

Linguistic and Psycholinguistic Aspects of Silence: A Structural Model of Communication

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Introduction. This work examines the role of silence along the lines of the theoretical considerations suggested by L. Wittgenstein and M. Heidegger. It also focuses on the role of communicative silence in each of the six functions of language in the structural model of communication put forward by Roman Jakobson. Other important types of functions are considered.

Methodology and sources. Firstly, various philosophical and linguistic approaches towards the definition of silence are studied. Non-communicative silence, being outside the language domain, is differentiated from silence as part of communication, which is treated as a zero speech act in its own right. Finally, the paper analyzes the roles of communicative silence in the communicative model developed by Jakobson. Aesthetic function of silence is given special attention to. The poststructuralist view of silence is discussed.

Results and discussion. Silence, acting as a linguistic sign, could convey information in the referential function; it could express emotions and personal experiences while performing the emotive function. As far as the conative function is concerned, silence serves to exert direct pressure on the addressee. Regarding the phatic function, silence acts as a means of establishing or discontinuing communication. Poetic silence focuses on the message for its own sake and manifests itself in repeating elements, such as syntactic pauses of various lengths and in differing contexts. Aesthetic function of silence is studied in a broader sense and involves the implementation of the motif of silence or “quietness” in a work of art. Silence becomes an important tool to study the acoustic, rhythmical potential of prosaic and poetic texts. With regard to silence in the metalinguistic function, it focuses primarily on the code of communication, i. e. on the language and its structure. The view of silence in psychoanalytical practice is also taken into account.

Conclusion. The study of the phenomenon of silence allows to see a different number of functions it performs in situations when the speaker is either in a particular opposition to the speaker; or the situation is associated with a sense of respect, grief, humility. Silence could also accompany a number of emotive states, and perform a major role in prosaic and poetic texts when it stands out against the sounds that the main character hears around him allowing texts to bring out its acoustic properties. Psycho-analytical perspective allows to reveal more functions of silence.

Keywords: silence, pragma-linguistics, speech act, pragmatic functions of silence, communication studies, language and speech.

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Лингвистические и психолингвистические аспекты молчания: коммуникативная модель

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Введение. В статье рассматривается роль молчания в соответствии с теоретическими воззрениями, предложенными Л. Витгенштейном и М. Хайдеггером. Изучается роль коммуникативного молчания в каждой из шести функций языка в структурной модели коммуникации, выдвинутой Романом Якобсоном. Рассматриваются другие важные типы функций.

Методология и источники. Во-первых, изучаются различные философские и лингвистические подходы к определению молчания. Некоммуникативное молчание, находясь за пределами языковой области, отличается от молчания как части общения, которое само по себе рассматривается как нулевой речевой акт. Наконец, в статье анализируется роль коммуникативного молчания в коммуникативной модели, разработанной Якобсоном. Эстетической функции молчания уделяется особое внимание. Обсуждается постструктуралистский взгляд на молчание.

Результаты и обсуждение. Молчание, функционируя как лингвистический знак, может иметь референциальную функцию; оно может выражать эмоции и личные переживания, выполняя эмотивную функцию. Что касается конативной функции молчания, то в этом случае оно служит для оказания прямого давления на адресата. При реализации фатической функции молчание действует как средство установления или прекращения общения. Поэтическое молчание проявляется в повторяющихся элементах, таких как синтаксические паузы различной длины, которые реализуются в разных контекстах. Эстетическая функция молчания изучается в более широком смысле и предполагает реализацию мотива тишины в произведении искусства. Молчание становится важным инструментом для изучения акустического, ритмического потенциала прозаических и поэтических текстов. Что касается молчания в металингвистической функции, то оно фокусируется в первую очередь на коде коммуникации, т. е. на языке и его структуре. Взгляд на молчание в психоаналитическом аспекте также принимается во внимание.

Заключение. Изучение феномена молчания позволяет определить различные функции, которые оно выполняет в ситуациях, когда либо один говорящий находится в определенной оппозиции к другому говорящему, либо изучаемая ситуация связана с проявлением чувства уважения, скорби, смирения. Молчание может сопровождать ряд эмоциональных состояний, которые представлены в тексте. Взгляд на текст с точки зрения постмодернистской парадигмы позволяет изучать текстуру прозаического или поэтического произведения, порождающего дополнительные смыслы. Психоаналитическое изучение текста дает возможность выделить дополнительные функции молчания.

Ключевые слова: молчание, прагмалингвистика, речевой акт, прагматические функции молчания, коммуникативные исследования, язык и речь.

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Конфликт интересов. О конфликте интересов, связанном с данной публикацией, не сообщалось.

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Introduction. In speech culture, silence is a universal, but very heterogeneous phenomenon, so its study requires an interdisciplinary approach and synthesis of various fields of knowledge. It has been referred to by M. Heidegger as well as L. Wittgenstein. Over the past fifty years, silence has been the subject of research in a number of scientific disciplines, such as philosophy, anthropology, ethnography and psychology. The anthropocentric paradigm in modern science activates the study of silence in linguistics and psycholinguistics as well: the description of human speech activity was incomplete without describing silence as one of the integral components of speech behavior.

Methodology and sources.

Silence in philosophy.

The scientific analysis of the phenomenon of silence finds its origins in philosophy, which developed the opposition of silence as a phenomenon in the sphere of language and natural silence as a physiological phenomenon: “in silence, nothing sounds – in silence, no one speaks. Silence is possible only in the human world (and only for a man)” [1, p. 337–338]. Silence was considered by philosophers both as a necessary background of speech, and as an independent figure, which allows us to conclude that the relationship between silence and speech is complementary, and their dialectical relationship. Thus, V. V. Bibikhin notes that language is the interaction of silence and words, and its beginnings lie in the choice to speak or not to speak. This initial choice between naming and omission runs through all levels of the language, giving each utterance a special significance. “The fact that the message appears here and now, when it might not have been, is a sign that has no synonyms for itself” [2, p. 160]. However, as Bibikhin notes, the sign of a special content can also be the silence itself, which in this case acquires the status of not just a background, but a figure: “...human silence sometimes speaks more powerfully than words. It better meets the world’s indeterminability” [Ibid., p. 161].

More specifically, silence in its relation to speech is interpreted by K. A. Bogdanov, who, while agreeing that silence has a background nature, nevertheless notes that the informational interaction between the sign and the background in the language is complementary. In other words, silence has exactly the same semantic potential as a word spoken against its background and entering into informational interaction with it [3, p. 7–8]. The basis of silence that precedes the word dominates speech because of its special status. It is present in all cultures and therefore requires reflection and analysis.

In the Western philosophical tradition, the problem of silence has received the most complete coverage in the works of Martin Heidegger. In *Being and Time*, silence is a measure of language: “Language is based within silence. Silence is the most hidden measurement of measure” [4, p. 233]. If language is the home of being, and silence is the measure that delineates its boundaries, then silence becomes the ontological object in which the limits of being are laid [4, 5]. In order for a person to properly respond to the “call of being” [5, p. 121], every word

must pass through the “purgatory” of silence, whose limiting power alone can turn language into the true home of being.

Ludwig Wittgenstein in the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* starts from the idea that the main task of language is to affirm or deny the atomic facts that make up both reality and the purest form of language – the language of logic. The German philosopher’s treatise ends with the famous imperative: “Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent” [6, p. 218]. The philosopher believes that silence is the only possible way to express a content that is not accessible to the language of logic, the language of atomic statements. Wittgenstein places all the subjects of metaphysics, aesthetics, and ethics in the realm of the mystical, and therefore by means of a language essentially inexpressible. What can be said in principle can be said clearly, in the language of logic, but what is beyond atomic facts and verifiable judgments should be kept silent. Where speech ends, silence begins. According to Wittgenstein, silence sets a limit to what can be thought and expressed in language, and therefore a limit to thinking itself: “this limit can therefore only be drawn in language, and everything that lies on the other side of the border will be just nonsense” [Ibid., p. 34].

Mikhail Epstein points out the inaccuracy and internal contradictions of Wittgenstein’s famous aphorism, “recalling the need to distinguish between silence as *Stille* and silence as *Schweigen*” [7, p. 181]. You can only be silent about what you can talk about, because silence, in contrast to silence as a special state of being, belongs to the field of language. The validity of the distinction between two types of silence is confirmed by the data of linguistic analysis: “...the verb to be silent <...> assumes the possibility of performing a speech action” [8].

Silence in linguistics and psycholinguistics.

Interest in the study of silence in modern linguistics is directly related to the general development of scientific thought, namely, the tendency to anthropocentric research. The position on the orientation of modern science to man and his defining role for it “is not only not in doubt, but also is the basis on which the successful fusion of scientific disciplines developed by man about man and for man” [9, p. 208]. However, the study of the speaker, considered as a starting point for creating a unified methodological framework that would explain all the most important moments of the existence of the language, was impossible without taking into account the silent person. It is impossible to disagree with the statement of K. A. Bogdanov that there are non-speaking members of society, but there are no such who would never be silent [3, p. 4].

The study of silence in the context of communication, which in modern linguistics is understood as the exchange of information through the sign system of language [10, p. 210], has caused the distinction between communicative silence, or communicative-significant, and non-communicative, or communicative-insignificant. There are many studies devoted to identifying relevant signs of silence as an act of communication, but most scientists conclude that silence can function as an act of communication if it is purposeful, has an intention and transmits certain information that is successfully perceived and decoded by the addressee. “In order for silence to have a meaning in the linguistic sense of the word, the speaker must be silent with some communicative intent <...> If there is no intention behind the speaker’s behavior, we can treat such silence as non-purposeful, and therefore meaningless from a linguistic point of view” [11, p. 8–9].

A great contribution to the study of the problem of silence as a communicative act was made by M. Saville-Troike, who makes a clear distinction between pauses as elements of the nonverbal

code and the act of silence as part of the verbal code: “when silence has a deliberate communicative function, it can be considered as a form of speech act” [12]. Saville-Troike challenges the widely accepted notion of the background nature of silence in linguistics, noting that silence can be an independent object of research, the boundaries of which are determined by the speech material, which in this case acts as a background. In addition to recognizing silence as a significant element of communication, M. Saville-Troike points out that the act of silence, like a speech act, has a complex structure and many dimensions [13, p. 4]. In addition, the researcher considers silence as a “signifier” in the Saussure sense of the word, that is, as a significant element whose connection with the referent is due to the conventions adopted in a particular culture [14]. “Just as in speech, the relationship between silence and meaning can be symbolic, indexal, or iconic” [Ibid.].

The ideas of M. Saville-Truac were further developed in the works of M. Ephratt [15, 16], who, pointing to the complex nature of silence and the need for a convergent approach to the study of this phenomenon, considers it in the context of paralinguistics, linguistics and extralinguistics. This method of analysis allows the researcher to distinguish three types of silence: 1) index (paralinguistic dimension); 2) symbolic (linguistic dimension); 3) iconic (extralinguistic dimension) [16]. Based on the classification of signs proposed by Ch. Peirce, M. Ephratt considers symbols as signs that have an integral communicative function: their only purpose is to transmit information, and such signs are deciphered using a special code. Icons, on the contrary, can transmit information, but will be generated in any case and regardless of the reaction of the perceiver. Moreover, the meaning of iconic signs is extracted by inference, not decoding [15, p. 1561]. Indexes in this classification occupy an intermediate position – they are used by the speaker to convey some information and at the same time perform a certain practical function related to language behavior [16, p. 2288].

In our opinion, a well-known analogy can be drawn between the problem of distinguishing speech functions and the problem of classifying the functions of silence as a full-fledged component of communication. That is why, from our point of view, the most successful classification of the functions of silence, proposed by M. Ephratt and based on the model of communicative functions of language by R. Jakobson. Thus, as a starting point for further linguopragmatic analysis of silence, we will use the classification of communicative functions of language developed by Jakobson with extra functions added: 1) a referential function that is characterized by a context orientation and serves the purpose of transmitting information, making judgments about the world external to communicants; 2) an emotive (expressive) function that focuses on the addressee and has the goal of “directly expressing the speaker’s attitude to what he is talking about” [17, p. 198]; 3) a connotative function that is focused on the addressee and finds “its purely grammatical expression in the vocative form and imperative mood” [Ibid., p. 200]; 4) a static (contact-setting) function aimed at providing and maintaining communication; 5) a poetic function aimed at the message as such, focused on it for its own sake; 6) an aesthetic function, being a similar function to poetic yet more evident in prosaic texts and forming a tradition of a new type of narrative; 7) a metalanguage function, the central component of which is the language itself (code): “If the speaker or listener needs to check whether they are using the same code, then the code itself becomes the subject of speech” [Ibid., p. 202]; 8) silence and its function from psychoanalytic perspective.

Results and discussion.

Referential function of silence.

Communicative silence, as well as speech, is characterized by a referential function, that is, orientation to the context and transmission of information about the world in the past, present and future. Silence in the reference function is implemented as a language sign—a symbol that has a zero plan of expression and a special, non-zero plan of content. As such, the **act of silence functions as a** “zero language sign” that transmits certain information. The fact that silence as an element of communication can perform a referential function is confirmed by example (1), referring to the Catholic and Protestant wedding ceremony, during which the priest addresses the audience with the following words:

(1) If any person here can show cause why these two people should not be joined in holy matrimony, speak now or forever **hold your peace** [18].

In example (1), the marker for an act of silence is the stable combination of “hold your peace”, which is defined by the dictionary as remain silent about something (Oxford English Dictionary). Behind the words of the priest is the following presupposition: if there are any obstacles to the conclusion of a legal marriage, the wedding ceremony will be considered invalid in the eyes of the Church and God, and, therefore, these obstacles must be reported.

The silence of the participants in the ceremony, which in most cases follows the words of the priest given in example (1), can be considered both collective and individual, as if each of the participants simultaneously said: “No, I cannot give any good reason against the conclusion of this marriage”, which will be the proposition of this act of silence. The post-silential effect of silence in this context will be expressed in the continuation of the wedding ceremony, which from this moment can be considered legitimate.

As research has revealed silence often serves as a sign of opposition, which could be against somebody, or against a situation. In other words, a participant is silent when he or she doesn't agree with a situation itself, as if adapting to reality. Silence could well serve as a sign of a complex of different meanings. It could stand for a shock which later develops into something more positive. Often a participant can't express the feelings openly and it takes some time to come to senses:

(2) Here we unloaded the truck and, at long last, followed the guides to our quarters, under a starless sky, with a fine drizzle of rain beginning now to fall. I slept until my servant called me, rose wearily, dressed and **shaved in silence**. It was not till I reached the door that I asked the second-in-command, “What's this place called?” **He told me and, on the instant, it was as though someone had switched off the wireless**, and a voice that had been bawling in my ears, incessantly, fatuously, for days beyond number, had been suddenly cut short; **an immense silence followed**, empty at first, but gradually, as my outraged sense regained authority, full of a multitude of sweet and natural and long forgotten sounds: for he had spoken a name that was so familiar to me, a conjuror's name of such ancient power, that, at its mere sound, the phantoms of those haunted late years began to take flight [19, p. 1–17].

The example (2) describes a situation in which the main character comes back to the places of his younger years during Second World War. Silence is expressed here explicitly (shaved in silence, an immense silence followed), and could be coined the mediative type of silence. In this

example, though, the most vivid example of silence is revealed through the fact that the name of this place is not explicitly stated in the text. In other words, the most important information is revealed through silence and deduction. “What is this place called” asks the main character, and then he gets the answer, which is not explicitly stated in the text. The main character explains: “he told me and, on the instant, it was as though someone had switched off the wireless”. Silence here stands for a shock and sadness that the main character is experiencing. However, the character continues to keep silent, and silence turns into a sign of something fruitful, its positive manifestation. While the character is silent, the world around him runs into sounds which refer to different notions and signify a multitude of referents and situations, including “sweetness”, “authority”, “power”, thus compensating for the feeling of opposition that the character felt at first (in the text: “an immense silence followed, empty at first, but gradually, as my outraged sense regained authority, full of a multitude of sweet and natural and long forgotten sounds”).

Emotive function of silence.

Silence, which serves as a means of transmitting the psychological state of the addressee, his feelings and emotions, should be considered as an emotive, that is, a special unit of speech that has the property of expressing emotional experiences [20, p. 5]. Silence can serve to convey both negative and positive emotions, while in most cases the way of expressing emotional states is determined by certain socio-cultural parameters. Thus, in English-language linguistic culture, silence is considered as the only possible means of transmitting certain emotions:

(3) Her father was dying there, Mrs. Ramsay knew. He was leaving them fatherless. Scolding and demonstrating (how to make a bed, how to open a window, with hands that shut and spread like a Frenchwoman’s) all **had folded itself quietly** about her, when the girl spoke, as, after a flight through the sunshine the wings of a bird fold themselves quietly and the blue of its plumage changes from bright steel to soft purple. She had **stood there silent** for there was **nothing to be said**. He had cancer of the throat [21].

The participants in the silential act of example (3) are Mrs. Ramsay’s landlady and one of her maids, whose father is dying of throat cancer in Switzerland. Silence, marked by the adjective silent, belongs to the individual addressee of Mrs. Ramsay, whose communicative intention is to express sympathy to the interlocutor about the illness and death of a loved one. Silence in this example is considered by the participants of the situation as the most appropriate way to express internal states, namely, empathy and empathy (“there was nothing to be said”, implicitly in the words “had folded itself quietly about her”).

Connotative function of silence.

The conative function of communicative silence is manifested in the desire of the addressee to exert a certain influence on the addressee:

(4) ...an American woman tried to sit here the other night with bare shoulders and they drove her away by coming **to stare at her, quite silently**; they were like circling gulls coming back and back to her until she left [19].

The addressees of the silential act in example (4) are the English aristocrats, the heroes of Evelyn Waugh’s novel *Brideshead Revisited*, who, without uttering a word, by their eloquent silence and insistent glances, forced the American woman to leave the hall, because she allowed herself to appear in society with her shoulders uncovered. The considered silential act is

characterized by orientation to the addressee, an appeal to him in order to cause a certain action, namely, to leave the hall. This act of silence can potentially be verbalized as follows: “We demand that you leave immediately, as your appearance does not meet the requirements of the society in which you are located”. This type of silence strongly implies assessment and judgement being at the same time a tool of producing an impact and acting upon the interlocutor.

Phatic function of silence.

Based on the theory of interpersonal silence, proposed by S. Baker, we propose to distinguish the following types of silencial act in the phatic function – negative silence and positive silence, or non-contact and contact silence. On the positive silence of Baker writes: “The underlying unconscious and unintentional goal of speech is not to ensure continuity of speech flow, but to achieve silence, since a state of psychological balance characterized by the removal of interpersonal psychological tension is possible only when the position S+ (positive silence) in the field of speech activity has been reached” [22, p. 161]. As for the speech itself, the author assigns it a place between S – and S+, that is, between negative silence, indicating the lack of contact and understanding between communicants, and positive silence as a symptom of relieving psychological tension and achieving complete mutual identification by the participants of communication [22]. Positive interpersonal silence can be illustrated by the following example:

(5) “I love love,” she said, closing her eyes. I promised her beautiful love. I gloated over her. Our stories were told; we **subsided into silence** and **sweet anticipatory thoughts**. It was as simple as that. You could have all your Peaches and Bettys and Marylous and Ritas and Camilles and Inezes in this world; this was my girl and my kind of girlsoul, and I told her that [23].

Example (5) reveals two stages of mutual understanding between communicants out of three (the first involves the silence of strangers when they meet), namely the exchange of informative speech messages (“our stories were told”) and, finally, the “immersion” into silence as a result of the removal of mutual tension (“we subsided into silence and sweet anticipatory thoughts”). The silential act presented in example (5) is of a mutual nature, that is, it comes from two participants in the communication act, each of whom are both the addressee and the addressee of the act of silence. The marker of the phatic function is an explicit indication of the complete mutual identification of participants in a communicative situation, the inclusion of a communication partner in the sphere of “your” world in contrast to the world of “the others” (“you could have all your Bettys, my girl, my kind of girlsoul”). According to linguistic research, the semiotic universal “friend-foe” is an integral part of both the collective and individual picture of the world, and is actualized in the language by means of different levels [24, p. 43]. The analysis of this example shows that achieving mutual authentication, that is, the inclusion of the communication partner in “your” world, non-violent, knowable, understandable and close on a psychological level, is a fundamental characteristic of positive silencelevel act, performing phatic function.

The poetic function of silence.

The poetic function is characterized by a focus on the message as such in order to provide it with a “better form” [17, p. 203], focusing on the message for its own sake. This function, says

R. Jakobson, is the Central and defining, though not the only, function of verbal art, acting in all other types of speech activity as a secondary, additional component [17, p. 202].

In order to consider the poetic function in the context of linguistics, the researcher needs to identify a clear linguistic criterion for its identification, that is, to answer the question of what characteristic makes a poetic text poetic: “The poetic function projects the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection to the axis of combination” [Ibid., p. 204], that is, the principle of equality (equivalence) is used to construct sequences. This definition assumes that every artistic text is a structural ordering of a special kind, and this ordering can be carried out in two directions. The first of them is paradigmatically ordered (the “axis of selection” according to p. The second is the order according to syntagmatics (the “axis of combination”, or the combination of selected elements in such a way that they form correct chains in terms of language). Lotman interprets these principles as two types of relations, on the basis of which the artistic text is built: a) relations of co-opposition of repeated equivalent (located on the axis of paradigmatics) elements and b) co-opposition of neighboring (not equivalent, located on the axis of syntagmatic) elements [25, p. 107]. The first principle equalizes what is not equalized in natural language, that is, it co-opposes one equivalent element to another: “in poetry, one syllable is equated with any syllable of the same sequence, verbal stress is equated with verbal stress, absence of stress is equated with absence of stress...” and, most importantly in the context of this work, “syntactic pause is equated with syntactic pause, and absence of pause is equated with absence of pause” [17, p. 204]. If the first principle that Lotman calls “the principle of repetition, rhythm” [25, p. 107], equates the equivalent elements of natural language, the second principle, “the principle of metaphor” [Ibid., p. 107–108], connects what cannot be connected within the framework of natural language. Lotman considers the tendency to repeatability, rhythmization as a constructive principle of poetic speech, in other words, as the basis of poetic function, and the tendency to connectability, metaphorization as the main feature of prose structure [Ibid., p. 107].

Thus, repetition appears in the poetic text as the realization of order on the principle of equivalence, order on the paradigmatic axis. From this we can conclude that silence as part of the artistic structure will be represented by repeated elements, such as syntactic pauses of different lengths and in different environments. As an example of this type of silence in this work, the work of American performance artist and composer Laurie Anderson:

(6) You're walking (..)
and you don't always realize it (...)
but you're always
falling. (...)
With each step, (.)
you fall
forward
slightly (...)
and then
catch yourself
from falling. (..)
Over
and

over, (.)
you're falling (..)
and then catching yourself (.) from
falling. (.....)
And this is how you can be walking (..)
and falling (..)
at the same (..) time [26].

A part of performance *United States* (1984), entitled *Walking and falling* and is presented in example (6), not only develops common performance motif of uncertainty, ambivalence, but also adds a new dimension via the mapping, or using the term Yu. M. Lotman, “co-opposition” [25], two seemingly opposite processes is indicated already in the title. Thus, at the level of content, example (6) is an apparently paradoxical discussion about the nature of movement, in which the contradiction between walking and falling is removed, which is maintained at the level of form – poetic silence, realized through syntactic pauses, plays the same role in creating an aesthetic sequence as speech. In other words, individual phenomena that seem to be opposite combine into a more complex unity, forming a continuous continuum, whether it is a process of movement, or the process of creating a poetic language.

The aesthetic function of silence.

The analysis of examples has shown that in addition to the above functions, one can also distinguish the evaluative and, above all, aesthetic function. The aesthetic function of silence (the implementation of the motif of silence or silence in a work of art) allows you to pay attention to the implementation of this concept in the aesthetic aspect. The motif or image of silence can be actualized in the text as a contrast between sound and silence, usually when describing the inner state of the hero. This often objectifies a metaphor that “describes the picture of the world as a way of existence of human subjectivity” [27].

The aesthetic function of silence, the implementation of the motif of silence or silence is associated with the process of “reviving the sound”, paying attention to its accentuation, which is realized due to the fact that modern authors often use musical notation, musical scores directly in their literary works. At the same time, unexpected provocative metaphors are played out, which, like a piece of music or any other work of art, are intended to excite, shock, and leave a trace. Known for her outrageous plot and penchant for radical feminism, the British writer Jennette Winterson in the novel *Art and lies: a piece for three voices and a pawd* adds a musical score at the end of the novel. The author uses a large number of sound repetitions, creating a prose work about three brilliant creators, its poetics in many ways is reminiscent of the poetic form.

The narrator talks about the state of the doctor and the patient during anesthesia: “the patient continues to hear the sounds of surgical instruments, crackling, dripping, sloshing” (in the text ripping, snipping, severing, squelching, dripping), while the surgeon, “at work!”, all the time hums famous arias, “especially from *Madame Butterfly* or *La Boheme*” (in the text: “our Surgeon liked to listen to opera while he worked but he insisted on *Madame Butterfly* or *La Boheme*”) [28, p. 11]. With the author’s characteristic poetry of prose (irony and deliberate cynicism!) this fragment implements a metaphorical transfer. A person is compared to a musical instrument (having a “membrane”), and a surgeon is compared to a musician who can listen to an opera and simultaneously clank instruments. The comic effect is created by combining medical discourse

and musical discourse in one paragraph that is, using lexical units that relate to different areas of professional activity. Here is one more example:

(7) ...The great paved jaws of the bridge had been opened to let through an invisible fog-bent boat. **I heard the clang of the bell and the slow clatter of the bridge on its huge chains.** I thought I **heard drumming, drumming, footsteps marching in dead motion to the Tower.** I could see the thin grills fixed in the thick stone. Did I see a face? [28, p. 16].

Metaphorical transfer is realized by comparing a musical instrument with a human body and contrasting music with silence. The narrator (surgeon) goes on to describe the landscape of London, talking about the sounds that are heard around: the “ringing of bells”, “creaking of chains”, “beating of drums”, which stand out in contrast to the “dead silence”. To more accurately convey the sound environment, the author uses echo-imitative elements, duplicating onomatopoeic words (in the text: drumming, drumming). The deliberate provocation of the opposition, “life-death” the author shows in his other works, which, in his favorite manner to change the register of the narrative (as well as the questioning of gender and age identity of the characters), comes to the grotesque describing every part of the body of a dying loved one, combining static discursive practices medical encyclopedia and the dynamics of lyric narrative.

Here is one more example:

(8) “When you grow up **Handel**, you must do some good in the world.” I held my mother’s soft hand and ran beside her cuban heels. I saw her only once a day for our walk at three o’clock. <...> I asked for hot water. None. I asked for clean cloths. None. **I wanted to scream at them** “What do you think this is? Dickens? They were both staring at my evening dress. What do I think this is? Dickens?” I took off my jacket and starched tie, my waistcoat and stiff shirt. I cut the shirt into six clean squares and gave the man money to buy hot water from a neighbour. He left, **the room was quiet, the woman looked at me.** “It’s stuck.” “Yes.” I knelt down and let my hands across her triumphant belly. Why doesn’t she split? I know why she doesn’t split, I’m a doctor, but why doesn’t she split? Her skin was stretched over her with upholstered zeal. She was **smooth, perfect, no frills, no tucks, only the supple leather vof her body, tobacco pouch round, tobacco pouch brown** [28, p. 2–10].

In this example you vividly see that silence is expressed as something that characterizes the situation itself and its tention. It also characterizes the place, the room in which the woman is giving a birth to a child and is suffering (the room was quite). As we could see silence is always used here against numerous sound effects, emotions, possible connotations, as if making them more evident. The paragraph starts with a reference to music and Handel, as it is his childhood that is described. Later, the author describes a woman who is naked and lying in bed. In spite of the situation, and suffering, her body is described in detail, with its touch, shape, colour (in the text “smooth, perfect, no frills, no tucks, only the supple leather of her body, tobacco pouch round, tobacco pouch brown”). On a number of occasions, the main character wants to say something, but being a child – doesn’t. Silence is expressed explicitly (“I wanted to scream at them”). Yet instead of speech, the author describes the internal speech of the character, full of emotions (in the text, “What do you think this is? Dickens? They were both staring at my evening dress. What do I think this is? Dickens?”). Silence here serves by the author as a means of contrasting itself to the sounds and hues of the world.

The process of life of sounds and words in literature is manifested by comparing the sound background and the color scheme of the surrounding world and the implementation of this phenomenon in the text. In relation to the actualization of the motive of silence, A. Veselovsky notes that in verse form, not only epithets-metaphors are usually used, such as “the dead man is silent”, “silence is a sign of death”, but also other epithets explained by physiological syncretism [29]. Syncretic epithets correspond to the unity of sensory perceptions, which primitive man often expressed with the same linguistic indicators. In the middle of the 20th century, auditory ecology becomes an absolute value of literary creativity on a par with music. The latter is characterized by a high threshold of sound sensitivity and an increased attention to microscopic sound elements, to the smallest nuances of changes in sonority. For musical creativity is characterized by the fact that silence becomes a full-fledged sound material, acquires aesthetic “legitimacy”. Such attention to the smallest sound elements in the analysis of a literary text is shown, for example, in the implementation of special cases of various sound transformations, such as sound reflection, i. e. “echo”, emphasis on traditionally insignificant punctuation marks (dash, dot, ellipsis), close attention to the interval between words, as a general trend, “emancipation” of poetry and artistic text from grammar.

Metalinguage function of silence.

A characteristic feature of the metalanguage function, or interpretation function, is the installation on the communication code, which in ideal communicative conditions is fully or partially shared by the addressee and the addressee. The selection of the metalanguage function is due to the need to distinguish between two levels of language: “target language”, which is spoken about the external world, and “metalanguage”, which is spoken about the language itself. At the same time, it should be noted that metalanguage is not only one of the most important tools of any linguistic research, but also has great significance in the context of everyday communication: “we use metalanguage without realizing the metalanguage nature of our operations” [17, p. 201–202]. An example is an exchange of language messages, the purpose of which is to check whether participants use the same code, or statements that contain information only about the lexical code of a particular language (for example, an explanation of the meaning of a word unknown to the recipient). The analysis showed that silence has a metalanguage function to the same extent as speech. Let’s imagine that a foreigner in an English-speaking country is addressed with a question that is exclusively metalanguage in nature: “Do you speak English?” the recipient can conclude from the intonation that the interlocutor is addressing him with a question, and not trying to talk about the weather. However, even if the addressee does not have sufficient language competence to distinguish a question from a statement, the experience of interacting with other people will tell them that the speaker wants to establish contact with them. In this case, the addressee who does not know English will answer the addressee’s question with silence, which performs a metalanguage function. The propositional content of such an act of silence can be formulated as follows: “I cannot communicate with you, because we use different codes.” Silence in this case has the character of a language sign-symbol, acts as a silential act and performs a metalanguage function, since its propositional content is primarily directed at the communication code itself.

Silence and its function from the psychoanalytical perspective.

An interesting dimension of silence is its function in psychoanalysis. The fact of the psychoanalyst being silent (not giving approval or any kind of assessment) allows the patient in

the situation of psychoanalysis to reveal (by means of language) not only the conscious but also the subconscious. Silence therefore in this situation means lack of judgement. There are many famous literary examples in which the situation of psychoanalysis is shown.

Renowned examples of analysis of Edgar Poe's detective story *The Purloined Letter* was given by psychoanalyst J. Lacan [30] and philosopher J. Derrida [31]. Their famous psychoanalytical perspective on E. Poe's detective story allows a) to work out that silence accompanies the Truth (which is always hidden, as the characters in the story can't find the letter which is in front of them and is very significant). Psychoanalytical perspective also allows to b) notice that silence bears symbolic meaning. In the story by E. Poe it is not explicitly silence that bears symbolic meaning, it is the letter. The letter (that is stolen) "goes" from one person to another almost unnoticed. According to Derrida it signifies sexuality [31], according to Lacan, it means "the unconscious" [30]. Silence in constant opposition and support to a word (oral or written) reveals fundamental desires of a human being. Silence therefore has most profound meaning, not directly stated, but identifiable:

(9) For one hour at least we had maintained **a profound silence** [32].

In the situation described above the detective (the only character in the story who could identify the Truth and therefore is similar to a psychoanalyst), maintains a profound silence for a long time. Silence therefore allows to activate cognitive processes and reveal the true motifs of characters. Its function is supporting communication, activating cognitive processes, and assisting to reveal hidden details in any conversation.

Conclusion. Thus, viewing silence as communicative silence based on the classification of the communicative functions of the language by Jakobson allowed us to prove that communicative silence has different functions. They could be coined as referential, emotive, connotative, emphatic, assessing, phatic, poetic, aesthetic and metalanguage functions similar to those of speech. Regarding the silence in the metalinguistic function it focuses primarily on the code of communication, i. e. on the language and its structure. Silence occurs when the stereotype of behavior is violated. It is a sign of control, deliberate participation of the speaker in a particular opposition; it could be associated with a sense of respect, grief, and humility. Silence and quietness are different concepts. Quietness allows to develop acute view of details (textual as well as emotional). Psychoanalytical view of silence is an interesting way of exploring its functions. Silence allows to activate cognitive processes. Its function is supporting communication, activating cognitive processes, and assisting to reveal hidden details in any conversation.

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