verbal communication as an integral whole that emerges from the synthesis of these two factors: verbal and nonverbal means" [1, 22].

In the process of communication, the responsibility for transmitting or expressing information lies with both linguistic and non-linguistic units. The roles of linguistic and non-linguistic elements in communication are distributed in accordance with the contextual system, as required by the communication framework itself. When speakers engage in interaction, the



means of expression take on the full or partial burden of conveying information in a manner appropriate to the speech context. Through these means, not only intellectual information is transmitted but also the subtle nuances characteristic of the functional and stylistic types of speech are entrusted to creolized elements [5, 26]. The choice and use of verbal and nonverbal tools in communication depend on the purpose, the target audience, and the nature of the message being conveyed. These two types of means operate simultaneously, ensuring the complete delivery of the intended message. For this reason, verbal and nonverbal tools function as an integrated whole in expressing the conveyed thought.

Linguists emphasize the importance of verbal means, highlighting their primacy in expressing thoughts, while psychologists argue that nonverbal means hold greater significance. According to studies conducted by American psychologist A. Mehrabian, only 7% of the information about a speaker's intentions, emotions, attitudes, and demeanor conveyed to the listener comes from words. The remaining 93% is attributed to nonverbal means, of which 55% is derived from facial expressions, body posture, and gestures, and 38% from vocal tone [2, 76]. In our view, achieving the intended purpose and fully conveying the intended message in communication is possible when verbal and nonverbal means are harmonized. In this context, both linguistic and non-linguistic tools are considered equally significant, serving to complement one another.

Nonverbal communication between individuals is carried out through various forms and means of expression. Modern literature offers a distinctive classification of this system of communication based on a new scientific paradigm. The delineation of fields that study the means of expression in nonverbal communication has led to the emergence of numerous studies in this area [5, 57]. The growing interest in studying nonverbal communication has driven diverse interpretations and analyses of its means and methods.

The development and advancement of the field of paralinguistics in global linguistics owe much to the contributions of scholars such as G.V. Kolshansky, T.M. Nikolayeva, B.A. Uspensky, I.N. Gorelov, G.E. Kreidlin, and M.L. Butovskaya, whose work deserves recognition [6, 8, 9]. In Uzbek linguistics, the characteristics of non-linguistic means have been studied in the works of researchers such as A. Nurmonov, N. Mahmudov, A. Mamajonov, Sh. Safarov, S. Mo'minov, Sh. Iskandarova, D. Lutfullayeva, M. Hakimov, D. Khudoyberganova, M. Saidkhonov, N. Yuldashev, B. Akhmedov, M. Burkhanova, M. Kurbanov, and M. Baratova [1, 4, 5, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22].

There are various reasons for the need to use gestures in speech.

1. These elements are directly related to the functionality of the communication channel, and the greater the resistance, the more paralinguistic means (including gestures) are involved. This resistance can be linked to two factors: internal and external. For example, when communication takes place in an open space, and the distance between speakers is large, or if the distance is close but strong noise interferes with the conversation, the need for additional nonverbal means, such as gestures and facial expressions, increases. Internal reasons are related to the subjective states of the speaker and the listener. Specifically, the addressee may have difficulty hearing. In such cases, gestures can be helpful.
2. The use of gestures is also related to speech styles. In formal speech, gestures accompany the speech and ensure its effectiveness. The appropriate and consistent connection between verbal and nonverbal means during the speech process is a sign of high eloquence.
3. It is related to the speech situation. The addresser may need to use kinetic means to avoid making their thoughts known to nearby companions.

4. If communication occurs in an open space, and the distance between the addresser and addressee is very large, making it difficult for sound transmission, the use of gestures becomes necessary [15, 175]. Thus, the use of nonverbal means in communication is a communicative necessity, determined by the speech situation, context, style, and the goals of the interlocutors.

Due to their broad scope, nonverbal means are subject to diverse interpretations. Research on the classification of paralinguistic means suggests analyzing elements such as gestures, movements of the body and its parts (kinesics), phonation, extralinguistics, haptics, and olfactics as paralinguistic phenomena. These elements exist outside of speech but consistently accompany and are applied in parallel with it [1, 22].

M. Kurbanov classifies the components of nonverbal communication into 18 distinct groups:

1. Kinesics – gestures and body movements.
2. Vocalics – acoustic characteristics of the voice.
3. Natural features – physical attributes such as body shape, size, and hair color.
4. Haptics – touch involving parts of the body.
5. Proxemics – spatial positioning and distance.
6. Chronemics – the timing of communication.
7. Oculistics – eye movements and expressions.
8. Artifacts – clothing, adornments, and cosmetics.
9. Aesthetics – music, colors, visual arts, and other forms of art.
10. Gustics – taste-based communication and its signs.
11. Olfactics – communication through smells and their perception.
12. Systemology – the surrounding environment and context.
13. Graphics – letters, numbers, symbols, and emblems.
14. Mimics – facial expressions such as smiling and other movements.
15. Extralinguistics – nonverbal vocal expressions like crying, laughing, coughing, and

sighing.

16. Sound markers – vocal sounds like "hmmm," "eee," and "uhhh."

17. Pauses – moments of silence or deliberate avoidance of communication.

18. Locomotion – movements such as limping or slow, labored steps. This comprehensive classification highlights the multifaceted nature of nonverbal communication [10, 12-13]. It is evident that nonverbal means are broad and diverse, and their various forms, whether individually or collectively, contribute to successful communication when used alongside verbal means.

G. Hasanova identifies nine functions of paralinguistic means:

1. Emotional Expression: Conveying the speaker's emotions and feelings.
2. Regulation of Interaction: Managing the flow and direction of communication.
3. Complementing Verbal Communication: Enhancing or clarifying spoken messages.
4. Contradicting Verbal Messages: Indicating discrepancies between spoken words and true intentions.
5. Substituting for Verbal Messages: Replacing words with gestures or facial expressions.
6. Accenting or Emphasizing: Highlighting specific parts of the verbal message.
7. Repeating or Reinforcing: Echoing the verbal message to strengthen understanding.
8. Regulating Conversational Turns: Signaling when it's appropriate to speak or listen.

9. Establishing and Maintaining Relationships: Building rapport and conveying social dynamics.

These functions underscore the integral role of paralinguistic elements in effective communication:

**Interpersonal Function:** Nonverbal means serve to express internal emotions and feelings in interpersonal relationships.

**Symbolic Function:** Primarily involving gestures, nonverbal means are used to convey specific messages. In dialogic speech, the addresser uses nonverbal tools to indicate their intended message, and the addressee interprets these silent actions to understand what the addresser intends to communicate.

**Illustrative Function:** In dialogic speech, nonverbal means are used to indicate the size, shape, distance, and other characteristics of objects. They also provide information about the speaker's identity, temperament, social status, cultural or group affiliation, personal qualities, and emotional state in specific situations.

**Adaptive Function:** Nonverbal means serve as tools of reassurance or self-soothing, often manifesting as unconscious behaviors such as playing with hair, stroking a beard, or fiddling with a pen or cigarette while speaking.

**Emphasis:** Nonverbal means frequently emphasize certain parts of verbal messages. For instance, raised eyebrows indicate surprise; a finger wag expresses disapproval; and furrowed brows signal anger, displeasure, or astonishment.

**Complementing:** Nonverbal communication reinforces the overall tone or attitude of verbal communication. For example, lowering the head or adopting a slouched posture may accompany words expressing sadness, while standing upright with a smile and animated gestures may enhance words conveying joy.

**Contradiction:** Nonverbal communication may sometimes contradict verbal messages, either intentionally or unintentionally. For instance, a person may claim to feel fine while tears and a trembling voice suggest otherwise.

**Repetition:** Nonverbal means can repeat the information conveyed by verbal communication without adding new meaning. In such cases, nonverbal elements simply mirror the verbal message, ensuring clarity or reinforcing understanding.

**Substitute for Verbal Means:** Nonverbal tools can replace verbal communication. For instance, nodding the head can confirm a message, or raising a thumb while curling the other fingers into the palm can serve as a gesture of approval or praise [19, 15-16]. It is evident that nearly all functions of nonverbal means are related to reflecting an individual's psychological and emotional state, emotions, and the internal experiences occurring in their mind and heart.

Only when the speaker uses nonverbal means appropriately in communication can they effectively convey their intended message, enhance the impact of verbal tools, and exert psychological influence on the listener. However, the use of excessive or unnecessary nonverbal elements may lead to potential misunderstandings. This is because, like verbal tools, nonverbal means are composed of gestures and movements that can carry either a single meaning or multiple interpretations [10, 16]. Nonverbal means are significant not only for exerting psychological influence but also for expressing emotions and revealing a person's inner experiences and psychological state. The correct and appropriate use of nonverbal means enables precise expression of internal emotions. Therefore, nonverbal tools are given considerable attention in psycholinguistic research.

Gestures, facial expressions, and body movements are considered supplementary tools in communication. They serve to convey information and enhance its meaning, particularly in live speech, where they are often employed to express the speaker's thoughts briefly, succinctly, and effectively. During the process of delivering information to the listener, movements of the hands, head, shoulders, body, facial expressions, and variations in vocal pitch, volume, or duration also convey meaning. Conversely, the listener's reaction to the received information is often reflected in their facial expressions, allowing the speaker to adjust their subsequent sentences to align with the listener's response. In psycholinguistic analyses, paralinguistic tools are regarded as factors that enhance the effectiveness and impact of speech [3, 39]. Emotions and their reflection in speech are among the key issues studied in psycholinguistics. In expressing an individual's psychological state and emotions, nonverbal means play a role alongside verbal tools. From this perspective, studying the function of nonverbal means in reflecting psychological states is a necessary and significant area of research.

Nonverbal communication is a type of wordless interaction between the speaker and the listener, used to complement verbal means. It encompasses all non-verbal message units and can be both voluntary and involuntary. Nonverbal elements confirm verbal communication and reflect the speaker's subjective attitude toward the expressed thought. Furthermore, during the speech process, the addressee receives pragmatic information from the addresser through nonverbal tools [19, 11]. Nonverbal means include any tools other than linguistic ones, some of which manifest as physiological processes. These involuntary processes occur in the body, face, or internal organs without conscious control. Others, however, are deliberately chosen by the speaker and used with specific intent. For example, blushing due to embarrassment is considered a physiological process, as participants in communication cannot voluntarily induce blushing.

Kimsan akam qo'lini sochiqqa artib, ayvondan tushdi. Xijolatdan **yuzlari lovullab** supa oldiga keldi. - Rahmat, ukam! - Zakunchi uning yelkasiga qoqdi.- Dushmanga omonlik berma! (105-bet)

Turning the face away in anger or sulking is an example of a voluntary nonverbal action. In this case, participants in communication can choose to turn their face away if they wish, or refrain from doing so if they do not intend to.

- Ma'limda gunoh yo'q! - Bobom Oqsoqolga chaqchayib chiyilladi. - Gunoh yo'q! - dedi arazlagan boladek yuzini o'girib. - Tag'in o'sha Zakunchiga uyimni bo'shatib berarmishman! Ma'lim ertaga qaytib kelsa, qaysi yuz bilan ko'ziga qarayman!

- Bilaman! - Oqsoqol xo'rsindi. - Hammasini bilaman! Ammo zamonni ko'rib turibsan-ku... (70-bet)

Thus, it is appropriate to classify nonverbal means into voluntary and physiological categories for analysis.

In literary works, the psychological state of characters is often depicted through nonverbal means, which are conveyed using linguistic tools. "Nonverbal means can deliver a message without verbal tools by utilizing direct visual or gestural forms. However, in written texts, where it is impossible to observe nonverbal actions directly, information about nonverbal elements is conveyed through linguistic units." [19, 12]. While reading a literary work, the character's emotions, such as sadness, joy, anger, or surprise, are expressed through action verbs. The psychological and emotional state of the character is conveyed by the author using these descriptive verbs, allowing the reader to visualize and understand the character's feelings in their imagination.



"In specific speech situations, gestures conveying a particular meaning are described through certain linguistic units during the process of recounting that situation. Thus, every language contains a set of verbs that represent gestures. These verbs are semantically referred to as action verbs. For example, phrases like squinted or pursed their lips fall into this category. Through action verbs, the nonverbal tools used by a character and the meanings of these nonverbal actions become more concrete and specific in the narrative." [15, 169].

## Conclusion

Nonverbal communication is an indispensable component of human interaction, functioning both independently and in conjunction with verbal tools. Its voluntary and involuntary manifestations provide depth and nuance to communication, facilitating the expression of emotions, psychological states, and situational contexts. The integration of nonverbal tools into linguistic frameworks enriches both everyday communication and literary narratives. Further research into nonverbal communication's applications across diverse cultural and linguistic settings is essential for a holistic understanding of human interaction.

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