

MIKE BARLETT'S *BULL* AND THE SPIRAL OF SILENCE: A DRAMATIC ANALYSIS OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION IN THE WORKPLACE

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ABSTRACT

This paper, aims at literary studies, investigates the mechanisms of social silencing in a workplace context. Identifying Elizabeth Noelle-Neumann's The Spiral of Silence theory as an analytical model, the paper presents a dramatic analysis of Bull by Mike Bartlett. The qualitative type of research implies a text-based examination of Bartlett's play, which elaborates how the fear of isolation, a perceived dominance of one opinion, and the individual's self-censorship become dramatized via the characters, language, and the setting. The research question of how Bull theatrically shows the mechanisms of the Spiral of Silence, therefore, follows the hypothesis that the play exhibits the way individual members are silenced by and under group pressure in accordance with the psychological and social foundations of Noelle-Neumann's model. The analysis then extends to Thomas as the marginalized minority, and Tony and Isobel as the empowering enforcers of uniformity, alongside the manager as the silent locus of sustainability. Language in Bartlett's play is interpreted mostly as a signifier of oppression and exclusion, whereas the cramped setting of the office serves as an open metaphor for a closed spiral - a space where no outside help can get in and silence is unavoidable. Consequently, the implications of the discussions indicate that Bull is not limited to a presentation of workplace bullying but rather represents a manifestation of general attitudes and characteristics of people that facilitate silence and conformity. Using the theatrical setting, Bull converts the stage into a laboratory in which it shows the combination of communication, power, and fear. This paper aims to signify the efficiency of theatre as a tool for understanding psychological and sociological concepts, illustrating modern organizational and communicative principles on the manifestation of the Spiral of Silence. In future research, it will be significant to compare these frameworks in different performances and cultural contexts to gain more in-depth knowledge of silence as a social phenomenon.

KEYWORDS: Spiral of Silence, Noelle-Neumann, Mike Bartlett, Bull, workplace

1. INTRODUCTION

Mike Bartlett's *Bull* is a compelling theatrical exploration of workplace dynamics, particularly focusing on social exclusion and the mechanisms that compel silence and conformity among individuals. The play serves not merely as a depiction of bullying within an office but as a broader representation of human attitudes and social behaviors that reinforce silence in hierarchical environments. By using the stage as a controlled laboratory, Bartlett illustrates the intersection of communication, power, and fear, highlighting how individuals navigate organizational pressures and interpersonal dynamics (Boles 4). The significance of this research lies in demonstrating the efficacy of theatre as a tool for understanding complex psychological and sociological concepts, offering a rich lens through which organizational and communicative principles can be examined.

Bull is among Bartlett's most representative works, in which the thematic concerns of social pressure, conformity, and power hierarchies are vividly portrayed. The entire play unfolds within a single office conference room, effectively functioning as a microcosm of organizational structures where social exclusion and silence are enforced (Coveney 56). The narrative centers on Thomas, whose deviation from normative expectations exposes him to subtle and overt pressures from his colleagues. While Thomas resists conformity, characters like Tony and Isobel, as representatives of authority and enforcers of organizational norms, employ both direct and indirect strategies to maintain silence and uphold hierarchical power. The manager, as a passive authority figure, further legitimizes these social pressures by inaction, demonstrating the institutional reinforcement of the Spiral of Silence (Hassan 151).

Bartlett's spatial and dramaturgical design reinforces the play's thematic concerns. The office is not only a physical space but also a metaphorical representation of societal constraints. Characters circulate within a confined stage, reflecting patterns of repetition, surveillance, and social control. This restricted environment mirrors the broader sociological phenomenon of the Spiral of Silence, wherein individuals refrain from expressing dissenting opinions due to fear of isolation and normative pressure. Bartlett's arrangement of space, character positioning, and temporal pacing engages the audience as observers of these social and psychological dynamics (Harvie and Rebellato 22).

Elizabeth Noelle-Neumann's Spiral of Silence theory provides a crucial analytical framework for

examining these dynamics. Originally developed within political communication, the theory posits that individuals tend to suppress minority opinions to avoid social isolation. It identifies three key mechanisms: the fear of isolation, reliance on perceived dominant opinions for social guidance, and self-censorship to avoid ostracism. While initially applied to mass media contexts, the theory has been extended to organizations, social groups, and educational settings, where structural conditions such as power hierarchies and normative pressures—facilitate silence. *Bull* exemplifies these mechanisms, as Thomas navigates the pressures of majority opinion, ultimately conforming to a culture of silence, while Tony and Isobel exemplify normative enforcement and coercive social influence (Edwards, G. 23).

This study aims to explore these dynamics through a qualitative, text-based analysis of *Bull*, focusing on three dimensions: character interactions, language and rhetoric, and spatial representation. The first dimension examines how roles and authority positions influence expression, highlighting tensions between individual agency and normative pressures. The second analyzes dialogue and rhetorical strategies as instruments of social control. The third investigates the office as a metaphorical and dramaturgical device, illustrating structural limitations that restrict agency and perpetuate silence. Collectively, these dimensions elucidate how the Spiral of Silence manifests in both the narrative and performative aspects of the play (Dülek 61).

Guided by the research question: How does *Bull* theatrically depict the processes of the Spiral of Silence in a workplace context? This study hypothesizes that the play not only illustrates Noelle-Neumann's concepts but also enriches understanding through theatrical representation. Whereas social scientific approaches may employ surveys, interviews, or ethnography, Bartlett's play provides a symbolic and performative context in which the effects of silence—emotional, relational, and social—can be observed, interpreted, and critiqued. Thus, theatre becomes a site of inquiry, offering insight into individual behavior and collective activity within organizational and social systems (Berman 2).

This article establishes dual objectives: first, to situate *Bull* within Bartlett's broader dramaturgical and thematic concerns regarding power, authority, and social conformity; and second, to examine these concerns through a formal analytical framework that illuminates the social production of silence in both micro- and macro-social contexts. By integrating

literary, theatrical, and social-theoretical perspectives, the article demonstrates the utility of dramaturgical analysis in understanding psychological and sociological phenomena. Ultimately, Bartlett's work not only entertains but also informs, revealing subtle and pervasive mechanisms through which silence is maintained across professional and social environments, offering valuable insights into human interaction, conformity, and resistance (Saunders 15).

2. THE ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT OF SILENCE AND ISOLATION: A THEORETICAL READING

This study is theoretically based on Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann's Spiral of Silence theory, a social-psychological theory that outlines the revealing and concealing of opinion in groups and society. The Spiral of Silence theory, which was first developed in the 1970s, was originally developed to explain public opinion formation and mass communication, especially by the manner in which individuals listen to social cues to evaluate how common or accepted their own opinions are compared to the prevailing views. The premise of the theory is based on a fundamental fear of isolation, which drives individuals to assess the climate of opinion before expressing their personal beliefs. As a result, when an individual believes their opinion is in contrast to the dominant or majority view, they may decide to remain quiet to avoid social disapproval, ostracism, or marginalization. This self-censorship contributes to masking the visibility and dominance of the majority opinion, contributing to a continuous or spiral effect in which minority expressions are suppressed. (Wyver 26)

There are three basic mechanisms that help us understand the Spiral of Silence. First, fear of isolation serves as the primary motivation for assessing social opinion. Individuals are attuned to both overt and covert signals from others, whether reactions are verbal, through body language, or through social practice, to determine whether having a disclosive perspective may lead to unwanted outcomes. In the workplace, fears of isolation may be exacerbated by formal organizational hierarchies, concerns about job security, and relationships that can enhance the repercussions of deviance from group boundaries. Second, perceptions of dominant opinion enable individuals to translate which views can be reasonably assumed to be approved or disapproved by the social group. Again, these perceptions may not reflect objective reality; instead, they reflect the individual's understanding of social agreement and the implied distribution of power and

influence among the group members. In organizations, dominant opinion would emerge from both formal authority and informal peer pressure and therefore, conformity would often be a practical strategy for social survival. Third, self-censorship occurs when individuals refrain from expressing their opinions, feelings, or behaviors to avoid dissenting or disapproved reactions. Self-censorship is not merely expressing an opinion; instead, self-censorship reflects a conscious process in which individuals encode the anticipated norms of action and deliberately modify their behavior, message, and attitude to conform to perceived expectations. (Girolamo 101)

Although the Spiral of Silence was initially designed to focus on public opinion in mass communication, the general principles of this notion are very relevant within organizational and closed social contexts. Workplaces, for example, often have structural and cultural features that contribute to the spiral effect. Hierarchies, peer evaluation, performance measurement and management, and rewards and sanctions all create a setting where straying from normative behavior warrants greater risk. Employees may have knowledge of these organizational behaviors and keep ideas to themselves, refrain from questioning authority, or publicly subscribe to dominant positions while privately holding alternative, dissident positions. Behaviors like these exemplify the processes explained by Noelle-Neumann and illustrate that the Spiral of Silence exists wherever social cohesion and a fear of exclusion are salient. (Ross et al. 975)

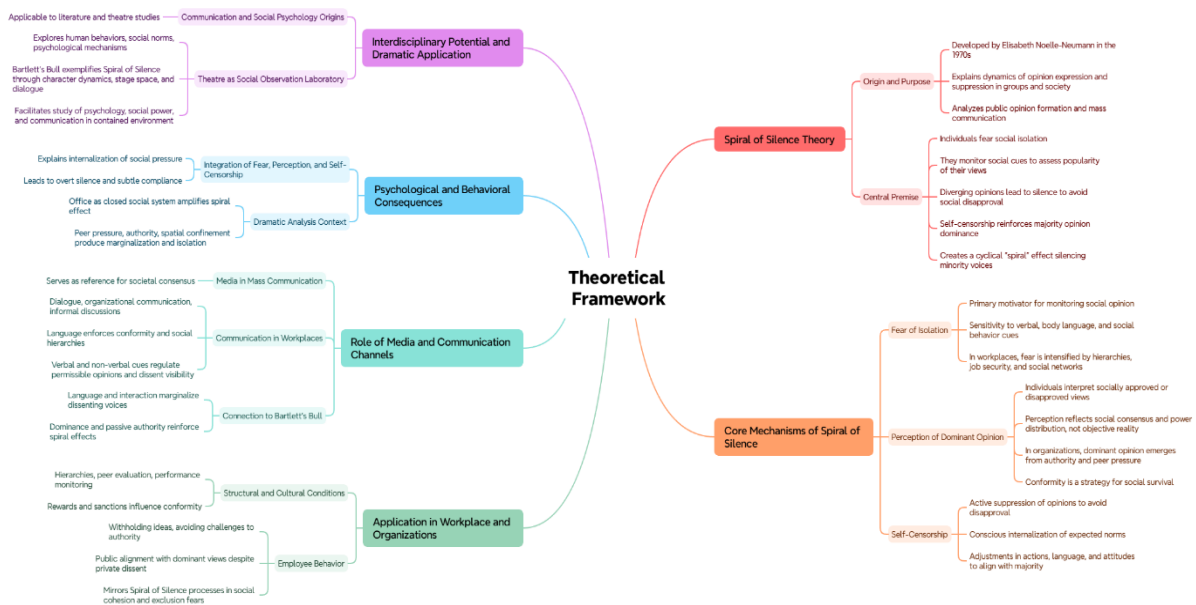
In addition, the theory underscores the influence of media and channels of communication in determining which majority and minority opinion prevails. In mass communication, how the media reaction exposes users to displays of societal consensus is the point of reference. In the small arena of workplace interaction, about the only things that will serve the same purpose to such a degree, are dialogue, organizational communication, informal and formal discussion, and observed behavior, while language is all at once an instrument of compliance and an instrument of social status. Verbal and non-verbal cues signal which opinions are acceptable and which ones should be marginalized, consequently, boundaries of the free flow of the conversation and whether dissent is seen by others are established by the social cues. This description directly relates to the analysis of Bartlett's *Bull* in which Thomas' dissenting voice is marginalized through language and interpersonal interaction, Tony and Isobel's authority and dominance is reinforced, and

ultimately the more passive authority over the spiral is the manager. (Sheneman 61)

Moreover, the Spiral of Silence has explanatory power for examining the psychological and behavioral outcomes of social exclusion. Integrating fear, perception, and self-censorship, this theory explains how individuals internalize social pressure in a way that leads to noticeable silence and more ambiguous compliance. Dramatically, this opens up possibilities for analyzing character motivations, dialogue, and social behavior in the confined stage space of *Bull*. The office functions as a closed social system, intensifying the interaction of peer pressure, authority, and situational space so that the spiral creates observable instances of marginalization and isolation. (Edward L. 12)

By using the Spiral of Silence Theory as a framework for dramatic analysis highlights the

interdisciplinary potential of the theory. The theory emerges from a communication studies and social psychological context, but it can be equally applied to the study of literature and theatre to theorize how representations of human behavior, social norms, and psychological mechanisms, are symbolically and performatively explored. The complicated relationships between the characters, the constraints of the stage, and the dialogue in *Bull* are all examples of the workings of the Spiral of Silence; theatre can be examined as a laboratory of social observation. Lastly, Bartlett's work allows researchers, in instances, to examine the relationships between individual psychology, social power and communicative practice through a contained observatory lens. (Edwards, "This Is England 2021: Staging England and Englishness in Contemporary Theatre" 11)



3. DRAMATIC ANALYSIS OF BULL

Mike Bartlett's *Bull* depicts overt and intense examples of social exclusion and silence in the workplace. The dramatic structure, character interactions, and linguistic devices in the play establish a scene where the Spiral of Silence operates very well, rendering visible the interactions among power, conformity, and exclusion. In this analysis, will examine the text with consideration of three interconnected layers: characters and silence, language as a method of control, and the stage as a closed spiral, which illuminates how social and psychological pressure drives silence (Young 224).

3.1 Characters and Silence Dynamics

At the center of the dramatic conflict in *Bull* is Thomas, a junior employee whose distinct identity, and contrary viewpoint have already categorically placed him in the out-group of the office dynamic. Thomas embodies the psychological and social effects of being marginalized: his knowledge of public opinion, and his simultaneous desire to belong, springboard him into a form of self-censorship. Over the course of the play, Thomas's voice is stifled, not only through the blatant claims of his colleagues but also through passively endorsed behavior of the managerial figure. The dynamic

between Thomas and the prevailing factions of the pairing of Tony and Isobel uncovers the relational perception of power visible through Sayles (1993) Spiral of Silence model. Tony and Isobel act as enforcers of particular forms of compliance by signaling acceptable forms of behavior and opinion both subtly, and overtly. Their dominance is as social as it is performative, as they further ostracize Thomas through their tone, gestures, and interruptions, stressing the immediate influence that a colleague has in which people are able to share their thoughts as a minority at work (Delgado 19).

The role of the manager serves to reinforce this dynamic. While appearing to represent a neutral or passive role, the manager exerts an almost invisible yet powerful form of control. By not intervening in conflicts or exclusionary behaviors, the manager provides implicit legitimization of the actions of the dominant employees and continues to maintain the hierarchy of power among employees. This character exemplifies legitimate power as a social silencer: the manager's inaction provides non-verbal feedback to Thomas that disagreement will not be tolerated or protected, thus contributing to the silence spiral. Therefore, Bartlett's character work allows the audience to see the relationship between individual psychology, peer pressure, and organizational structures, in which silence is normalized and perpetuated (Louise 190).

3.2 Language as a Tool of Domination

Language in *Bull* is not only a vehicle for communication; it is also a tactical tool through which power and conformity are wielded. As evidenced in Bartlett's dialogue, our words can undermine, frighten and coerce. The dominant characters employ sarcasm, interruptions, rhetorical questions and lighter forms of patronization to invalidate Thomas's perspective on his plight, thereby communicating the limits of tolerable speech in their office. This domination of language is ultimately aligned with the operation of the Spiral of Silence: as Thomas interprets that his stance is unpopular and socially dangerous, minority members (including Thomas) engage in self-silencing that limits the visibility of dissent and reinforces majority power (Ibid 191).

Additionally, Bartlett deliberately constructs pauses, silence and non-verbal communication as mechanisms to generate social pressure. These performative aspects of language - the sidelong glances, gestures and silence between lines of dialogue - are strong markers of disapproval, exclusion and threat. They build a communicative

space in which Thomas' reluctance to about his experiences, uncertainty regarding fielding a question when it was directed at him, and fear of retribution from his peers ultimately make him abandon the conversation due to pressure, which is both psychological and social. The play thus illuminates the dual role of language in its bidirectional capacity; that is, it is a way to work collaboratively and connect, and conversely, a means of control and suppression with social implications. The audience observes Thomas' private struggle via socially-invisible forms of language, sure to feel the weight of social pressure, too creative.(Bartlett 33).

3.3 The Stage as a Closed Spiral

The office environment in *Bull* serves as a dramaturgical metaphor for the entrapment of social relations. In situating all action within a single bounded space, Bartlett foregrounds the structural conditions that produce silence. The absence of any external intervention—no colleagues from other departments, no family, and no authority to mediate—produces a microcosm in which the spiral of silence can unfold in its totality. This spatial localization parallels the social reality within organizations where isolation, hierarchy, and peer pressure conspire to silence minority voices. The audience observes not just interpersonal boundaries at play between characters but also the larger structural forces that emphasize choice and agency (Ibid 22).

Moreover, the physical geography of the stage—desks, partitions, and patterns of movement—serves as visual representation of social positionality. Thomas is constantly isolated within the space, both physically and symbolically, while Tony and Isobel occupy the center of the space that reinforces their superiority. In this way, Bartlett uses space to externalize internal psychological pressures and translate abstract social dynamics into visible forms. The stage is a closed spiral: the interplay of spatial isolation, hierarchical structure, and performative interaction ensures that minority voices are contained, monitored, and silenced through cumulative effect observable and analytically revealing (Macalister 5).

By integrating characterization, language strategies, and spatial metaphor, Bartlett's *Bull* dramatizes the processes outlined by the Spiral of Silence theory. In the play, audiences experience fear of isolation, perceived dominant opinion, and self-censorship, showing the potential of theoretical ideas as dramatic fact. This reveals the potential of theatre as both a reflective and an investigative medium,

conveying the complex intersections of social, psychological, and structural conditions that generate silence, adherence, and exclusion in organizations (Bartlett 24).

4. CONTEXTUAL AND COMPARATIVE REFLECTIONS

Examining Mike Bartlett's *Bull* in a wider comparative and contextual context allows for greater understanding of the play. By exploring similarities between *Bull* and empirical studies of work life, or the work of other dramatists who give voice to silence in a social context, it is possible to realize patterns of common experience, human action, structural demands, and psychological processes that silence voice. This comparative lens highlights the universal nature of the Spiral of Silence, as understanding and applying the model transcends time, culture, and profession.

4.1 Groupthink and Bullying in the Workplace

Research on how bullying happens in workplaces offers a compelling real-life parallel to the social interactions that are presented in *Bull*. In organizational studies, bullying is typically defined as a set of repeated, aggressive acts directed at an individual or a group that is believed to be non-conforming or who is seen as inferior. Bullying behaviors may include verbal harassment, exclusion, and other surreptitious forms of manipulation that demonstrate the individual or group is trying to establish power and silence the opposition. In *Bull*, Thomas is subjected to the social dynamics of his unwanted peers, Tony and Isobel, through ongoing verbal and social harm, which has been witnessed quantitatively in the organizational literature (Bartlett 22). The play acts as a qualitative case study on social pressure to conform to perceived majority views groupthink that inhibits the views or position of non-conforming person or group. The friction between individuality and social conformity present in *Bull* is consistent with the understanding of organizational psychology of how employees will censor their views for fear of retaliation, social isolation, or personal harm. (Boles, "Linda by Penelope Skinner and The Wasp by Morgan Lloyd Malcolm. Performance Reviews" 20)

Groupthink research enhances understanding of the psychological processes behind the spiral of silence. Groupthink fosters a desire for group consensus that enhances cohesiveness at the expense of diverse viewpoints and critical thinking. The setting of Bartlett's office further illustrates this concept: here, the dominant characters establish

norms for both behavior and language that permit in-group opinions while discouraging dissenting opinion, and Thomas, who recognizes these socially policed boundaries, eventually reduces his verbal contributions (Bartlett 25). Thus, the play dramatizes both the social and cognitive aspects of groupthink and how institutional hierarchies, peer pressure (conformity), and normative behavioral expectations occur together to enact silence, conformity, and exclusion. As *Bull* illustrates with empirical studies, we can observe in Bartlett's dramaturgy the complex relationship between interpersonal interaction and the pressure of institutions displaying the Spiral of Silence in the workplace. (Boles, "Mediatization's Promise and Downfall: Facebook, Our World, and Mike Bartlett's *Love, Love, Love*" 36).

4.2 Parallels with Other Dramatic Works

Similar to Mike Bartlett, Bridget Hayman's historical social imaginary shares such intersectional themes here as the character in Freirean's view does in other context-based locations. Thus, while the imagination does chronicle past events, its capacity to bolster creative ideas is good to remember. While Hayman's fiction-writing illustrates an attempt at social accountability by confronting the serious business of race, thought, and the notion of the character of the person. These point to others of consideration enlisting critical focus. (Edwards, "Staging the English Rural" 17).

4.3 Implications for Contemporary Spaces: Digital and Professional

It can be noted that *Bull* and comparative analysis could provide a basis for further understanding silence in both modern digital and professional settings. Modern work culture through online platforms for communication, workplace messaging systems, and professional networking open new possibilities for being visible with an opinion at work, while simultaneously amplifying the consequences of voicing dissent (Ibid 38). Digital environments heighten the perceived impact of dominant opinion, which in turn could exacerbate self-censorship as the person weighs not only the happening in direct communication but also the mediated responses to the communication, and general social signals. Bartlett's dramatization of office social dynamics offered prescient detail for understanding how social and psychological processes operate in both a physical and virtual workspace. The intersections of authority, peer pressure, and isolation explored in *Bull* will be of interest to scholars and practitioners seeking to better understand how to intervene in silence, promote

inclusive dialogue, and support minority voice expression in modern workplace organizations (Sierz et al. 256).

4.4 Synthesis of Contextual and Comparative Insights

By making a comparative observation, *Bull* becomes a robust dramatization of the Spiral of Silence that extends beyond its immediate context. Research on workplace bullying and groupthink support the play's representation of social and psychological pressures, while also situating Bartlett's focus within other dramatic works that connect with a larger literary and cultural tradition. In addition, the dynamics on display in *Bull* connect with current issues faced in professional environments that are both physical and digital, emphasizing the continued relevance of social silencing as a phenomenon (Botham 51). Thus, the comparative and contextual lens not only deepens the interpretation of Bartlett's work, it also illustrates the wider relevance of the Spiral of Silence theory as an analytical frame for understanding human behavior across different social, organizational, and cultural contexts.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Analyzing Mike Bartlett's *Bull* in relation to Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann's Spiral of Silence theory reveals complex patterns of social silencing in the isolated confines of a workplace. The results of the analysis fall into three connected dimensions: character interactions, language and speech, and

spatial metaphors. Each dimension illustrates how the processes of fear of isolation, the perception of majority opinion, and self-silencing combine and collaborate to create social silence and conformity. The dramatization of Bartlett not only illustrates the psychological processes discussed in the Spiral of Silence but also offers visualization of social exclusion in workplace contexts.

5.1. Social Silencing and Character Dynamics

One of the most interesting concerns, the interaction between characters and the processes of social silencing. As a minority voice inhaled at the office, Thomas experiences both interpersonal and structural mechanisms of marginalization throughout each of the following examples. Both his developed self-censorship, struggles to speak fully, and degradation at varying levels represent the central premise of the Spiral of Silence fear of isolation leads to the voicing of opinion leading to the majority voices becoming more salient and visible. Tony and Isobel, as the Established Majority, are enforce conformity through covert and overt behaviors such as interruptions, sarcasm, and passive-aggressiveness entirely. These interactions illustrate the psychological pressures that develop when an individual perceives their own opinions may be deviant other socially risky (Owen 114). The role of the manager as an idler also exacerbates, demonstrating that institutional silence and inaction are ways through which the majority wins again while reinforcing the marginalization of the minority. The table below summarizes these dynamics:

Character	Role in the Spiral of Silence	Observed Behaviors	Analysis
Thomas	Minority voice; silenced	Hesitation, self-censorship, withdrawal	Illustrates fear of isolation; aligns with Spiral of Silence's psychological mechanism.
Tony	Dominant majority	Interruptions, sarcasm, dismissive gestures	Enforces conformity; suppresses minority perspectives through interpersonal control.
Isobel	Dominant majority	Strategic manipulation, reinforcement of office norms	Maintains perception of consensus; marginalizes dissenting voices.
Manager	Passive authority	Inaction, tacit approval of bullying	Institutional silence legitimizes majority dominance, reinforcing self-censorship.

5.2 Control Mechanisms: Language and Communication

The function of language as a communicative and regulatory mechanism underscored using dialogue, pauses, gestures, and rhetorical strategies, Bartlett creates a communicative environment that systematically excludes (marginalizes) Thomas and signals the boundary of acceptable discourse. Interruptions from Tony prevent Thomas from

finishing his turns, while Isobel's subtle sarcasm and rhetorical questions serve to erode even more Thomas's confidence. In addition, non-verbal indicators, including gaze and silence, serve to heighten Thomas's vulnerability (Rebellato 178). Language, then, serves the function of reinforcing the idea of a dominant opinion, which is key to the Spiral of Silence, guaranteeing that minority voice become increasingly silenced over time. This summary is represented in the table below:

Mechanism	Examples in <i>Bull</i>	Impact on Minority Voice	Analysis
Interruptions	Tony cuts off Thomas during meetings	Prevents expression of dissent	Demonstrates verbal suppression; signals control over discourse.
Sarcasm and patronization	Isobel mocks Thomas subtly	Reduces confidence in minority perspective	Psychological manipulation reduces likelihood of dissent.
Non-verbal cues	Glances, silences, gestures	Creates anticipation of disapproval	Reinforces perception of dominant opinion; fosters self-censorship.
Strategic framing	Discussions structured to marginalize Thomas	Positions minority viewpoints as inappropriate	Language shapes social norms; maintains majority dominance.

5.3 Spatial Metaphor and Structural Reinforcement

The ways in which office space acts as a spatial metaphor for social entrapment relates to Bartlett's constrains all action into a single, bounded, office setting, therefore intensifying levels of social pressure while impeding routes towards alternative support networks. Thomas is regularly located in the margins of the office, both physical space and

symbolic space, which not only emphasizes his lower status, but legitimizes this for the viewer. Furthermore, the manager's passive oversight, within a confined space, contributes to the reinforcement of hierarchical control. The result of being confined in space and process of social order combines to form a closed spiral in which the majority round-the-clock monitoring of minority voice can become silenced (Bartlett 39). A summary of the spatial silences can be found in the table below.

Element	Representation in the Play	Effect on Silence	Analysis
Office layout	Confined desks, limited movement	Physical isolation of Thomas	Spatial arrangement mirrors social marginalization.
Stage confinement	Single office setting	Absence of external intervention	Closed system intensifies peer pressure; limits dissenting opportunities.
Proximity to dominant characters	Thomas at edges/corners	Reinforces subordinate status	Physical positioning reflects psychological exclusion.
Passive authority	Manager does not intervene	Lack of corrective mechanisms strengthens silence	Structural/institutional factors amplify the spiral.

5.4 Synthesis of Discussion

Character interactions, uses of language, and spatial configuration converge to suggest that Bartlett's *Bull* provides a full exemplification of the Spiral of Silence. Minority voices are systematically silenced, driven by the pressures of both perception and environment, while commanding characters and participant bystanders enforce conformity and silence. The analyses suggest that social exclusion is complex: arising from the interplay of fear, perception, language, and environmental factors. The theatre is also an effective medium for representing, and visualizing, these interactions, and allows audiences to observe the processes of social silencing in real time. Bartlett's dramaturgy illustrates that silence is not simply a lack of speech, but a multifactorial, socially incited dynamic that reflects broader organizational and sociological dynamics.

5.5 Conclusion

This study aims to explore how Mike Bartlett's *Bull* illustrates Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann's Spiral of Silence, particularly regarding social exclusion and

the silencing of minority voices in a workplace setting. The main research question looked at how the play shows self-censorship, fear of isolation, and conformity in response to perceived majority pressure. Through a thorough dramatic analysis, the study supports the hypothesis that *Bull* clearly depicts how group pressure silences individuals. Thomas's marginalization highlights the psychological, social, and structural aspects of the Spiral of Silence. The interactions among dominant characters, passive authority, and the restricted office environment reveal the ongoing and reinforcing nature of social silencing, making the abstract aspects of the theory easy to see in a performance context.

Moreover, the research illustrates the pertinence of the Spiral of Silence not only on the theatrical stage but also in the realm of political dynamics by drawing parallels with the present-day political dramas that deal with the same issues like in the case of the series *House of Cards* by Beau Willimon and *The West Wing* by Aaron Sorkin which often illustrate the conflict between public opinion and personal belief revealing the characters' ways of finagling through political pressures while risk of personal damage is at stake thus mapping the Spiral

of Silence within political actions. In the same vein, Iannucci's *Veep*, the series full of satire, is about the impact of political decisions that the public approval has, thereby, indirectly showing the social silencing through the humorous and critical communication in

politics. These are instances which certify that the Spiral of Silence is not only an invaluable tool for analyzing the realm of art but also for following human behavior in politics, organizations, and media contexts.

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