



Yearning for Words, Learning With Words: Poetic Ruminations

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ABSTRACT

As a poet I am always seeking ecological interconnections amidst body, brain, language, knowing, mind, consciousness, education, imagination, heart, cognition, and spirit. In language play I hope to find my way to a purposeful pedagogy that acknowledges and honours how learning is always a holistic adventure in process and flux, an adventure of human becoming filled with wonder and mystery beyond the counting, but always abundantly available for courting with wild delight and desire.

“My experience is not described or explained by language; it is language”
(Griffin, 1995, p. 192).

In *Unleashing Your Language Wizards: A Brain-Based Approach to Effective Editing and Writing*, Crow (2010) observes that despite the significant time and effort that educators have invested in teaching writing, “many students still do not write very well” (p. ix). Crow presents a brain-based approach to teaching writing that emphasizes inquiry-based learning: “Don’t cover the material—let students uncover it” (p. 41). I admire Crow’s compelling vision of brain-based learning as: multimodal, hands on, problem solving, pattern based, interconnective, challenging, and recursive. Nevertheless, while Crow sustains a clear focus on grammar, registers, diction, punctuation, and voice in expository writing, I recommend that one more way to attend to the complex relationships amidst the brain and mind and education is to play with words and shapes and sounds in order to attend to the mysteries of denotation and connotation, syntax and semantics, in order to explore again and again how

language is integrally connected to the heart of learning, and how the heart's yearning is to ask questions that might not have answers, all part of a quest to acknowledge how the world is full of mysteries and enchantments beyond the counting. As a poet I invite educators to ruminate on the possibilities of what Calvino (1995) calls a "pedagogy of the imagination" (p. 92).

Babble and Doodle

words as a perpetual pursuit

Italo Calvino

stretch words tight and taut so they twang
words wait between the lines to be called
these words, your words, more words, words

throw words in the air, seek shapes
words never let you go, always let you go
the world woven in the shadows of words

write the earth, one word after another
words open up expanding worlds
words, spoken here and there, for you

care about words, offered with care
words seek their way, light offered
the way into the haunted words

lay down words, linear and labyrinthine
words wind through the blood, no end
a parade of words, glad to be alive

laugh with wild words, dangers everywhere
words remember what can't be forgotten
words with the heart's beat, full of breath

host a surprise party for words
words don't always need punctuation
words, the hermeneut's heresy, a long quest

seek words that give you goose-bumps
words whisper secrets in shopping malls
scribbled words in gusts of wind

hold words tentatively, not with tentacles
words challenge grammar with glamour
words as a perpetual pursuit, full of yearning

... our language passes in at the eyes, out at the mouth, in at the ears; the words are immersed and steeped in the senses of the body before they make sense in the mind. They cannot make sense in the mind until they have made sense in the body (Berry, 1990, p. 192).

Body wisdom is not found in the mind or the spirit, but in the belly—the deep core of the body, where it signals with physical sensations what feels ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ to us: our gut feelings (Arrien, 2005, p. 73).

Cogito Ergo Sum

I think, therefore I am
I blink, therefore I am not
I wink, therefore I am naughty

I clink, therefore I am here
I sink, therefore I am where
I slink, therefore I am somewhere

I ink, therefore I am a blab
I fink, therefore I am a scab
I dink, therefore I am a drab

I drink, therefore I am pee pee
I stink, therefore I might (not) be
I kink, therefore I am a knot, not free

I plink, therefore I am ludic
I jink, therefore I am elusive
I wrinkle, therefore I am loosely

In European culture, the idea of logic, reason, even the capacity for insight, thought, or clear-mindedness have been situated so firmly in the duality between intellect and emotion, mind and body, spirit and matter that to challenge this duality must seem like a threat to consciousness itself (Griffin, 1995, p. 40).

... a particular language leads the speaker down a particular thinking pathway (Little Bear, 2004, pp. vii–viii).

Logical?

analogical
biological
chronological
dialogical
ecological
futurological
geological
horological
ideological
jumpological
kinological
logical
meteorological
neurological
ontological
phenomenological
quinological
radiological
sociological
tautological
ufological
virological
waxological
xenological
yesological
zoological

Doubtless the final state of thought is disorder, rambling, the fragment and extravagance (Baudrillard, 1997, p. 118).

There couldn't be a fragment that doesn't relate to everything (Lynch, 2006, p. 141).

Phony Euphony

ambling in ample academic addiction
 babbling bubbling bumptious boasts
cuddle coddle the challenge of change
 dazzle with a double dabble dribble
epistemologies & pissing mythologies
 fat flatulence filled with flat fraudulence
grumble with gregarious grubby greed
 humour a hidden hegemonic tumour
idols of ideology & idle ideologues
 jump the juvenile jumble of jouissance
keen kinetics knowing kissing kinetosis
 language languishes imitation limitation
message a massage in a messy mass age
 noxious notoriety with nervy nonsense
oblique obligations & obtuse openings
 peddle in prepositions & propositions
querulous quest for a queer question
 razzle rattle riddle ripple rubble rebel
sadistic statistics staked to mistakes
 tooting tottering in a tattered toupee
unaccountable ubiquitous ululation
 vandalized & analyzed & scandalized
writhing in writing & righting wrongs
 xenogenetic xylophonic xerophyte
yearning for yackety-yak on a yacht
 zealous zanies on the ziggurat zenith

Artist brain is associative and freewheeling. It makes new connections, yoking together images to invoke meaning (Cameron & Bryan, 1992, p. 13).

The mind that truly seeks treasures will go to the furthest place to hear the magic word that leads to them (Bloch, 2006, p. 107).

Art Arrests

hymn to voluptuousness, to the voluptuousness of writing – Hélène Cixous

art arrests art attests attuned attentiveness
 bonny lass with bony ass alas at last
 circumambulatory criticism cynical ceremony
 did Didymus bet on the alphabet no doubt
 eaves dropping in the evening ever even
 fail in the fall, fall in failing, flailing in failing
 grab bag gabfest, more gumbo than gumption
 hyena hyphen hymen a heaving heart
 iron a shirt iron in the blood pumping irony
 joyful journey of just juxtapositions
 kind of kin kindly kindled kinship sailed
 lust is a must bust a button, Philip Larkin
 momentousness of the moment, not monumental
 naughty novice needs new night goggles
 omnivorous orphans ominous omens
 pearls purls perils perles perplexed
 questioning quetzals weary your query
 raining on the reindeer in romantic Rovaniemi
 scoundrel in a scandal wearing sandals
 taxi station toxic taxing taxation attending
 uttering urgently uxorious understanding
 vivifying vivacious voluptuous verbs
 words how many words is Wordsworth worth
 Xeroxed ox a tale of oxen or oxtail soup
 yodeling yellow yeses with yearning
 zombies in zoot suits suit the zoo

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