

Creative Writing Forum

Guidelines for the new creative writing column

Kazuko Unosawa

<k-unosawa@msa.biglobe.ne.jp>

In this issue of *Learning Learning* there is a new column for creative writing titled “Creative Writing Forum” so that members can publish their work related to themes concerning Learner Development. We welcome pieces ranging from poems to short stories as well as other forms of creative writing. As a general rule the maximum length should be 1500 words. We look forward to your active participation and if you have any questions please feel free to contact the coordinator.

創造的な作文（クリエイティブ・ライティング）コラムへの投稿ガイドライン

今月号の「学習の学習」（Learning Learning）では、Creative Writing Forumというクリエイティブ・ライティングを取り上げた新しいコラムを始めました。これは、会員のみなさんが学習者ディベロップメントをテーマにした作品を発表するためのものです。詩や短い物語など様々な形式のクリエイティブ・ライティングの投稿をお待ちしております。原則として1500語を単語数の上限としています。みなさん積極的にご参加ください。何か質問があれば、お気軽にコーディネーターにご連絡ください。

Theories of Second Language Requisition

Caroline Kocel-Ross, student of Sophia university.

<c.jkoross@gmail.com>

While there's much research on second language acquisition
Far less is said on the topic of imposition
So today I'm taking a fresh position
Sharing theories of second language requisition.

SLR is characterized by student compliance
Grammar plus vocab, student-teacher reliance
Yes it's *possible* that some learning *may* take place here
Through sheer grit and grind, and a healthy dose of fear

In this classroom, I'm master - forget about the rest
I'm not here to teach you beyond how to pass the test
The reality of this exercise is confined to these four walls
I decide which ones of you are good at English and which ones of you are fools.

Target 800 words - less than 24 weeks
That kind of pressure really speaks
Volumes about the priorities of True Second Language Requisition;

Empty vessels, cram them with words
No added sugar and 99% context free
Out of 15 new words, you only scored 3?!
You really *must* improve your English vocabulary
A 5000 word jigsaw puzzle, finally complete
Three weeks after the test? Mostly obsolete.

And just how far are these lessons actually effective
When we look at things from our students' perspectives?

Autonomy? You ask
Then you're clearly yet to grasp
That the only reason I'm even *in* your class
Is because I need your grade to pass
This is mandatory - I'm not here for *me*
I'm here because I *have* to be

So while you roll your eyes at me and my motivation
I'll autonomously roll my eyes at this second language education
Have you forgotten what it's like to be forced to sit in a classroom against your will?
Jumping the hoops of the foreign language drill?
While the weight of the world is as much upon my shoulders as it is upon
Yours
And I'm sitting here distracted by what the future has in store
For me
And I still don't know what I want to be
When I grow up.

So forgive me, please
If I don't live up to *your* classroom expectations
And forgive me, please
If I disprove your research dissertation;
You can just call me
An "*anonamaly*".

When it comes to SLA
I think the research can lead us astray
Promising gains, so many advantages
From the acquisition of English—I mean—
second languages
When in fact
The only ones of us
Who actually ever learned a foreign language
are
a) those of us who wanted to or
b) those of us who were forced to

It's simple logic, one or the other
As for me? I thank my mother—
"It's good to learn a foreign language," she told me
"You never know when another language might come in useful," she told me
And this I agree.
But that doesn't mean that everybody
Needs to follow the same path as me.

When we go abroad, we take an adaptor plug
And if we don't?
Well then we just don't use the electric plug
An adaptor plug *is* adaptable
But that doesn't make it necessarily valuable
In your own goddamn country.

So excuse me please while I remind both you and me
That languages are only *one* aspect of this great big tapestry
That we call life

And if you wouldn't mind entertaining me,
For a moment here
Just imagine with me

Just imagine—
If artistic creativity or musical ability
Were given just half the credence of linguistic capability
How then might our classrooms be?
What change could this effect in our society?

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