

# **EMBODIED WRITING**

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# SOME AIMS

Deconstructing the dualism between "theory" and "praxis" in writing through different tasks, discussion, writing etc.

Finding own unknown potential(s) of writing, enjoying of them, empowering of them, making them audible.

Performative/artistic/poetic/pathetic/political/critical mode of expression.

The informed reflection of the writer-reader relation.

The everyday potential of own writing, the embodiment, movement in it, the reflection of directions of the processes.

# THE LOCATIONS OF WRITING

As a part of a thesis

As artistic expression, artistic work

As a personal reflection, (semi-diary), a way of thinking and discussing some specific topics/actions/spaces/sensations etc.

As a one part of one's literary expression; as a enriching element, reflection surface, catalyst etc.

As a therapeutic detachment from a referring-based academic writing

As a sensual pleasure

As a jouissance

# THEORY AS PRAXIS

Writing is always embodied, material and social action ie. praxis.

The meaning comes from this praxis-quality.

Also writing on/within theory is material and social action.

Theory is "live" when thought/written/"used"/negotiated/contested.

Theory is never fixed, not even at the moment when not in use.

# PRAXIS AS THEORY

Writing is rehearsing the language, dancing with the concepts, sculpting the sentences/words/meanings...

It is not about the style per se, but the live praxis.

Repetition, failure, experiential attitude, curiosity, openness.

# **EXAMPLE:**

## **SOME CONCEPTS IN ARTS**

Line, space, shape, form, texture, contrast, color, tension, release.

Movement, rhythm, pattern, melody, balance, frequency, amplitude.

How to put these concepts in action in a text?

# **EXAMPLE:**

## **”PERFORMATIVE WRITING”**

### **SOME DEFINITIONS**

Performative Writing is...

-a form of postmodernist and avant-garde academic writing  
(Wikipedia)

-evocative; it evokes sensations, emotions, actions etc. (Pollock)

-“On generating and trapping thoughts in word and imagining by writing through conversation and observation, in the same site as the artwork” (Tracy McKenna and Edwin Janssen)

# PERFORMATIVE WRITING FOCUSES

on doing more than meaning

on embodied experiences

on subjective registers

on oscillating between poetry, research, documentation,  
experiment, dialogue...

on ruptures, differences, diversities

on micro-tactile realms



# **YOUR VOICE... OR STYLE?**

What is the difference between personal writer voice and style?

- Own experiences, exposition, courage
- Distance, changes, leading of the story in and from a certain perspective
- Authorial choices, directions in the text

# **DELLA POLLOCK: PERFORMATIVE WRITING: SIX EXCURSIONS**

*evocative*

*metonymic*

*subjective*

*nervous*

*citational*

*consequential*

# EVOCATIVE

## PW

...”evokes worlds that are other-wise intangible, unlocatable: worlds of memory, pleasure, sensation, imagination, affect and insight”

At the borderline of critical, creative, potential telling.

**“a liminoid field of possibility”, which draws more from the potential, uncategorized and unpredicted than the (positivist) ontologies of the rational**

# METONYMIC

It dramatizes the limits of language, [...] and endlessly open field of expression.

Obscuring things in the very act of writing, making absent what mimetic/metaphoric use of language attempts to make present.

It marks the materiality of the sign.

Naming by a way that connects the action and the material.

”Hän lukee Saarikoskea”.

# SUBJECTIVE

(Not subject as a simple category of “self”)

Situated and shifting relation.

Articulating the motive for/of writing, and the position from where this motive is emerged.

# NERVOUS

It anxiously crosses various stories, theories, texts, intertexts, and spheres of practice, unable to settle into a clear, linear course, neither willing nor able to stop moving, restless, transient and transitive, traversing spatial and temporal borders.

# CITATIONAL

Writing as rewriting; citational writing quotes world that is always already performative.

Citational writing stages its own citationality, re-sighting citation, displaying it in an accumulation of quotations[...].

Fragility of identity, history and culture.

# CONSEQUENTIAL

It is not only dramatizing, it makes things happen.

It is not only rhetorical change, but a real embodied transformation.

The reader as a co-writer, as a co-constituent of an uncertain, provisional, normative practice.

An actual writing body at the sphere of academic knowledge-producing.



# LET'S DANCE/WRITE/ SENSE/PERFORM

Write on and with your everyday items. Choose two items and put them in interaction.

Write

What happens

Why it happens

What/where are the specific soils, backgrounds, contexts, etc. for the events

# D.SOYINI MADISON

Think about these questions through art-making.

1. How do we reflect upon and evaluate our own purpose, intentions, and frames of analysis as researchers?
2. How do we predict consequences or evaluate our own potential to do harm?
3. How do we create and maintain a dialogue of collaboration in our research projects between ourselves and Others?
4. How is the specificity of the local story relevant to the broader meanings and operations of the human condition?
5. How—in what location or through what intervention—will our work make the greatest contribution to equity, freedom, and justice?

(Introduction to Critical Ethnography)

# MADISON

**Theory/Method.** Critical ethnography becomes the “doing” or the “performance” of critical theory. It is critical theory in action. Theory, when used as a mode of interpretation, is a method, yet it can be distinguished from method (and indeed take a back seat to method) when a set of concrete actions grounded by a specific scene is required to complete a task. We rely on theory—whether it is Marxist theory, critical race theory, or phenomenology—to interpret or illuminate a social action. However, in composing a lay summary, designing interview questions, or coding data, theory may inspire and guide, but it is a methodological process that directs and completes the task.

# MICHELLE FINE: THREE POSITIONS IN QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

1. The *ventriloquist* stance that merely “transmits” information in an effort toward neutrality and is absent of a political or rhetorical stance. The position of the ethnographer aims to be invisible, that is, the “self” strives to be nonexistent in the text.
2. The positionality of *voices* is where the subjects themselves are the focus, and their voices carry forward indigenous meanings and experiences that are in opposition to dominant discourses and practices. The position of the ethnographer is vaguely present but not addressed.
3. The *activism* stance in which the ethnographer takes a clear position in intervening on hegemonic practices and serves as an advocate in exposing the material effects of marginalized locations while offering alternatives.

# WRITING TASK

For ten minutes :

1. Make notes 5 minutes. Write all the 5 minutes, don't evaluate, don't stop. Just observe everything and let the text emanate.
2. Then close your eyes, close another ear. Walk around whenever you are with a mono hearing. Observe what you sense.
3. Open your eyes and your ear. Write 3 more minutes.
4. Observe textual flows in you.

# Focus on

- rhythms in text
- weights in text
- lines and burrows in text
- silences in text
- interruptions in text
- temporal and spatial terms that you create in the text

# PERFORMING AUTOETHNOGRAPHY

A good autoethnographic text (by Tami Spry):

1. The text must be well crafted. it should be good literature as well as good science.
2. The must be emotionally engaging as well as critically self-reflective.
3. The text should build a relational style between the author and the reader.

# AUTOETHNOGRAPHIC TEXT

- personal/cultural/embodyed/material thick description
- dialogical praxis between the critical theory and performing body
- ethnography is an intensely sensual way of knowing



# JEAN-LUC NANCY: CORPUS

a corpus is a weighing of a material, of its mass

”writing” does not mean witnessing a meaning, or shaping it, but it means touching the soul/meat. Touching needs the distance, the difference, and turning to this difference.

Corpus is not a substance, but being, from where one can write out (l’etre-excrit). It is movement.

I often think through sound: noise, silence. Etc.

# WRITING TASK FOR 18TH MAY

Write on something when you thoroughly felt the mass, the weight of your body.

Write the text in several sessions: make returns to the text, read it in different places and in different times.

Sense the relation between you-writer and the reader when you read/write your text. The grain of flesh includes sensations as well as emotions and thoughts.

Max 4 pages.