



# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES

An International Open-Access Peer Reviewed Refereed Journal

Impact Factor: 6.064

E-ISSN : 2249 – 4642

P-ISSN: 2454 - 4671

## A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS STUDY OF SILENCE IN SELECTED TEXTS OF VIRGINIA WOOLF

**Dr. Bushra Ni'ma Rashid**

College of Education-Ibn Rushd, , The Department of English, Baghdad University, Iraq

DOI: <http://doi.org/10.37648/ijrssh.v12i02.028>

**Paper Received:**

06<sup>th</sup> February 2022

**Paper Accepted:**

14<sup>th</sup> March, 2022

**Paper Received After Correction:**

20<sup>th</sup> May, 2022

**Paper Published:**

31<sup>st</sup> May, 2022



**How to cite the article:** Rashid B.N.(2022), A Critical Discourse Analysis Study of Silence in Selected Texts of Virginia Woolf, *International Journal of Research in Social Sciences & Humanities*, April-June 2022 Vol. 12, Issue 2; 424-438 DOI: <http://doi.org/10.37648/ijrssh.v12i02.028>

## ABSTRACT

Silence is one of the forgotten and/or undermined aspect of language that otherwise play a very important role in communicative purpose. It is believed that silence is merely the opposite to speech or communication; whereas this study negates this standpoint and proves it to be as vital and communicative as speech itself is. This paper aims at most significant works of the writer with a detailed analysis of Silence in the linguistic field of study by Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). It aims at answering the question whether Silence in communication helps the speaker and/or the listener in the context of discourse or not? It focuses on the significant role that Silence plays in the context of communication – taking into consideration Woolf's two novels namely *'To the Lighthouse* and *between the Acts'*. Various sources have been taken into consideration while compiling this endeavor to prove it to be a great addition to the body of knowledge in general and to linguistics in particular. In the end, it is proved that Silence is a very vital element in discourse with the help of given reference from the mentioned texts.

## INTRODUCTION

There are many types of literary and linguistic forms which generate meaning in novels, the focus here is on the contribution to meaning of various forms of silence, suspending, to some degree, other sources. It is about a theory of reading silence in narration not for the sake of theory, but as a means of engaging the multiple levels and the meaning of silence that one experiences in a Woolf novel. This effort may, perhaps, be as futile as Virginia Woolf's pursuit of the elusive "it" of life, but, nevertheless, it is made by establishing the objective to discuss thoroughly the importance of silence in the concern text. But what is silence in a text? Is it a sign or a floating signifier or a word? Is it a kind of figure, a symbol? Is silence a discourse or a rhetoric? Could it simply be an idea or a theme? Is it a strategy? Is it a presence or

an absence? Is it a space in the text or an implicit structure? Is silence part of a rhythm patterned with sound? How do we empirically grasp it? How does a writer mark silence with words? It also asks the question on how the writer uses this technique of using silence to convey meaning. How does the reader read silence is also of great importance? She hints at reading the silence with some modifications:

**To read on the basis of the unreadable would be, here again, not what does the unreadable mean, but how the unreadable mean does. Not what is the meaning of the letters, but in what way do the letters escape meaning? (Soshana, 2001: 187)**

Such questions may seem to subvert their own terms, but they underly the explorations of this paper, in interpreting Woolf's narrative silence not only in "marked" but "unmarked" contexts as if it were of the same order as the "readable"—the same order as words on the page. Through her narrative methods, adventuring, and changing always so that silence is expressed: its nature, its meanings, its uses. Woolf attempts to both use and escape the alphabet in creating these narrative silences as she wants to capture the rushing stream beneath the conscious mind, beneath the symbolic alphabet—the broken dreams, the nursery rhymes, the unconscious moments, the street cries, the interrupted rhythms—the rent fabric of self, language and culture in the twentieth century. Each novel under discussion—*To the Lighthouse* and *Between the Acts*—has been chosen as the best text to illustrate a particular kind of silence though it may occur in diluted or involuted forms in other places. This study is about the linguistic analysis of silence in the works of Virginia Woolf.

### LITERATURE REVIEW

Not much has been done in exploring the significance of silence in the context of literary novels. But, some cases are referred to in the study to make the reader understand the concept of silence

and its vital role in discourse analysis in particular and in the daily use and reuse of the mentioned phenomena in general.

Silence is said to be the absence of speech or any other form of vocalization. It puts the phenomenon of silence out of the context or the territory of communication altogether. Anything that cannot be heard through the human ear is called silence, and when no words are expressed or said, it means no communication occurred. (Ephrat, 2008)

Silence, in the political aspects, can mean load of things. Manifold intentions can be there behind the silence observed by a speaker whether in front of a massive general public audience face to face or on the electronic medium such as television or the internet applications. For instance, it can be used to show power. In the research of Melina, she comes to the results that through silence many politicians vie to exhibit their power – in a sense that the speaker is not answerable to any person the official world or among the general public. (Melina, 2016: 39)

Silence plays a very important role in not only teaching the art of speech and presentation but also in the classroom management for the teachers in an educational institution. With the help of this linguistic item, the speaker may intent to calm the audience, to make them pay

undivided attention to the speaker, or to turn the attention of the audience towards something highly essential, new or important. (Milad and Baqir, 2016: 11)

### **Concept and Definition of Silence**

In psychoanalytic theory, silence has often been interpreted as resistance? in communication studies, as passivity or absence and this perceptual bias has led researchers to attend to more readily noticeable behaviors while treating silence as merely background (Saville-Troike, 1985:14). Similarly, the fields of sociology and anthropology, until recently, have viewed the absence of the poor or the oppressed from certain social roles as a part of their silence, their inferiority or enactment of subordinate status. Troike's Lesson.

Discussing the objective of the study that has analyzed its importance for having own post-structuralist position springs from a reading of Woolf's silence as one of the "signs by which literature draws attention to itself and points out its mask" (Genette, 1996: 22). Critics have yet to decipher the "many silences," and the many ways in which silence can "figure" in a novel and an epistemology of silence as a guide to reading Virginia Woolf's novels has yet to be written. How can a reader mark what is absent? How does a writer mark silence with words?

Though usually the ground against which talk or sound is perceived, silence "figures" itself. But how, more precisely, does it figure? Since the many kinds of silence to be discussed here present difficulties in articulation as well as audibility, the importance of silence must make distinctions. Silence can mean many things: it may suggest a physical silence or loneliness or a pause as someone dips a pen in ink. Silence can signal a question, a promise or denial; or a warning, a deceit, a threat or insult, or even a request, or a command. It may signal that someone is thinking or holding his peace, or waiting quietly, or being cut off or being stifled; it may reveal something about gender. Research Journal.

### **Silence and Pragmatics**

Various aspects of the language sum up together and compose the best product or asset of a language that is Pragmatics. The prime concern with Woolf's writings is the context in which she tries to convey to the readers. In light of this comment, this study hints at, is the way she tries to explore her method of silence in her novels that is no farther than her own ideals of the role of language, sex, knowledge, mind and being. She introduces a new approach and context to the pragmatic role of silence in competition to the writers of her

contemporary age as well as of the twentieth century. She defines "silence" to be "present" and not "absent" in any case. She hits hard at the authoritative state of "speaking subject." Through her great use of language – in realms of silence and pragmatics – she puts light on many matters such as the use of interpretation and the important role of pragmatism, the unconscious mind and interiority. (Research Gate).

### ***Silence and Illocutionary Speech Act***

There can be innumerable reasons and/or purposes behind the act of silencing in routine life, in political arena or most notably in a novel or any other piece of writing. This feature of silencing is widely used in the field of literature by many great novelists of both the classical period as well as by the novelists in the modern and the post-modern period, such as in the novels of Virginia Woolf. She brilliantly elaborates the phenomena of silence and eloquently makes the reader understand of the intentions behind the silence of the character without giving any detail in the form of speech or even an act at all. Illocutionary speech acts theory – as is known by its name – refers to the innate power of the listener to make a sane and just outcome of the expectation of the observer of silence. Silence and this form of speech act theory are greatly inter-

connected since one is the precursor to the other (in this case the former to the latter). (Research Gate)

### **Silence and Politeness Theory**

In realms of civility, decent behavior and conversation, the first rule says that any action that is done when one is in the company of others must be out respect and politeness to the people that are present on that spot. The next rule suggests that if a someone enters the room in a cold winter day, one must ask him to come and sit by the fire and one must not speaker in a louder tone since it is ill manners. The above examples signify to be the roadmap to being a well-mannered gentleman in the society. For instance, saying "Thank you" and "you are welcome" or knowing the manners of table. This behavioral theory or the Theory of Politeness goes far and beyond all that is aforementioned. In the 1950s and 60s, Erving Goffman defined face as "the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact." This is so because both the speaker and the opponent are trying to present a persona befitting the standards of a good interaction. In 1970, researchers named Levinson and Brown who are considered to be the discoverer of the Politeness theory, presented their idea of

"Face". They said that the Face can be of two types or forms: the Positive Face: when the speaker expects the listener to comply with in positive or expected manner; and the Negative Face: which is a claim merely to the rights presented by the speaker. For example, a teacher has a different Face when talking or communicating with his students and with his friends or colleagues. This is what's known as a "Face Threatening act." (Levinson and Brown, 1970: 185).

Politeness theory uses different strategies on reducing that face threat. Since this theory has an application in the whole world, it seems important to them to deal with it internationally or universally. In Iraq, at the University of Babylon, Al Hindawi and Musa worked on this theory and published a critique to it, in which they co-related this theory in the context of Japanese culture – a collectivist one. They came to a conclusion that it would not work since it is so static and rigid. (Al Hindawi and Musa, 1990: 23)

Next to this, some researchers published "Applicability of Brown and Levinson's politeness theory to a non-western culture" in which they came up with the opposite results. They came to know that these politeness strategies are to be used intrinsically in the middle of the conversation. These strategies whether

they are a collectivistic culture or an individualistic culture, are what defines politeness theory. There are five strategies and there are 20 different ways to ask somebody to rake the leaves. The first one is a statement directly uttered: "go, rake the leaves". The second is "positive politeness" that supports the Face says: "hey, I know you do such a great job with raking the leaves would you mind doing that today." Negative politeness, on the other hand, does not need to force: "I know you're busy I'm sorry to bother you I hope I'm not imposing but would you mind raking the leaves." The fourth strategy is indirectly off record, so it is not directly said, rather it is implying; "hey, the yard look would look really great if the leaves weren't there." So, it's not a direct question but you're kind of implying it and of course. The fifth strategy is to avoid saying anything all together. In some cases this can be good, because with many words comes transgression; but in other cases it's bad because, then, the issue goes unresolved or unaddressed and so using these strategies obviously can affect many different areas.

Politeness Theory does operate in a computer mediated form. Power and social distance are two of the three relational dimensions that Brown and Levinson discuss in their model. The first being "power" which is the clout of an individual

such as a doctor and a patient. The doctor has power in that situation because of their knowledge distance refers to the social distance of the relationship, for example a 10-year family doctor is going to have a different relationship with him. There are only two options when talking about the theory of politeness. He either must reject it thoroughly and come up with a new solution; or can revise it and expand on it which is where it lean towards and the reason is because of the heuristic value that politeness Theory has its conceptual framework that is applicable in many different scenarios and cultures and; then it's inherently pragmatic. Richard Watson published a book in 2003 which says that when defining politeness

**It's fundamental to explaining how human beings communicate with one another and this indicates you know how we try and treat everyone we're trying to get along with our fellow man or trying to be polite. (Watson, 2003" 24)**

This statement carries a lot of different connotations to it. Some scholars may say that it is superficial to say the right words, it can reduce the face threat Andreas Bumgarner takes politeness as being courteous. He says "courtesy is more than politeness it comes from the heart.

### Psychological

The way in which silence is embodied is crucial to Woolf's experimental project in the genre of the novel for when Woolf creates a scene of silence which might be categorized as psychological, she is revealing her interest in the exploration of the affective domain — "What is the reality of any feeling?". She pays less attention to the traditional elements in the novel that E.M. Forster describes in *Aspects of the Novel*— character, plot and dialogue— basing it more on feeling and the sensations of the body and mind. She turns consciousness inside out. Forster in his *Passage to India*.

### Social

In addition to these silences which "figure" interiority, there are scenes of silence in which silence is not a signifier endlessly floating in the "dark places of psychology." Rather the silences are positioned, as M. M. Bakhtin would say, as social signifiers. Woolf's social silences then are structured not around solitary activity but social conversation— communicative silences: for example, Mrs. Ramsay's dinner party in *To the Lighthouse*, Mrs. Dalloway's party, the Pointz Hall luncheon and play in *Between the Acts*. It is here in society that Woolf continues to explore psychological states, not only the "unsaid" but the "unsayable"

based on the social taboos of Victorian propriety— the silences in company. (Gender Studies)

### Historical Silence

In addition to the psychological and social, historical silences appear in Woolf's novels in relation to those on the margins of society: women, the obscure, children, and the mad. In *Between the Acts*, for example, Woolf inserts an historical silence into Miss LaTrobe's play. During the historical procession of scenes from English history, Woolf marks and then erases the presence of the working class by marching villagers across the stage representing Chaucer's pilgrims:

"All the time the villagers were passing in and out between the trees. They were singing; but only a word or two was audible '...wore ruts in the grass...built the house in the lane...' The wind blew away the connecting words of their chant...." (Between the Acts,p.80)

### Philosophical Silence

Philosophical silences in Woolf emanate from her sense of what the researcher has already been discussed in the study in twentieth century would term the "ineffable," and what she, at the turn of the century, marked in nineteenth-century vocabulary as "dumb" or "inarticulate." In

addition to the silences which occur in time— the psychological and social silences which interrupt conversation with others— silence is also a sign of the eternal, the changeless. These are philosophical silences. (Go Fer thesis)

Woolf sometimes describes life from the perspective of being "inside" something and seeing through a film opaquely. She asserts that "Life is not a series of gig-lamps symmetrically arranged; but a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end" (Modern Fiction, 1951: 154). She describes "the feeling...of lying in a grape and seeing through a film of semi-transparent yellow" (Sketches from the Past, 1958: 65). Life is semi-transparent, only partially knowable, and silence, a "floating signifier" marks this. Woolf fractures and diffuses three philosophical traditions of silence in her novels; the Oriental, the Romantic and the Meditative. Woolf incorporates mystical elements of Oriental metaphysics, suggesting to the twentieth century, Buddhism and Taoism which have articulated the necessity of transcending language and moving toward silence. (Traditional Fiction)

### Structural Silence

This study explores the relation of narrative form to meaning as well as the

aforementioned themes: psychological, social, historical and philosophical as they concern silence. But it is difficult to talk about Woolf's formal concerns in the novel and her experiments with "silence," for even her own words fail when she tries to distinguish "reality" and "true reality" which connect with her uses of silence in her journal. It is clear, however, that she is not interested in ready answers about the nature of reality. And because her novels after *Jacob's Room* lack traditional plot and characters, critical analysis of theme or character seem inappropriate and unresponsive to her experimental and formal concerns. (Academia)

## **FUNCTIONS OF SILENCE**

There are various functions of silence in the context of communication. For instance:

### **A. Emotive Function**

Silence is believed to be a great element in showing the emotions of an individual. Listeners who remain quiet for an extended period after a speaker has finished speaking make it clear to the speaker that the listener is either uninterested, has previously heard the material, or finds it uninteresting alternatively, it may be there to demonstrate the speaker's carelessness. In addition to love, hate, rage, and attention,

silence may also be used to express other emotions. (Journal Express)

### **B. The Conative Function**

In order to bring the attention of the listener towards the speaker, the latter observes silence for few seconds so that the listener(s) will indirectly understand that the speaker intends to speak to them. This observance of silence can be seen in many academic or professional platforms. (Journal Express)

### **C. Conceptual Conative Function**

In biblical or even in mythical manuscripts, the name of the lord is not mentioned off and on. It is because it arouses the sentiments of fear, anger, mythical or biblical powers. This use of omitting the name is also believed to be one of the functions of silence. (Research Journal)

### **D. Procedural Function – as a Discourse Marker**

One of the other most important function of silence is in discourse. It is believed to be very important for turn-taking when for example during a debate. "The opponent must wait for his turn so that he can object to what is said and show a reflexive response to prove his strength in logical reasoning. (Academia)

### E. The Speaker's Silence as a Speech Act

Most often the speaker observes eloquent silence when the illocutionary speech act is brought in to performance. For example: "I will not speak to you unless you do your assignments." is a good example of threatening the listener of the consequences through silence. (Academia)

### F. Rhetorical Function

Some writers are very professional in using the element of rhetoric in their language be it in the context of literature or linguistics. These rhetorical questions – if thought closely upon – include a form of silence behind them. Considering the example: "Am I the only sinful?" The mentioned question by itself ends with an understandable use of silence that needs no further explanation. (Academia)

### SILENCE IN LITERARY GENRE

This formal concern with silence in Virginia Woolf's novels or modern literature, in general, is still an uncharted field. Nevertheless, to the work done by Rachel Bowlby, *Virginia Woolf; Feminist Destinations*; Makiko Minow-Pinkney, *Virginia Woolf and the Problem of the Subject*; Jane Marcus, *The Languages of Patriarchy*; Lucio Ruotolo, *The Interrupted Moment*; James Naremore, *The World Without a Self*; and Alex Zwerdling,

*Virginia Woolf and the Real World* (the verb is missing in this piece of information). The post-structuralist theory influenced by Deconstruction, Structuralism, Linguistics, and Feminism would not have developed if these critics of Woolf had not done their work. Of those critics who do address issues related to silence in Woolf, is Lucio Ruotolo's *The Interrupted Moment*. More attention is given to the theme than the narrative strategy of silence in different novels. Ruotolo, in focusing on the historical and political dimension of "interruption," asserts that "interruption" is central to all of Woolf's thinking "heralding change, and the growing expectation that society is on the verge of radical transformation" However, Woolf, breaking the mould of the novel, ventures into the field of silence, varies her experimental intention with each new novel expressing the nuances of silence with a lexicon of "pause, nothingness, emptiness, blanks, abyss, absence, gulfs" as well a particular kind of silence, "interruption," which Ruotolo focuses upon. Sometimes the concepts of silence express harmony as in the word "pause"; at other times, words like "gap" or "interruption" express disjunction. (Rutolo, 1989: 16) Linguist

Though other modern novelists like Flaubert, also challenge the narrative function and turn consciousness inside out

on the page, Woolf is unusual, in that, she challenges "the literary" by more frequently marking the vacant or unconscious spaces of the mind in her lexicon, punctuation, syntax, tense shifts, rhythm and metaphors. Woolf is not alone in this exploration of the underside of consciousness and language. For at least a century, the literary avant-garde— from Mallarme to Joyce and Artaud— has been introducing the multiplicity in language and self through ruptures, holes and spaces in the text. It is what Mallarme calls "the music in letters" or the listening for silence between syllables that St. Augustine recommends in reading his *De Musica* (Mazzeo,2000: 189). As Kristeva notes, "All these modifications in the linguistic fabric are the sign of a force that has not been grasped by the linguistic or ideological system" (Kristeva, 1989: 165.) And it is here, in the mental silences conveyed through the fabric of language that the contemporary novel's interest grows, with a nod and a yawn toward the Edwardian realist's "going on from lunch to supper." It can also be understand that the connection between alienation and the use of minimal poetic forms which employ indirection and silence in the work of Ezra Pound, T.S. Eliot and Wallace Stevens. They too dramatize James Joyce's strategy of "silence, exile and cunning," the withdrawal from a fragmented culture into

an interior world. Such "inward turning to convey the flow of mental experience" (Edel, 1983 :7) involves the philosophical discourse of feminism as well as modernism. The uses of silence by Woolf, in this case, are different from the aforementioned writers, and it is here that the nuances of her feminism shade the modernist movement which also marks "silence." Although modernism and feminism draw together in their challenge to fixed syntax, historical positioning, static notions of identity, and interest in the subjective, the sources of their interest and their uses of silence differ. Though Woolf violently objects to the term "feminism" in the early twentieth century as making static what should be fluid, Jeanne Kammer observes the nuance of difference in men's and women's silence. (Journal express)

## METHODOLOGY

The study is based on Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) perspective. Woolf's literary texts are analyzed in order to highlight the significance of understanding silence through the way communication works and the way both the speaker and the listener understand one another. Since communication is widely based on the understanding of the human beings about its aspects and variations,

silence has its own decorum in the discourse

### Data Collection

Each novel under discussion — *To the Lighthouse*, and *Between the Acts*— has been chosen as the best text to illustrate a particular kind of silence though it may occur in diluted or involuted forms in other places. It basically is an explanation of the theory of Silence as well as the way Woolf presented it in her works. “To the lighthouse” initially attempts first to define what "silence" is in a text. She is of the view that women nature is of great strength as well as silent. It too brings into light the relationship between silence and the reader and writer, and "confers a new kind of readability" (Rigorous Unreliability, 1983: 279) and complexity on the element of "silence" in Woolf's novels. The novel is clearly divisible into three chapters. The first one is based on *lighthouse*, the second

### Model Adopted

Since communication is widely based on human beings' understanding of its aspects and variations, 'this study' is based on Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as a model of analysis in order to highlight the importance of understanding' silence' through 'the way' communication works,

and 'the way' both the speaker and the listener understand one another.

### Data Description

Two of Virginia Woolf's novels ('To the Lighthouse' and 'Between the Acts') have been concentrated on in order to substantially achieve the aim of this study, which is to observe the idea of 'silence' in her main works. Numerous references from various sections of the novel are used to critically examine the intentions behind this endeavor, in order to effectively demonstrate the writer's use and reuse of silence in the aforementioned major works and to demonstrate that it contributes to the body of knowledge in general, and to the field of linguistics in particular.

### Data Analysis

The analysis is presented separately in relation to each novel.

### Analysis of *Between the Acts*

Silence is used as a vital part of communication to convey feelings or emotions of anger, hatred or resentment and judgment in the *Between the Acts*. For example, Isa's first and rather negative impression of Mrs. Manresa upon the flirtatious *woman's* visit to Pointz Hall is portrayed in quotation marks, as if Isa's silent thoughts have the impact of

something spoken. The narrator then confirms this notion:

**‘Or what are your rings for, and your nails, and that really adorable straw hat?’ said Isabella, addressing Mrs. Manresa silently and thereby making silence add its unmistakable contribution to talk. (Between the Acts, 39)**

Woolf asks her reader to consider the role of silence when she refers to it as making an “unmistakable contribution to talk,” but she does not explain what this means. Giles’s thoughts become increasingly violent towards Dodge after his introduction and the sympathetic portrayal of his concern for the war. During lunch, he thinks:

What for did a good sort like the woman Manresa bring these half-breeds in her trail? Giles asked himself. And his silence made its contribution to talk – Dodge that is, shook his head. ‘I like that picture.’ That was all he could bring himself to say. (BA, 49)

Woolf portrays Giles’s thoughts through free-indirect style, embodying his violent language (“half-breeds”) in the narration. The line, “Dodge that is, shook his head,” connects the silent aggression

Giles launches and connects it to the exterior world; “Dodge that is,” both confirms the subject of Giles’s thought and provides the subject for “shook his head.” The last line implies a kind of unspeakable hurt on Dodge’s part at Giles’s words, although we know them to be unspoken.

### **Analysis of *To the Lighthouse***

Mr. and Mrs. Ramsay’s relationship is largely defined by meaningful silences, and both characters encounter this constant and dramatic human struggle with language during a pivotal scene in *To the Lighthouse*. Mrs. Ramsay enters the study and immediately knows, “she wanted something more, though she did not know, could not think what it was that she wanted .... If only he would speak!” (*To the Lighthouse*, 117-118) Mrs. Ramsay is desperate for some kind of connection between herself and Mr. Ramsay, something she cannot exactly define, but knows that it can only be accomplished through his words. Later when he finally speaks to her, it is Mr. Ramsay who becomes desperate for Mrs. Ramsay’s reciprocal voice. He “wanted her to tell him that she loved him.” (*To the Lighthouse*, 123) Once again, they communicate in silence: “As she looked at him she began to smile, for though she had not said a word, he knew, of course, he knew, that she loved him. He could not

deny it ... she had not said it: yet he knew.” (To the Lighthouse, 124) There is so much that is left unsaid between them that carries so much significance. Even though Mrs. Ramsay wants to speak, “not for the world would she have spoken.” (To the Lighthouse, 20) Even though Mr. Ramsay wants to speak, “he passed her without a word, though it hurt him that she could look so distant, and he could not reach her.” (To the Lighthouse, 65) It is in these scenes of loving silence that the reader feels the disjointed intimacy that binds the two characters.

### Discussion of the Results

The study extensively examines the data from Virginia Woolf's two novels in order to maximize the lenses through which it is apparent that silence is not just the lack of communication, but is also in balance with speech. The functions conveyed or shown by silence are just as significant as those expressed or demonstrated by speaking.

In *Between the Acts*, numerous examples were quoted to show the vitality and strength of silence through the characters used by the novelist. With the use of silence, feelings of aggression and hatred are beautifully expressed by the characters at the beginning of the novel. It is only with the help of silence that an individual can add more meaning to his

expression of certain feelings or emotions. Where words cannot fill the gap, silence overtakes.

In the later part of the novel, non-verbal cues are used to express opposition to the words of the other character. The use of silence is so wide that it can embody many other psycholinguistic traits as well. For instance, gestures and postures are the key elements that assist in giving greater meaning to the expression of silence on certain occasions.

In *To the Lighthouse*, silence is eloquently used to express the feelings of love and intimacy towards the other character. It is true that speech could also have, on the contrary, met the purpose dealt with here in the mentioned scene of the novel. However, silence was observed and the purpose was met without even asserting the words of intimacy. Through silence and a smile, they were successful to get the desired outcome.

### CONCLUSION

The paper advanced the claim that although speech and silence are often perceived as means for expressing language versus breaking down communication, both can be used to serve significant communicative roles. Silence, just like speech, can be utilized to express meaningful messages, but via non-verbal

means as opposed to the widely used verbal means (i.e. speech). Speech and silence exist simultaneously in a conversation/message, and both contribute fundamentally to the well-delivery of a message. As means of communication, they are both within humans' disposal. The context in which they occur, however, plays a major role in determining which one is more operative in delivering a given message as well as which one should be prominent at a certain point. Likewise, the presence and absence of sounds does not seem to exclusively categorize speech and silence in human communication. Just as silence could serve a vocal function, speech can be expressed non-vocally in human communication.

## REFERENCES

1. Bakhtin, M. M. *The Dialogic Imagination*. 1981. Trans. Michael Holquist. Austin: U of Texas P
2. Bell, Quentin. *Virginia Woolf: 1972 A Biography*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich
3. Derrida, Jacques. "Difference." 1967. 129-160. *Speech and Phenomena, and Other Essays on Husserl's Theory of Signs*. Trans. David B. Allison. Evanston: Northwestern UP
4. -----Of Grammatology. Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins UP, 1974. "Structure, Sign and Play." *The Structuralist Controversy*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1972. 247-264
5. Ephratt, M. (2008). 1909–1938 The functions of silence. *Journal of Pragmatics* 40
6. Felman, Shoshana. 1985. *Writing and Madness*. Trans. Martha Noel Evans. Ithaca: Cornell UP
7. Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish: 1977. The Birth of a Prison*. Trans. Alan Sheridan. New York: Pantheon
8. Genette, Gerard. *Figures of Literary Discourse*. 1982. Trans. Alan Sheridan. New York: Columbia UP
9. Jacobus, Mary. 1986. *Reading Women*. New York: Columbia UP
10. Johnson, Barbara. (1980) : 9-10. "Nothing Fails Like Success." *Deconstructive Criticism: Directions*. SCE Reports 8
11. Kristeva, Julia. *Revolution in Poetic Language*. 1984 Trans. Margaret Waller. New York: Columbia UP
12. Kammer, Jeanne. "The Art of Silence and the Forms of Women's Poetry."r *Shakespeare's Sisters: Feminist Essays on Women Poets*. Eds. Gilbert and Gubar. Bloomington: Indiana UP
13. Mazzeo, Joseph A. 1979. 153-164. "St. Augustine's Rhetoric of Silence." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 23 (1962): 175-196.
14. Macksey, Richard and Eugenio Donato. 1972. *The Structuralist Controversy*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP
15. Saville-Troike, Muriel. 1985. 3-20. "The Place of Silence in an Integrated Theory of Communication." *Perspectives on Silence*. Eds. Deborah Tannen and Muriel Saville-Troike. Norwood, New Jersey: Ablex Publishing Corporation.
16. Tannen, Deborah and Muriel Saville-Troike, 1985. eds. *Perspectives on Silence*. Norewood, New Jersey: AblexShablising Corporation.