

**Silence is golden:
Some remarks on silent categories in Russian**

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This talk presents and analyzes primary and experimental data on the inventory of silent categories in Russian, with a particular emphasis on parasitic gaps. I examine systematic differences between parasitic gaps as observed in Germanic and their putative counterparts in Russian. I then compare Russian parasitic gaps to several other types of null elements observed in Russian, namely, arbitrary null pronominals, referential null pronominals, and implicit objects. I argue that Russian parasitic gaps should be analyzed as bound variables, which can only occur in those positions where null pronominals are allowed (the subject and the object position, irrespective of case marking in those positions). Null object pronouns are more felicitous in the context of telic/perfective verbs, although this correlation between null objects and telicity/aspect is not perfect. Atelic/imperfective verbs are often compatible with implicit objects. Novel experimental evidence indicates that implicit objects are not syntactically represented. When the context calls for the obligatory projection of a null object, those verbs that normally co-occur with implicit objects take a longer processing time as compared to those verbs that require pronominal null objects.