

When silence becomes loud: An unspoken conversation between mind and soul



Kamal Paudel
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Silence is often misunderstood as emptiness. Yet, at certain moments, it becomes so dense that it speaks louder than sound itself. This reflection explores that paradox—the quiet yet restless dialogue between the human mind and the soul.

“Who are you?”
“Are you asking me?”
“Yes.”
“I am nobody.”
“Nobody?”
“Yes. That is my name.”

What begins as a simple exchange slowly collapses into ambiguity. Names lose their certainty, logic turns circular, and meaning dissolves into wordplay. The interrogation ends without resolution. As is often the case, conversations about life rarely reach clear answers. They simply trail off, leaving behind questions heavier than before.

This unfinished dialogue resembles the nature of overthinking, an internal monologue that loops endlessly. Thinking, after all, defines our humanity. Yet, when reflection crosses a certain threshold, it becomes a source of anxiety, even despair. If thinking too much is harmful, then what does it mean not to think at all? Between these extremes lies a fragile balance. We must think enough to navigate life’s challenges, yet not so much that thought itself becomes a burden.

This tension gives rise to the central concern of this essay: when silence grows loud. Silence is not always passive. At moments of decision, it presses upon us, demanding clarity. It is in such stillness that unspoken questions surface, questions without immediate answers. Silence, then, is not the absence of sound but a different form of language, one that resonates beyond words.

This realisation has become increasingly vivid in my experience as a teacher. Today’s classrooms are filled with a new kind of silence, not the attentive quiet of curiosity, but a heavy stillness shaped by distraction. Where students’ eyes once reflected inquiry, they now glow with screens. Thumbs scroll in synchronised rhythm, and attention is fractured across digital spaces.

My students are not disengaged in the traditional sense. They are deeply involved in conversations happening elsewhere within social media feeds, notifications, and AI-generated responses that arrive before questions fully form. The silence I encounter is crowded, saturated with invisible noise. In this environment, the role of the teacher has shifted. I am no longer only a source of knowledge but a competitor for attention, an increasingly scarce resource.

Identity itself has changed. It is no longer rooted solely in lived experience or inner reflection but fragmented across digital profiles, curated images, and performative expressions. The self has become something to display rather than to discover. As a result, the inner conversation between mind and soul—once private and formative—has been externalised and diluted.

This persistent search for validation may conceal a deeper, unacknowledged anxiety. In an age where machines can replicate answers instantly, human effort often feels devalued. Students are not lacking intelligence; rather, they are navigating a system where struggle seems unnecessary and patience unrewarded. Ironically, in creating tools to advance ourselves, we have begun to mistrust the value of our own process.

The silence in the classroom, therefore, is not meaningless. It is a loud, unspoken conversation between minds overwhelmed by digital stimulus and souls longing for authenticity and purpose.

The challenge is not to outcompete technology, but to help students quiet the external noise long enough to hear their own internal voice. Education must reassert the dignity of effort, the necessity of struggle, and the irreplaceable value of human thought. The question “Who am I?” has quietly transformed into “What is my value in a world that can replicate me?” Until this question is addressed, silence will continue to echo.

Silence is often feared, mistaken for disengagement or absence. Yet it can be an active, even defiant space; a site of reflection, resistance, and possibility. It is not an enemy but an invitation to listen. When teachers give form to unspoken questions, they allow students’ inner worlds to emerge beyond screens and algorithms.

When silence grows loud, it does not signal an ending but a beginning. It asks us to rethink the teacher–student relationship and to rebuild classrooms as spaces for sustained attention and deeper thought. When we learn to listen, silence transforms from weight into potential.

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Kamal Paudel

Paudel is an Assistant Professor of English education.

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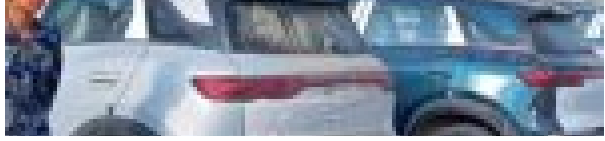
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