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DEVELOPING SENSORY AWARENESS THROUGH CREATIVE WRITING

“Creativity is ... seeing something that doesn't exist already.
You need to find out how you can bring it into being.”
Michelle Shea

У статті обґрунтовано важливість удосконалення палітри сенсорності у процесі навчання креативного письма.

Ключові слова: *креативність, сенсорність, усвідомлення.*

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Ключевые слова: *креативность, сенсорность, осознание.*

This paper advocates for the importance of sensory awareness in the teaching of creative writing to third year university students.

Key words: *English, creativity, sensory data, awareness.*

Human ethical standards and values get impressed upon our emotional grid system very early in life. Sometimes the way we think and talk about emotions is different, without our knowing it, from the way we feel about them deep inside ourselves. If we survey our personal histories and discover what of these childhood emotions are and where they come from, we'll find they have a tremendous power in our everyday lives [2: 167]. We live in the world where emotions play as large a part as reason, where the two are not easily separated. Creativity is a mental faculty of forming images or concepts of objects or situations not existent or not directly experienced [1: 15]. Various assumptions about human nature are inherent in the concept of creative writing. One could say that it is a soul craft. It sheds light on an individual's mind set. It is always about finding a new way, a new concept, a new palette in common things.

Writing skills are based on various students' displayed abilities to observe, to discover, to think. The course "In search of Personality" aims to involve students directly into the process of inquiry, so they could respond thoughtfully to the intellectual demands on the pathway to their true selves.

What we often call Reason Blake said, "is not the understanding at all, but is merely derived from the experience of our five senses, derived from our bodies" [3: 126]. When we write, we not only speak our minds, but also discover the indwelling strength of our sensory spectrum. Writing is a process of coming into consciousness of our senses and feelings. Individuals transform thought into language that can be seen or heard. "Sensory language in writing is the most important because that's how people understand what's going on around them – what you see, hear and touch" Deborah Behler [3: 130]. Perl claims, "Everything is grounded in awareness" [2: 292]. The act of writing is a way to increase our awareness to a particular subject, yourself, and our values. Description gives sensory information. Imagery helps the reader see, hear, smell, taste, or touch something in his or her mind. One of the basic techniques for observing is using sensory detail. Poems touch students' hearts and heads appealing to both senses and intellect. Poets create pictures in the mind by using words that make you see, hear, smell and even taste. The poems' "mystic sense" is in the cues reaching our senses and the associations we attach to them. Poetry has become the common language through which individuals share their sense of beauty. Sensitivity to beauty is also known as aesthetics. Poetry teaches students to observe nature in all forms – large and small, lasting and transient: a reflected sunbeam, the flight of a butterfly, a tree bending before the wind, a perfect white lily, a carpet of daffodils, the pattern of stars in the night sky, a lavish sunset, a gentle touch of the wind, whispering the fairy-tale to lull the birds etc. Students' efforts show in greater enjoyment of poetry and increased competence composing it have been displayed in the first issue of our anthology "Poetry: Powerful beauty". Their love to poetry and music has also produced the festival "Loud and Proud". It is fair to say that our students not only perform their own lyrics put to music but also really assert their freedom of self-expression and their civic position. The result is a sense of openness that enhances the intensity of the feelings expressed.

Creative writing is always, in some way, an exploration of our sensory data and an act of faith in telling others about it. It is generally accepted that we all differ in term of sensory capability. Each student has a unique way of seeing, hearing, touching and tasting. This power is in every one, and so is the need to express it. This sense of strength can connect individuals to a sense of Universal creativity. If they are going to write they must be aware of this richness in them and come to believe in it. Behind the words and sentences there is this deep moving thing – the sensory awareness. Whether students are writing a letter, a fairy-tale, their dreams, poems, it is very important for them to be aware persons. An aware person is all there and fully aware. The body is not doing one thing, while the mind focuses on something else [2: 275]. Our discussion about it touched my students deeply. Each student has his / her own view of what an aware person is. I am encouraged and inspired by various students' input on this subject. The excerpts of some of them follow:

This person:

- doesn't wear rose colored glasses to avoid the hard facts of life;
- doesn't use angry words while smiling;
- doesn't frown when the situation calls for laughter.
- Doesn't fear of a letting go of what has been familiar.

An aware person cannot help but be inspired as he / she views nature in all its beauty and always has something beautiful in sight. An aware person watches a sunrise at least ones a year. An aware person can stand by the lake, feel the wind and experience a sense of awe. An aware person can look at the sunset and say: "Wow!". An aware person doesn't take good health for grant it. An aware person knows an inner world of feelings, senses and fantasies and is not afraid or ashamed by them. An aware person loves her real nature.

We hear fairy tales from trees
The howl of wind, the songs of night,
Admire the rain and the sun so bright
The thunder storms and gentle breezes.

To hear all of these is very easy
But only one in hundred is actually stops
To listen to the music of the rain drops
The rest of us seems too busy.

Kurillo Iva

The program excites students to the broad study of creative writing in all its concerns. Among the writing options are personal reflections, observational reports, narrative descriptions, stories, literary interpretations culminating in the submission of creative dramatics. It demands an intensive involvement of our physical senses and feelings. Sensory data is a way that enables us to make sense of our world.

Individual sense of worth can flourish only in the atmosphere of freedom. "Writing is a form of personal freedom. It frees us from the mass identity we see in the making all around us." Don Pelillo [3: 113].

Creative construction needs a sense of freedom. Journal keeping is an inseparable part of writing rituals. Freedom is the core of it. It gives our students a new angle of vision for their opportunities. They are willing to expand the size of their perceptual windows with its help. It should be kept alive. When they describe what they observe about people, places or things, they actually "see" them more clearly. Within the framework of their journals they explore the interplay of physical and supernatural senses in their world. This experience brings new sensitivity to creative writing classes.

Gradually by writing they will learn more and more to be free, to say all they think and feel. So they can change what they want and strengthen what they want to strengthen. Individuals, who gain it, begin to like it because it has set them thinking. The more they use it, the more they have it. This is what students wrote about it. Here are some excerpts:

- Freedom is flight,
 - Freedom is might.
 - Freedom is harmony of my soul.
 - Freedom symbolizes the growth of my personality.
 - Freedom is an opportunity to get inspiration from everything without pressure from anybody.
 - Freedom is a thing we learn to get,
 - A wish of which allows not to stop.
 - Freedom is a brick in the wall between present and future.
 - Freedom is a gulp of the fresh wind in any area of your life, which can absolutely change your habits in a positive way.
 - Freedom is a fresh breath of a coming spring. It gives a splendid gift to my soul, incredible feeling.
 - Freedom is when you feel your wings and nobody tries to cut them. When you have your special creativeway of thinking and nobody judges you for that.
 - A sense of freedom is like two wings behind me.
- You can imagine, create free, have your own opinions, and an opportunity for discovery new areas for learning new things.
- Freedom is a breath of fresh air. It fills your lungs, your heart, your brain, and, then your limbs, every millimeter of your body, and of your beings.
- Freedom is the feeling of fear and happiness in the same time. It makes you free and holds you very fast. You feel strength, you feel power over the whole world. But you are slaves in the hands of freedom.

– Crazy things, strange combinings,
Many different mistakes,
Ever stopping, always laughing,
All these things can freedom make!
– Freedom, it is not a smoking girl
It is a smiling girl,
Dancing girl,
Decent girl.
Freedom, it is not a field of weeds;
It is a field of wild flowers;
A picture with bright colors;
A castle with high towers.

We have lost our freedom, like we have lost our soul. 21 grams of soul-less freedom. We sell our freedom to a strange marshrutka driver for 2 hryvnas when we can peacefully walk

somewhere or at least ride a bicycle. Even if you set a bid on e-bay or somewhere else, or when we take a look in the mirrors, we will see slaves of today's societies. Hello, zombie-machine, what is your zombie-task for today? Yes, we chose our job, because we are so independent. Later on, we exchange crusty money for our free time. We can do something better with them – such as build a little airplane or write a word. Later on, when we feel the emptiness in our pockets (forgetting about the emptiness in our brains) we try to get more and more of those crusty things. I forgot to mention that some of them can even jingle, asking us to be a slave of the working system.

We have a right to think what we want to think, it is our number one freedom. Do our thoughts really belong to us? We deafen our heartbeats with pop music and popcorn films. We think like the main figures of bestsellers. We buy what is advertised on the big juicy posters.

Chekhov said that we need to squeeze the slaves from ourselves, drop by drop.

Just question yourself – what is left when our fake freedom goes away with our real slavery?

Human Rights is the name that vast majority of the world's people give to a persistent yearning [2: 125]. The French pilot and writer Antoine de Saint Exupery called our planet "the Earth of people". Response to the suffering individuals is essentially spiritual throughout the world. To exist as a human being one's life must contain social activities. The actions of Amnesty International in the defense of the political prisoners have broken a new ground for our students participation.

Creative writing rife with social implications. It is an attribute of moral principles. Throughout the course, students use the language in various social situations. Their persuasive and public-spirited letters are premised on compassion and concern to the other unknown. The sense of concern, fairness, solidarity and belonging among our students could be a powerful affirmation of their civic identity. By fusing English language with the language of Human Rights, the Individuals can ensure their public accountability and a sense of publicity. It opens their eyes to many things they might overlook before.

Sensory awareness takes individuals deeper into their sense of self and self-concept. It is like light flowing through the prism. It may pave the way for more complex and deep treatment of the subject. Creative writing is affected by our sensory capability. It is generally recognized as a tool to help individuals realize more fully their sensory potential and enrich their understanding of life. Each individual must work out for himself the approach that comports best with his development. Not every student can or should be a writer; still, the sensory language to which we expose our students can touch their entire lives.

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