

ON SILENCE

BA Thesis
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INTRODUCTION

I question things
that seem to be so ingrained, so
seemingly obvious and ordinary, that I never
had a single need to question them... Language is
one of those things. It is so automatically used, that we
almost forget to notice that we are using it and realize how
much do we in fact depend on it.

I have always been intrigued by language. From a very young age, I was writing poetry, short stories and I was participating on many creative writing competitions and poetry and prose recitation contests. I maintain a long term letter correspondence with a few people. Language was always a dominant form of expression for me. It still is. I talk a lot, I write a lot... Poetry is the only way for me to clearly express the things that aren't clear to me. It was ever since the most effective way of saying things.

I have recently experienced a very profound way of communicating. It was like poetry. But it was nonverbal. It was somehow more direct than regular talking and much cleverer and clear. The memories of this quiet experience seem to be engraved more deeply in me. It was definitely one of the most remarkable encounter I have ever been involved in and lucky to be able to observe. On one of my travels in Spanish Pyrenees, I met a man. Jerome, spoke fluent Spanish and French. And I didn't. We tried having a conversation... I tried in English; he shook his head from right to left. I dusted off my German, even my very bad Polish, but we didn't find a language we would commonly speak or be able to understand. We had a proper laugh about the situation. The sound of laughter and couple of heavy inhales slowly faded away and we stayed in silence. For a reason to me still not entirely uncovered, we kept spending time together in silence. After we had been quiet together for just the first ten minutes, I was amazed realizing that what I had just experienced, has been the best and the most meaningful conversations I have had in my life.

The
silence allowed us as
partners in conversation to have an
equal voice. Nobody was talking, therefore
nobody was dominating. After just a few days, I
came to a surprising realization that I know the person
I just met to a greater extent than I know people that I have
known for years. I came to believe, that it was so, because we
skipped all the unimportant; all the confusing and what was left
to deal with was the stripped core of a person. The human essence,
without the facade of questions that we usually ask people when we
just meet them. Without all the answers, that do not really matter. It
was beautiful and it was liberating. It was not about not understanding
each other, it was about understanding each other so much, that there
was absolutely nothing to say. We didn't stay still, passively sitting on
a stone staring at the clouds whole days. The silence did not enable us
from active time spending: we travelled, we had to find our way, we
cooked, we rock climbed, we played music and we had to deal with
things and figure things out. With no questions that would have to be
asked or answered. There was absolutely no need for a conversation
about the in a dog fight bitten, ripped open bloody arm of Jerome or
about his dyeing dog...

I came to understand, that this trivially simple action as not speaking
can make an enormous difference in one's perception of what not only
out there but in(side) there, too.. In silence, you literally exist differently.
Since this very revealing experience, I started being curious about differ-
ent forms of nonverbal communications and our unconscious abilities of
decoding the types of non-lingual exchange of information, about which
existence and uses I had no idea before. I became more aware of them
and my interest grew into fascination. Therefore I have been dedicating
my time, thoughts and energy to the research and study of language,
silence and the spectrum in between.

After diving in
the problematic of unmentioned
topics for fairly a lot of time, I found a lot
of answers to my never really asked questions. I
started giving my attention to the silence of reality and
the information buried deep inside of it. Because I feel like
silence is a dimension of human communication that receives
relatively little consideration compared to the attention given to
speech, I would like my thesis to put a spotlight on understanding
silence as a way of communicating and provide the resources by which
we could properly integrate silence into our communicative practice.

ON CONCEPTUALIZING REALITY IN LANGUAGE

We live according to conceptual systems. Our concepts govern our everyday functioning, down to the dullest details.

Our conceptual systems thus play an important, if not central role in our everyday realities. These systems are not something that we are normally aware of. In most of the little things we do every day, we simply act more or less automatically, along certain lines. Just what these lines are is by no means obvious. One way to find out is by looking at language. Since communication is based on the same conceptual system that we use in thinking and action, language is an important source of evidence. And if I am right in suggesting, that our conceptual system is largely structured in language, then the way I think, what we experience, and what we do every day is very much a matter of language. Language is, besides all the beautiful names it can give to reality, also conceptualizing it. It is measuring it. It is portraying it.

Using language can be compared to driving a car or using our computer. We all just do it. We do not necessarily need to know how it works. We do not understand the complexity of the car engine and we are not aware of the microchips inside of our computers called processors and we certainly have no understanding of all the coding behind it...What is enough for us to know to be able to use it, is simply how to use it. We do not know how these 'ordinary' things work and we also don't ask ourselves those questions...Nevertheless, we use it. We talk. And we talk too much.

If I ask you if you remember a day in your (after infant) life, that you spent entirely not talking? I am convinced that you could if you did. The concept of language became a condition of our lives. We are so tangled in those systems/concepts that we never stand back and look at ourselves with a bit of an objective distance. We don't see ourselves as domesticated monkeys making those small mouth noises with culturally assigned meanings, that we constantly exchange. Our world is contaminated with

concepts,
patterns and myths that
we rarely see as illusive, because we
see the world through the grid of them. We
have an initial intellectual language block that keeps
us from seeing it, as much as many other things.
Alan Watts, a British philosopher, writer, speaker and a
pioneer in interpreting and popularising the Eastern philosophy
for a Western audience is said "When you get free from certain
fixed concepts of the way the world is, you find it is far more subtle,
and far more miraculous, than you thought it was."

I am of course not arguing that patterns/concepts should be entirely erased from our functioning in this world. This world and us in it would very soon collapse without them. What I would like to bring forward as an idea to consider is the natural/organic pattern being the one to follow. Always to act according to patterns that things have and with the system of relation that things have. Not requiring submission. Not conflicting but rather interrelating. Like when we chop wood, we chop along the fibre lines...

ON REALITY AND THE SELECTION OF REALITY BY LANGUAGE

Reality contains everything. The sun, the moon, the stars and the mountains and the rivers and minerals and the good men and the bad men and the horses and the feeling of love and the flies and me and the sage and fish and the air between us. And it involves inescapably far more. And it is all moving together, it all flows together I some kind of mutuality. Reality is a huge relationship of all there is.

Out of the whole reality, which is a huge range of vibrations, us humans sense /perceive a small spectrum scale of vibrations- sounds, colours, actions. That's what we call experiencing reality- If I am right suggesting that experience we have in our life, whether it's sound or touch or light, are in their essence a vibration. We have built instruments that are sensitive to by us non sensible/perceivable vibrations, such as x-rays, cosmic rays, gamma rays, which proof existence of realities outside of our spectrum and to me it's quite obvious that there are things outside of the spectrums of our instruments, too. And these things together with the ones we are able to perceive without technological help are probably still just a fraction of all there is. Out of this fraction, we make an even smaller one by trying to describe it in language. We select what we find relevant in this world, what is significant enough. It's not even us making this selection, but the ones bringing us up who do this for us, by saying- look- a kitty, or look, what a beautiful flower/leave/whatever. And they are also not the ones to blame, because they have been sucked into this language cage by the ones who brought them up and it goes on and on. We make and unconscious selection of things, that seem to be significant, or noteworthy, in other words, we are thought to regard only certain things as important.

We might think we are teaching our children how to talk, but the reality is, that we are applying much more on them, then just the language conceptions. We are telling them where to look, we are defining their grid of concepts (like if you would draw grid lines on a transparent sheet)

which
they will hold in front
of their eyes looking at the world.

Energy follows attention and what we give
our attention to, meaning what we notice (what we
are thought to notice) in the world is, is what is notewor-
thy and we note it in forms of notations- words, numbers.

What we notice is what appears to us to be significant and the
rest is many times ignored as insignificant. We select from the total
input that goes to our senses just a very small fraction. We leave out a
lot...

Trying to understand or define reality by using language is like eating
a soup with a fork. We leave a lot out. We can't fully grasp it. I believe
there are all kinds of realities around us that we cannot call a name, that
we don't see, hear, feel, taste or smell or are able to perceive else how.
It is, perhaps, because we are not trained to perceive them. We use our
senses, the ones we can name (the ones we are therefore aware of and
value) There is a lot more than what meets the dictionary, ear or the eye.

EXISTENCE

“For there is a growing apprehension that existence is a rat-race in a trap: living organisms, including people, are merely tubes which put things in at one end and let them out at the other, which both keeps them doing it and in the long run wears them out. So to keep the farce going, the tubes find ways of making new tubes, which also put things in at one end and let them out at the other. At the input end they even develop ganglia of nerves called brains, with eyes and ears, so that they can more easily scrounge around for things to swallow. As and when they get enough to eat, they use up their surplus energy by wiggling in complicated patterns, making all sorts of noises by blowing air in and out of the input hole, and gathering together in groups to fight with other groups. In time, the tubes grow such a abundance of attached appliances that they are hardly recognizable as mere tubes, and they manage to do this in a staggering variety of forms. There is a vague rule not to eat tubes of your own form, but in general there is serious competition as to who is going to be the top type of tube. All this seems marvellously futile, and yet, when you begin to think about it, it begins to be more marvellous than futile. Indeed, it seems extremely odd.” - Alan Watts

LANGUAGE AS A KNIFE

Language is approaching the nature with a knife. By this way of looking at language, I would like to point at the feature of language to chop reality into pieces, the attribute of language to precisely divide a pine from a palm tree and I from the other. It doesn't change much about the existence of the trees I used as an example, the things language is naming are already (and they have been, long before they were called this or that). The name/word/language doesn't change anything about their existence. The tree doesn't understand the logic of our language, and it doesn't follow our conception about itself, its standing outside of all of it, in its perfection, in its pure existence, in its nature. Nature is self evident: clearly true and requiring no proof or explanation. The self-evidence is what I miss in humans. The silence. The believe in their natural perfection. If we think of the trees further, we made them so complicated: while they have no idea of their biological complexity, botanist could spend days explaining you how the tree reproduces, or about the root communication system and about how the photosynthesis work... They do it automatically. Without having to try doing it. If you try to talk about the processes of nature, what is complicated are not the processes of nature but you trying to put them into words. It is created by our attempt to analyze it all. The investigation is what is chopping the thing into pieces. And the sharper you can sharpen your knife the smaller you can cut the thing. "Only words and conventions can isolate us from the entirely undefinable something which is everything." – Alan Watts

When I was a small child, I used to play with soil in the garden while my parents were gardening... I remember making piles of dry soil, one higher than the other... My mother told me she had to laugh watching me crumble the small lumps of soil in between my little fingers into even smaller lumps of soil until I crumbled it to the tiniest particles I possibly could. I was counting loud: 1 soil, 2 soils, 3 soils, 4 soils... My little mind

didn't care that soil applies to the layer of earth in which plants grow, it didn't analyze it as the dark brown material consisting of a mixture of organic remains, clay, and rock particles. No. I would go to the bottom of its materiality- the grain of soil, the smallest particles I could divide the soil into was what the soil was. And I would confidently go on counting how much of this soil there was in our garden. How much soil is there in the garden? It is not a question about the soil, it is a question about how are you going to define it. This story my mother told me came across my mind now, when looking at language from different angles. I love the angle from which I was looking at reality back when I was little. It made me understand that a thing (literally any-thing) is a unit of thought. And our realities stand on the houses built of these things (which are in our western civilizations mostly material things), units of thoughts, bits of realities, building blocks, bricks of words, forming complicated sentences, which make life uneasy sometimes...

INTERDEPENDENCE OF LANGUAGE AND THOUGHT

Language is not only used in a spoken or written way as it might seem.

Think about thinking. Since I already brought up the subject of language in connection to thought in the previous paragraph, I would like to add some more explanation to the interdependence of these two. Thinking of language is impossible without tripping over the topic of cognition and the thought-language debate. There are many opinions, theories, whole books written on the interdependence of language and thought, word and meaning...

What I concluded, agreed with or assumed is making me look at and understand thinking as an inner conversation going on somewhere inside of our skulls, it is an endless chatter, the constant dialogue within us, which is giving us a moment of peace only when we are asleep. Thinking can be according to my definition considered talking to yourself sub verbally in your head. The thought is a language minus the sound of it. In other words, language is a thought dressed up in sound.

The following hummingbird story was told by Terrance McKenna, an American ethnobotanist, mystic, psychonaut, lecturer, author, and an advocate for the responsible use of naturally occurring psychedelic plants, during an interview by John Eden & Gyrus / Conducted October 1996

Gyrus: You've said quite often that the world is made of language, and this seems to have caused quite a bit of confusion, myself included. Could you clarify what you mean by the word 'world' and what you mean by the word 'language' in that context?

Terence: Well, for example (the example I always use), the child lying in a crib with an open window—a pre-verbal or nearly pre-verbal child—and a hummingbird flies through the room. It's a psychedelic miracle, it's absolutely stunning. The boundaries of that experience are completely undefined. But then the mother or the nanny walks into the room and says, "Oh! It's a bird, baby. Bird." The miracle immediately collapses down into a hard little tile, and by the time a person is six years old, reality has been entirely replaced by a mosaic of defined and very non-numinous meaning. And so people are then imprisoned in this language. And they will remain so imprisoned until the yawning grave, unless they are put in touch with the trans historical wisdom of the body. By the way, this idea that reality is made of language is actually the standard position in structural linguistics. This is not a radical position; this is dull-as-dog-shit orthodoxy for those people.

Gyrus: I was talking with a magician the other week and he was in complete agreement. You said once that the true secret of magic is that the world is made of words, and if you know what words the world is made of, you can do with it as you wish, and yeah, he was...

I used the McKenna's humming bird story to illustrate the way we acquire language. This example also applies to the selective aspect and the shrinking effect of the medium of language. In other words, the

feature
of language to bring
the whole reality of the hypnotized
child down to a single word. The shimmer-
ing colors, the dance of the birds and the sound
it was making, the wind in its wings, this magical
combination of events, the beautiful blend of colors and
sounds down to a bird. B-I-R-D. The miracle was confined.
What language did here is that it separated the bird from the
color of the background and from the sound of the wind slithering
under the door of the room... But the error is, that in my perception
of reality, they are not separate; they are happening together, sharing
one space and one time- they are the reality. And the reality depends on
them...

Increasingly, with each word we learn as children, we tile up every aspect of reality with a linguistic association that blunts it, limits it and confines it within moral judgements and cultural expectation. However, this doesn't mean that the world that we knew before we learned how to talk, in other words, the miracles we forgot by the time we learned to call them birds, doesn't exist! This significant world is outside of this grid, still existing, beyond the foreshortened horizons of a culturally validated language.

HOW DO WE LEARN LANGUAGE

We are born naked without language or a legal status. Language is deeply connected to intelligence, in its definition of capacity for logic, understanding, self-awareness, learning, emotional knowledge, reasoning, planning, creativity, and problem solving. In other words, language is the medium through which we are able to perceive or deduce information, and to retain it as knowledge to be applied towards adaptive behaviours within an environment or context. ¹

The base of language is the ABC , the alphabet - the most elementary lesson we get. The word infant- comes from the Greek infants-/not speaking/.² We develop language through the interaction with adults, who already know how to play the language game. And because as children we mirror what we see/ hear, and our parents gets us fascinated enough about this game of- ma-ma, with a finger of our mothers pointing at the middle of her chest, we start picking up not only the waves of sounds, movements of mouth, but also the meaning of the words. Once we understand the rules of the language game we start figuring out what does that sound mean and how to vocalize it, we start talking. And we pretty much never stop. We talk. All the time. We talk to each other, and we talk to ourselves. We rarely ever pause or stop the stream of language (spoken, written, thought) applying our moral judgements on reality. It is a fall into our constructs of reality, rather than the reality itself.

¹ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intelligence>

² <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Infant>

THE NON-REALNESS OF LANGUAGE

“The menu is not the meal.”
- Alan Watts

By this quote, Watts tried to state, that language represents reality in the same way menu represents the dinner. People are psychologically perverted in such a way, that we confuse symbols, words, and numbers with the real world of nature. We are so tight up in our minds/ heads (literally most of our sensual receptors are on our heads- close to our brain) that we lost our other senses. If I am right suggesting, that we use the same conceptual system in thinking and talking, then we as much talk in symbols, we think in symbols/signs. We are trapped in them; therefore we don't have actual contact with reality that these symbols are standing for. (By a sign I mean anything that stands for something else then itself). Furthermore, in the time that we live in, records of things seem to be more important than the things themselves. By things we can also understand reality. I am a big fan of reality. I prefer living it rather than creating representations of it. By constantly commenting on it, thinking about it, describing it... If I say sun, how much of the heat of the sun are you going to feel on your skin? There is not much reality buried in the sound wave or the thought of sun.

A Japanese Zen master said: “The sound of the rain needs no translation.”

According to my assumptions
about language as a social tool and reality,
linguaging about reality is shrinking the reality
into boxes of assumptions. Boxes, which are labelled
with words. Boxes, which contain the meaning of the labels
they are labeled with.

Language is a social tool, and therefore the goal of communication is for the speaker boxes and the audience boxes to contain the same meanings...To match up. Therefore language can be understood only when we are able to set and agree on assumptions of the names we give to reality. These are the rules of the game we play in order to come closer to understanding each other. We are all individually shaped throughout our lives, given different genes, education, gaining different knowledge according to which we create different associations. That is what makes language inaccurate in terms of communication. I can only be responsible for what I say, not for what you understand. I can only assume what is in your box according to my subjective experience. That's one of the reasons I find verbal communication very confusing.

We can never communicate in an equally corresponding way or at least we can never be sure that we do.³

THE SILENCE

Silence can possess a great number of meanings. By analogy, silence is the lack of audible sound or presence of sounds of very low intensity. The word silence can also refer to any absence of communication or hearing, including in media other than speech and music. Silence is also used as total communication, in reference to nonverbal communication and spiritual connection. Silence also refers to no sounds uttered by anybody in a room or area. Silence is an important factor in many cultural spectacles, as in rituals.⁴ However, much more attention, in comparison to silence, has been given to sound/speech. This lack of consideration may result from a view of silence as an essentially passive, inactive state. However, this view neglects the way in which silence is almost always communicative and powerful.

The word silence comes from the Latin word *silens* meaning to be still, quiet, or at rest.⁴ In English, it still maintains some of these meanings as most modern dictionaries define silence as the condition or quality of being or keeping still and silent, the absence of sounds, stillness or as a period of time without speech or noise.⁵ However depending only on these definitions we don't grasp the full potential of the state of silence. Hence the silence is more than the state of being silent; entire absence of sound or absolute stillness. The silence pointed out in this thesis is the silence that, promotes intersection and reflection. In other words, the silence that allows us to communicate.

Although many people understand silence as a passive act, I argue that silence is a powerful practice. In the modern world, silence is becoming an increasingly rare phenomenon. Moreover, we see silence as

intrinsically dangerous, anti-social or abnormal. Silence is often mis-characterized as unimportant or awkward. As a result the modern conversations become chaos in which two or more people racing to see who can speak more without paying any attention to the other. Yet, people forget that silence can be used as a technique of communication, kind of respect.

Lingual communication is becoming more and more impossible in a cacophony of noise in which nothing can be properly heard. Our western standard, in which the emphasis is on the expressive word over the activity of listening, is creating a world where the loudest voices triumph. The rat race life that most of the people perform on an everyday basis is requiring a lot of sound to be absorbed as much as produced. It is obviously clear that we are living in a noisy world. It seems almost unescapable. Cities are full of noise pollution and even in the forest you are going to hear the chainsaw chopping of the trees. It seems to be difficult to find a place free from human sounds. And it is almost impossible to find a place to hear the human silence. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), noise pollution is a major environmental and public health burden, second only to air pollution. The sound of the external world is muting the sound of the internal world besides in this brutally noisy reality, a lot of 'noise' is bombing us from the online spaces into which ordinary people are able to pour their brave speech. We have substituted the human experience with technological experience and digital connectivity which, in my opinion provides just a surfaced level of communication. This kind of communication often distance us. It is there to fill space that doesn't need to be filled, it is filled. We think all this noise is human. But it is not. It takes us away from what is human.

⁴ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Silence>

⁵ <https://www.ukessays.com/essays/english-language/the-importance-of-silence-for-students-english-language-essay.php>

People
seem to hate silence.

We avoid it and for some reason we find silence depressing. We much rather choose its opposite- destructive noise (informational, musical...), that we call entertainment. The reason why people avoid it, is as simple as that silence is not always sugar coated. It can be dark... but it will be true. It puts people against the wall and says this is you, you are existing and this is your reality. People always have opinions on what they see and what they are confronted with. We were thought to tick one of the boxes- yes or no. I like it or I don't. What we, many times find in the silent confronting state is a no, I don't like it. The mirrors are too close and impossible to avoid. We always want to control everything. Silence, however, can make us feel out of control, for a simple reason of making us aware that we are not that in control. We have no choice but to actually relate to our surrounding. We have to relate to the people around us if we are in a social silence context. We can't hide behind words. More importantly, we are forced to relate to ourselves.

Silence is also, among all the other qualities it has enabling us to lie. Since words are the major carriers of the human disorder called dishonesty. We lie to others constantly, yet we lie to ourselves, too. We are all trying to be true to ourselves and authentic and real... And it is not an easy task to do, since we are polluted with the layers of the non-authentic and non-real material which was, without us being aware of it happening, gradually applied on us along the way. Silence, of course isn't an instant cure to stop this dishonesty. It does create the conditions for the (sometimes brutal) honesty to be seen. In silence, your lies lie there quietly, for you to see.

Despite all the good there is about silence, it is increasingly becoming a radical choice. A choice, which we should all use and benefit from, rather than simply avoid.

The agrarian poet
Wendell Berry captured the
modern inability to find silence in this short
poem:

Best of any song
is bird song
in the quiet, but first
you must have the quiet.

In this poem, Berry describes quiet as not an absence, but rather a necessary condition for a song. Without silence, there is no true speech. In much the same way that quiet is a necessary part of hearing bird song, vulnerable silence within a noisy space is a necessary component of true communication.

“But I'll tell you what hermits realize. If you go off into a far, far forest and get very quiet, you'll come to understand that you're connected with everything.” - Alan Watts

If I think of the most memorable, the most important moments of my life, I was not saying much, if anything. I might have shouted or made a small sound. A sound of pain or pleasure. In other cases I have been entirely silent. Speechless. ‘Silence is the language of all strong passions, such as love, anger, surprise and fear’ - Bruneau

An Arab Wiseman said “there are 7,000 types of silence, which are summarized in seven words: silence is a worship without effort, an embellishment without jewelry, a prestige without sovereignty, a fort without walls, getting away without apologizing, a convenience of the two angles (who writes the man's good and bad deeds), a mantle of faults.”

Edgart
Tolle, best known
as the author of The Power of
Now and A New Earth said- "Pay attention
to the gap -- the gap between two thoughts, the
brief, silent space between words in a conversation,
between the notes of a piano or flute, or the gap between
the in-breath and the out-breath. When you pay attention to
those gaps, awareness of 'something' becomes -- just awareness.
The formless dimension of pure consciousness arises from within
you and replaces identification with form. True intelligence operates
silently. Stillness is where creativity and solutions to problems are
found"

I would like to compliment Tolle's words by adding my own interpretation of the silent space he is referring to. My observation / fascination for the "mmmmm " in the middle of our sentences, the moment our brow furrows, or if you furrow it, because you are concentrating so hard to find the word to express what you mean, you even touch your forehead trying to dig it out, when we roll our eyes into its upper corners in frustration, as if we were literally looking for the right way to express what we mean. We clearly do know what you mean. And you even say that "you know what I mean." It doesn't necessarily mean we have lack of knowledge on the subject .What we don't know is how to represent it in language. It might feel like it is in the tip of your tongue, and if we don't consider the communication medium through which we are trying to bring it from the tip of the tongue out, it might stay there forever.

As I mentioned previously in this thesis, I consider language being deeply connected to intelligence, in its definition of capacity for logic. What I would like to indicate here is, that if we pay attention to the gaps of silences, or if we allow the silent moments in communication penetrate deeper then to the surface in which we find it annoying and empty, we might activate the non-conceptual intelligence within us. The kind of silence which when discovered, can guide our actions.

Scientifically minded
people are extremely suspicious
about intuition. It is because they don't
(and cannot) understand the logic of intuition.
But despite it is being given not enough attention /
being neglected?, intuition is, in my opinion something
everybody uses. Everybody and every day. It is an amazing
analytical power of our brain- even though we like to feel it in our
guts or bones. The word intuition comes from the Latin verb *intueri*
translated as "consider" or from the late middle English word *intuit*,
"to contemplate" Intuition is the ability to acquire knowledge without
proof, evidence, or conscious reasoning, or without understanding how
the knowledge was acquired. Different writers give the word "intuition"
a great variety of different meanings, ranging from direct access to
unconscious knowledge, unconscious cognition, inner sensing, inner
insight to unconscious pattern-recognition and the ability to understand
something instinctively, without the need for conscious reasoning.
There are philosophers who contend that the word "intuition" is often
misunderstood or misused to mean instinct, truth, belief, meaning but
rather realms of greater knowledge and other subjects, whereas others
contend that faculties such as instinct, belief and intuition are factually
related. Sensibility to situation, in other words, sensibility to reality is
one of the major conditions to get in touch with one's intuition, to notice
the moments of simple clarity without confusion.

CONCLUSION

In order to clarify my points concerning language and to bring some light on the absence of it, I had to be quite radical in pointing a finger on all the things that are wrong about language. I would like this not to be a vast critique of language neither just a celebration of silence. As I stated in the very first paragraph of my thesis: language was, and it still is a dominant form of expression for me. We have the gift of language. We use it because we weren't thought a different way to communicate and because language is the only thing we know, we don't question using it. We make noises while exhaling. We send pressure waves through the air and these waves then create ideas in other people's minds. And that's amazing! We know exactly what to imagine when somebody says apple. We almost see it objectified in front of our eyes. And we do this unconsciously. I can say something like: imagine a neurotic guinea pig riding on a back of a horse in a dark pine tree forest and hopefully, if everything has gone well in your life you have never had this thought before. And now you just had that thought for the first time, because I made those pressure waves travel through the air. It is a wonderful tool and I am very happy to be able to share my thoughts in the form of words with others. I think that language has a great capacity to operate hand in hand with the sensual way of experiencing reality and can enhance the experience, when it is moderated and properly used.

I am, by no means trying to convert the world into silence, I would rather like to you think of its possibilities. I am also not trying to prove anything, but rather put silence forward as another possibility to think about, stop being scared of and apply on our lives. Not an absolute silence, but a balance of silence and all its opposites, which can maximize our perceptual awareness, situational awareness and our richness of being.

Individuals in our society has become more and more associated with not only the right, but some kind of social obligation to convey our

will to
the world, to get
out our thoughts, to not hesitate
and to express our ideas and believes.
There is such an intense drive to contribute our
little response to the world. I would like to conclude
my thesis stating, that an appreciation of softer, quieter
registers of responding to the world and of being in general, is
a choice that we can make.

I cultivated the appreciation of silence, as the precious thing it is in my own life. I started listening. Listening, in a sense of listening, not only waiting to speak. I became more aware as an observer, which helped me to notice how much of what I was being said doesn't need to be said. Silence is not something I started doing because I hoped it will change my life. I discovered the impact of it rather randomly, and since then, I started noticing it more and more in my life and my actions and giving attention and gratitude to its effects on my wellbeing. I started noticing that I was seeking silence ever since. I am, to a fanatical point passionate about horses. I used to ride, and that itself in a sense is an action of communicative silence. It causes me inexpressible happiness to just be in a presence of a horse. The way I perceive the situation, the way I am aware of it in its silence differs immensely from the noise/language influenced ones. Just after I started understanding conceptual reality and digging into the research of these topics, I realized what is it about horse riding that has an extraordinary effect on my state of happiness. It is the absence of concept in the action. It is an immediate response to the 'material' that I work with. The quiet agreement (I am not talking about sport horse riding or dressage, where riders apply various conceptual patterns and specific riding structures are required... I am talking about riding a horse without knowing where to, about the way my body follows the movements of the back of the horse and about the rhythm of gallop).

Another example of a silent gap in my life is pottery making. I love it besides many other aspects for its silence, too. It is, for me, in its essence a meditative act, with a material result. I have been escaping the nerve-racking environment of fashion to work with clay, but since in my graduation semester I won't have that many chances to escape, I am trying to approach making clothes with the state of mind I am approaching clay. Not knowing what's going to come out. I take a block of clay, close my eyes for a short moment, and enter a time capsule in which the small figure muscles know exactly what to do, without me having to navigate it in any way. It is happening through me. I am the medium through which it happens. I don't feel any responsibility for it happening, I have no duty towards anything, and my only job is to let it happen. Surrender to the creation which flows from somewhere where it sources, through me, to where it belongs. It is beautiful.

Likewise, I have been working as an art model for 4 years and because of this job, I have more than a lot of opportunities to practice my silence. I do approximately 3 drawing/painting/sculpting sessions of three hours a week, during which I am consciously not only silent, but physically entirely still. I am enormously grateful for having unexpectedly discovered the art of meditation while sitting still for hours. I feel almost privileged to have the chance, as much as the time, to spend considerably a lot of hours naked and still, with all the gifts that naturally follow that state of the body and mind. Moreover, I am grateful for being able to use this time for an introspection and having the benefit of being paid for it. When I emerge from a period of stillness and silence, my movements and words seem to be more purposeful. My thoughts are more intentioned. I came to believe, that silence is a practice. It is the resting place of everything essential. Silence returns us to what is real.

We have such a deficit of this kind of silent encounters (with ourselves or with others) in our lives. Modern people don't feel moved or impressed just by living, and not at all by just sitting still and quiet. And that is, hopefully to be reformed by taking a step back, and then two more. Silence makes it more possible to live life in congruence with your values. It doesn't guarantee you will do this, but it makes it a lot harder not to.

Franz Kafka, one of the most influential writers of the 20th century said "You need not leave your room. Remain sitting at your table and listen. You need not even listen, simply wait, and just learn to become quiet, and still, and solitary. The world will freely offer itself to you to be unmasked. It has no choice; it will roll in ecstasy at your feet."

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And many many others

Thank you