

Dear Lingual Animals

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[1]
Dear Lingual Animals,

What do you read? Why and how do you read? To share our ode to reading and to comfort us by reading I am sharing some words from Agata Kristof.

Ich lese. Das ist wie eine Krankheit. Ich lese alles, was mir in die Hände, vor die Augen kommt: Zeitungen, Schulbücher, Plakate, auf der Straße gefundene Zettel, Kochrezepte, Kinderbücher. Alles, was gedruckt ist.

Ich bin vier Jahre alt. Der Krieg hat gerade angefangen.

(...) Und ich lese. Fließend, fehlerlos, so schnell, wie man es verlangt. Abgesehen von diesem großväterlichen Stolz, wird mir meine Lesekrankheit eher Vorwürfe und Verachtung einbringen. »Sie tut nichts. Sie liest die ganze Zeit.« »Sie kann sonst nichts.« »Das ist die bequemste Beschäftigung, die es gibt.« »Das ist Faulheit.« Und vor allem: »Sie liest, anstatt...« Anstatt was? »Es gibt so viel Nützlicheres, nicht wahr?«

Noch jetzt, wenn das Haus sich morgens leert und alle meine Nachbarn zur Arbeit gehen, habe ich fast ein schlechtes Gewissen, daß ich mich an den Küchentisch setze, um stundenlang Zeitung zu lesen, anstatt... zu putzen oder das Geschirr von gestern Abend zu spülen, einzukaufen, die Wäsche zu waschen und zu bügeln, Marmelade zu kochen oder Kuchen zu backen...

Und Vor allem, vor allem! Anstatt zu schreiben.¹

When I was four years old, I read out loud a lot. I was in the car with my family, and as the car passed signs slow or fast enough for me to read, I read aloud. At that time, I think I was enjoying recognising the letters. Letters could have been arbitrary shapes or something else, but they were letters that are arranged according to some sort of system. Also, each alphabet had a phonetic value. On some level, I even felt like I was proving to myself that I had the ability to read something. But most of all, the sense of being one of the lingual animals fascinated me. It was like entering a new dimension where others lived, and I was becoming a part of this world.

Although I am older, I still love to read aloud as much as I did when I was four years old, especially in languages that I am not familiar with. Perhaps the sense of testing and proving my ability to read is carried on by speaking unfamiliar languages. Also, I also read for a much wider range of purposes, moods, and expectations than I did when I was four years old. My reasons for reading have become more layered. I have texts that I particularly like or dislike. My relationship with text expanded, and I realised that this relationship is deeply personal. I can now see why I am drawn to text more than any other medium, or why I am confronted with its guiding power. This attraction stems from how everyday text is. Text provides me a very own room for contemplating where I am and how I relate to others.

The questions that everydayness raises for me are spread across various layers. I can say talking about everydayness as a subject is a sort of promise, and I deliberately ask myself pretty often 'What is everydayness, and how each day forms my everyday'. Perhaps this view could be fragmentary, but I am not looking at my life and the world actually like I am looking at the earth from a satellite or checking a street view on Google Maps from top to bottom. This disguises us having an actual overview. I think it is clearer to focus on and understand the units and the relationships between units, because sometimes talking about something in chunks makes things way too ambiguous or unspeakable, and it presupposes a lot of assumptions that convey uncertain skeins. I am not denying that there is a need for meta perspective in discourse, but this view is an attempt to make my position more concrete when I start a discourse and in how I frame it.

Thinking about everydayness brings up the point of desire to break the repetition, to be less automatic. Ordinary days with being less automatic and acting with more intentionality – this is how I want my everyday to be! One way I have found so far is building my own rituals by finding conscious moments every day. Actually, it does not matter whatever a person behaves in a certain form as a ritual action, but it is more about finding a specific reason and keeping this with pure gratitude. In the end, it is all about pure joyfulness. This kind of pure rituality strengthens the agency of individual. To find out the rituality in everyday life, to seek for pure joyfulness, speech is the base material. Speech, that one can recognise it, is all around. It is itself,

it is there all the time. I have not existed in the world without it. If I was, I can not remember it. Because memory is lingualised, and language is a materialised consensus that was not known concretely when it was built. So language is just lying around and floating around. Everyday life is made up of picking language up and putting it away, or letting it out and picking it up again, and here, those actions are not just 'for one or by the one'.

This aspect makes 'us' as 'lingual animals'. Animals perceive things by their bodies, and react. Animals learn, think, and act or react to in and around their each body. In doing so, we, animals use lingualised concepts, and through this, animals lingualise themselves. Some animals react strongly to certain languages while others do not, which sometimes seems like an automatic reaction. Eventually, in the dimension of lingual animal's environment, there are myriad arcs that each animal shape. There is no exactly identical arc, but some arcs are repeated more than others, so they look like forming a thick arc. The appearance and starting point of this kind of arc change by generation, culture, and region. Through tracing these arcs, we can find innumerable coordinates. They are text. For lingual animals, the speech through the text is everywhere. This is how text itself entails everydayness. Still, all the activity involved in speech through text is not intrinsic, but highly intentional. It is this conscious activity that lingual animals recognise themselves as a species – 'the human being'. This allows 'them' to differentiate between humanity and non-humanity, and to observe what happens when the sense of humanity is absent.

Therefore... Firstly, talking about language means locating a starting point for observation, tracing arcs, and looking at the discourse of a generation and a culture. Secondly, talking about text means constructing and deconstructing the groups of linguistic animals, their ideologies, and the environment and context around them, that make up the discourse. Thirdly, seeing us as lingual animals means coming up with a methodology for defining 'we' as a species. Finally, paying attention to everydayness means setting up the manner to take the methodology of seeing us as lingual animals. This attitude is for thinking from the individual to the species. Based on this angle, this writing is written through looking over one individual attributes as a lingual animal. It also involves analysing others', and imagining what arcs we might draw from careful observation and consideration of our attitudes towards the everyday in which we live.

A reader who gives up

I do a lot of things every day, and I spend a fair amount of time designing. I start with a concept, create a coherent system, follow and break rules, edit based on materials, find the adequate visual language, and manage production. The most intimate time between me and the text begins at the very beginning of the process. The 'intimacy' with text comes from the feeling of chewing it slowly and gulping down it, although the intimacy during the design activity is eventually almost zero. Most of the time I receive a text from someone, and I skim through it to get a sense of the sort of theme and tone. It is like a first meeting just for a first meeting. Then I get any kind of impression or a preference, whether I want it or not, I have to touch them. Text is just there and neutral. They are forms now. I rarely read. I choose a particular typeface to give it an appearance. I see what mood the text gives off and match it with one of several fonts that are somehow classic or experimental of different level and spectrum, but still not off. Then, our physical connection becomes deeper and deeper. A text becomes stacks of paragraphs. Paragraphs become bundles of sentences, like straws. Sentences become rails of words, like train compartments. Words become gatherings of letters. Some of them are close, the other is not. Finally, it begins to look like a black body, and surroundings become the air. There is always a moment when each looks like a black body or a collection of bodies, and this perspective comes and goes many times. Dealing with the black bodies and the white air, it gets to be a overall grey space with some white and black crumbles, with a motto from 69 years ago.:

Imagine that you have before you a flagon of wine. You may choose your own favorite vintage for this imaginary demonstration, so that it be a deep shimmering crimson in colour. You have two goblets before you. One is of solid gold, wrought in the most exquisite patterns. The other is of crystal-clear glass, thin as a bubble, and as transparent. Pour and drink; and according to your choice of goblet, I shall know whether or not you are a connoisseur of wine. For if you have no feelings about wine one way or the other, you will want

the sensation of drinking the stuff out of a vessel that may have cost thousands of pounds; but if you are a member of that vanishing tribe, the amateurs of fine vintages, you will choose the crystal, because everything about it is calculated to reveal rather than to hide the beautiful thing which it was meant to contain. ²

Now, the text settled down and ready to be read. Following the modern typography motto, I could write a sentence about one for now: Sometimes texts look like melted butter spread on a slice of toast, sometimes like cold butter with lumps and melted parts. Melted butter toast is closer to crystal goblet. It would give the moment to the reader to read the text fully, but not to see. However, some texts could be intended to read without coherence. Then the cold butter toast would be better for this case. Also, the transparency of typography is not something that is inherent in a particular form, but built by the customs and habits of reading, therefore it changes. In any case, as a designer, I make a decision whether to make melted butter toast or cold butter toast. I do see, to make a decision to make a text to be read. This builds less intimacy between me and text, which leaves me wanting, but at the same time, the pleasant distance.

Nonetheless, I do see rather read during the design process, there is a moment of reading is performed very fragmentarily, in order to do a better hyphenation or not to create orphans in the typography. Hyphenation is even an activity that is totally aimed for seeing, still dabbling in to reading, because the words and sentences still have to be read to be natural hyphenations in etymological wise. (by the way, this process is only applied when it comes to Latin alphabet based typography more or less in English and German so far to me.)

A writer who declares

I write codes. This kind of text writing/editing is practical. It is proceeded with semantical tags. This writing has a certain universal format. It has opened/closed head and opened/closed body. It is pretty interesting that head and body are differentiated, even though head is part of body. (This way of differentiation is applied to name the file for the book production in English – like ‘body.pdf’ and ‘cover.pdf’) ‘Body’ is somehow a word that came from a belief system has to include all the contents and built up as a boundary to be differed from other parts. Following this belief system, I write most of the codes in body part. My languages are HTML and CSS among more or less, 8000 languages to code. (Some people are saying 9000 wikipedia is saying 7000.) I only speak 2 languages that are still relatable with pragmatic English as usual. My two languages are declarative. I tag (name) them to request what to work. Then

the names function, more precisely, in this case, a name is a function itself. The text is function itself. It does not have a meaning behind or there is no room to be interpreted. This sentence can be applied to coding primarily.

(...) the Name does not cross its lips, it is fragmented into practices, into words which are not Names. ³

Names are written in a light colours on a dark background in the text editor. Names are declared by the author. Whether or not the writer is interested in writing rationally enough, whether the writer is in the mood to organise, a name is only valid if it is arranged and edited according to certain rule and logic. It should ‘work’, whether intended or unintended. Because the text is a function itself, and a function is perceived only if it is appeared. Even function that don’t work must appear, because it is a feature to appear. Things that don’t work, or work differently than planned, are called errors, which means they are still a condition of the functionality. So when one finds a white blank page on the web, it is still declared well, even if it was not intended.

Code writing is personal. In most cases, people who want to be online do not need to write code. Code is outside the text editor with a dark background, and it loses the properties of text and gains the properties of image, because function is perceived by appearance. Online is the dimension of functionality that can only be recognised by its appearance of features. Users (a term also comes from a belief system that provides a boundary between using and writing, just as ‘body’ is used as a primitive unit that gives a boundary between inside and outside) see the same screen as other users. This is not from a personal decision or agency. Users can move around by clicking and touching. Clicking and touching give the sense of friction, which embodies and demonstrate the function. If we imagine writing something on a web page, it is still an image because it is writing on top of the representation of a couple lines of text as a function. The user’s writing is evidence of the function. Written text on the screen also has primarily the properties of image, since it appears by names and is treated under the umbrella of functionality. So far, mostly, people don’t have to read or write to be online. Because this is not dominant property to use. From here, writing must accompany the personal and sometimes ultimate motivation to build something online. Like dreaming of the unified internet experience, fantasizing efficiency, earning more money, learning hacking by cracking vice versa, suggesting alternative computing, opening the sources. Having a feeling of real estate by having a URL, having a social network service for 4 people, writing a selfie diary with herbs, etc. This way of writing, are insisted by personal declarations.

A speaker who aims to speak indirectly

I speak one language very fluently, the other language less fluently, and another language much less fluently. I try to speak the other languages for the pleasure of pronunciation and to understand people from language backgrounds unfamiliar to me, rather than for practical communication. I mostly speak my second language, but I live in a country where my third language is mainly spoken.

In order to get into the school I attend, I had to prove my third language to be able to follow the academic course. The order of learning language is divided into levels. For A level, the speaker learns the alphabet and how to pronounce it. Then they learn the existence of 8 or 9 parts of speech and create independent clauses. At this time, pronouns, articles, and numerals change the form of verbs, so it is imperative to know what the difference is when establishing the subject and object.

If speakers understand this so far, they can move on to level B. In the B level, speakers learn tense of verb, subordinate clause, definite article and indefinite article, comparative, and the different order of speech (noun and verb) according to different conjunctions. Speaker gets to know there's separable verbs that is the mixture of prefixes and infinitives, which has a critical role for ordering the words in a sentence and meaning. Also, learning in subjunctive mood is also very focused, in comparison to level A where they speak in indicative mood mostly. Besides, using reported speech is dealt.

In the C level, two levels are divided into C1 and C2 more obviously than A and B levels, because C2 is treated almost the same level as native speaker. Here, speakers learn to speak much more subtle, context based. One of the ways of learning this is delivering other's speech with intention. As level goes higher, speaker learns how to speak more indirectly, which demands more about languages. Indirectness gives a spacious room for speaker/listener with a specific fragrance, so there is an intention and vibe in the air that defines the room generally. Therefore, so-called advanced speaking works pretty tricky way. This explains my third language, German, since I am living in Germany where majority of people speak advanced German. In this environment, speaking updated my linguistic habits.

A listener who pretends to grasp

The basis of my habit is: I pretend to understand what people are saying, but this pretence is on a very fuzzy line between real and not real. This line appears whether people are speaking my first, second, or third language. It becomes somehow auto-

matic and patterned. At first, I thought that I was pretending to get what people were saying because of my lack of fluency and my strong will not to interrupt the whole conversation. If so, this might be an issue specific to foreign languages. However, I realised that I have the same habit on my other language. Since the line is very subtle, it was difficult to recognise whether I was pretending to get what is talked or I was really getting what is talked. Most of the time, it was quite rare for me to not follow entirely what was going on. But can I say that I understood everything? Can I say what I heard was the same as what the other person said? There is so much to think about during a conversation, so I decided to be willing to engage in this activity, but pretend to grasp. Also, I can picture a conversation as a huge room. It is a huge room with various scents. Sometimes the scent is very strong, sometimes it is too weak. Sometimes the strong scent is unclear, sometimes the weak scents are way too obvious. It is not about a power game of certain scents. Some people are good at playing the scent game with some skills, and some are not. In any case, I am trying to stay in the room for a while because I like to be.

Another habit of mine is guessing the context of sentences by catching verbs. Verbs are bolder than other speeches. What one person talks is describing what happened and what one sees and thinks, and it makes chains of listening and speaking. Verbs represent the most attributes of things at that moment, and they also include specific tenses for being said. I even overlook nouns that are subjective and objective during a conversation, I guess nouns by verbs. This habit could be related to my mother language, Korean, that nouns for subjective and sometimes for objective is not so much used to talk in everyday life. I found some a couple of interesting sentences about verb that resonate with my habit and the reasons for it. They are a few snippets from the chapter of Michel Foucault's "*Order of Things*" on the relationship between language, thought, and symbols. The claim is made that language plays a decisive role in representation, distinguishing it from all other symbols.

The proposition is to language what representation is to thought, at once its most general and most elementary form, since as soon as it is broken down we no longer encounter the discourse but only its elements, in the form of so much scattered raw material. ⁴

The verb is the indispensable condition for all discourse; and wherever it does not exist, at least by implication, it is not possible to say that there is language. (...) The threshold of language lies at the point where the verb first appears. This verb must therefore be treated as a composite entity, at the same time a

word among other words, subjected to the same rules of case and agreement as other words, and yet set apart from all the other words, in a region which is not that of the spoken, but rather that from which one speaks. It is on the fringe of discourse, at the connection between what is said and what is saying itself, exactly at that point where signs are in the process of becoming language.

(...) What we must do before all else is to reveal, in all clarity, the essential function of the verb: the verb affirms, it indicates 'that the discourse in which this word is employed is the discourse of a man who does not merely conceive of nouns, but judges them'.⁵

Having some scripts are also one of my habits. This is like a scam message – Hallo Papa, ich habe mein Handy verloren, die ist meine neue Nummer. Schrieb mir bitte per WhatsApp. This is like a parrot mimics people's talks and themselves. There are several words that I use a lot, they are on the lips all the time. Especially, having a talk with people in certain circle about art and shows is a case. This is based on the trust that people who I interact with could already know what kind of words and tendency that I consider and speak out. This habit makes a form of repetition, but it does not mean that people are talking about the exactly same things all the time.

There is a habit that was built pretty recently. When I describe a particular situation, it is easier for me to speak in the language that was used in that situation, even if I was not much involved in the dialogue. It is different from reconstructing a situation from reading, in which I have less difficulty talking about what I have read in a language I am familiar with. Of course, there are certain terms that are not translatable, but that is a different layer of engagement. – When I think back to what I actually perceived, language plays a dominant role in my memory.

The last habit is only relevant when I speak German. When I want to form a sentence with certain conjunctions, I breathe differently than at other times – wenn, dass, weil, and ob. While saying these words, I say the head (usually the subject, noun), pause for a breath, say some more, pause again and say the verb. This creates a rough rhythm to my breathing, and sometimes I forget what I have said on the way to the tail. There are two reasons for this habit, firstly, I am physically cautious because verbs are so bold for me, and I give them meaningful strength. Secondly, it is a moment when I can feel the layers of foreign language in my body. English is my first foreign language, and it became a sort of 'default' to me about any kind of foreign language, so the room for German is partly occupied by English. Therefore, different rules for other foreign languages from my first default foreign language confuses me more than from

my native language that does not share space with other languages. However, this room constellation breaks down from time to time. – I find myself in situations where I do not recognise if I am speaking Korean, English or German, which I call null-lingual situation.

Reflecting on my attributes as a lingual animal made me think about what kind of other lingual animals' writings I particularly like and why I do. In order to write about it, I sought to explain my preferences or tastes not in a flat way. I hope this exploration of my relationship with text is a long breath. I made two points to unfold the subject.

First, where does the 'Joyfulness' come from?

Second, why do I read certain text more than once?

Then, I narrowed down the list and brought two works. By bringing up them, I would like to dive into how they write and talk about text. The one text is "*A Lover's Discourse*" written by Roland Barthes, published in 1977, and the other one is "*Tender Buttons*" written by Gertrude Stein, published in 1914. Both works fit to two points about my preference. Based on these criteria, I explain why I enjoy them to read.

Form

Both works are composed of fragmentary paragraphs. This format inherently entails discontinuity, but that does not mean that it is incoherent. There is no single narrative or logic to follow, or if there is, it is obscured by the structure of the text. The only expectation I can have while reading is about the form in which the text is written.

The pieces read like a monologue, and I feel like I am tracing the writer's use of the text according to their own tastes. It seems like an intuitive way of writing just what they like, and in those pieces, the text functions as a kind of mould. "*A Lover's Discourse*" is a list of fragmentary quotations from literature and theory, and this is a collage of figures curated by Barthes. On this point, there are moments where it jumps from place to place, but it still keeps me in the space of the monologue. In "*Tender Buttons*," Stein wrote various portraits of objects, food, and rooms. In this piece in particular, there was a difference between reading it out loud and not reading it out loud, and reading it out loud created context differently, by physically unexpected moments of respite. Titles are not so much rhetoric, but still attract me in a special way in these works. One title and a few sentences are a deliberately arranged pile of scattered text, images, and speculation. The sentences seemed not aimed to be understood as written. They give me a completely empty room. With their inherent discontinuity, they break the linear perception. This is like opened taps on the window, which is chaotic but allows me to associate things with unexpected approaches. I find the pure pleasure in this form of text.

Order

The reason I have read those works more than once is that there is no sense of repetition. This sense is about the way they are read, which may come from the way the texts are arranged in fragmentary form. But another thing I can think of is about 'repetition'. When there is any kind of repetition, a certain reaction comes to me.: 'boredom'. When I get bored, I do not keep doing it any more. Reading the same text multiple times means that a special connection has happened between me and the text. In this regard, 'order' plays the big role. Sometimes I read them in order, and sometimes not. However, the nature of these works is such that it is not taboo to go back and forth. As a result, the appreciation of individual pieces is not the same as the appreciation of the order in which they are written, either in an arbitrary order. This gets the boredom out from me. Especially, In "*A Lover's Discourse*" there are a lot of classics like "*The Sorrows of Young Werther*", and it does not come across as clichéd in that way at all. The combination of the quotations and Barthes's text is not so much groundbreaking or subversive as it is embracing the text I have already read and creating a new context for it. So, it reads differently each time and I feel like it does not repeat itself. In "*Tender Buttons*", non-repetition works in a different way. It would be more extreme. The sentences themselves are certainly not grammatically easy to read at first glance, but if I follow them somehow, I end up somewhere unexpected. I feel like I am trying to pick up the scattered words like grains of sand and hold them together, forgetting why I am doing it.

As I was figuring out the relationship between me and text while reading their pieces, I got to be curious about the relationship that both writers had with text. So, I tried to find pieces that gave me a glimpse into how each dealt with text – mainly, “*The Pleasure of the Text*” by Roland Barthes, published in 1973, and a chapter “*Portraits and Repetitions*” from “*Lectures in America*” by Gertrude Stein, first published in 1935. This time, I read in the latter scheme of the paragraph below.

Whence two systems of reading: one goes straight to the articulations of the anecdote, it considers the extent of the text, ignores the play of language (if I read Jules Verne, I go fast: I lose discourse, and yet my reading is not hampered by any verbal loss – in the speleological sense or that word); the other reading skips nothing; it weights, it sticks to the text, it reads, so to speak, with application and transport, grasp at every point in the text the asyndeton which cuts the various language – and not the anecdote: it is not (logical) extension that captivates it, the winnowing out of truths, but the layering of significance; as in the not from a processive haste but from a kind of vertical din (the verticality of language and of its destruction); it is at the moment when each (different) hand skips over the next (and not one after the other) that the hole, the gap, is created and carries off the subject of the game – the subject of the text.⁶

Actual Space

The first step in following Barthes’s theory about text was to define what a text is and how it exists. For him, a text, is just a text, and it has an existence of its own. He argued that texts do not have a single meaning that is regulated and corresponds to an author’s intentions or the formal structure of the text, but rather a multiplicity of

variable meanings that intermingle and conflict with each other. The interpreter must actively participate in the construction of these multiple and variable meanings, and take pleasure in reading them literally.

With this argument, Barthes criticised classical criticism for deifying the author, expecting a one-to-one relationship between language and interpretation, and limiting the possibility of seeking and believing in universal truths and realities. He tried to look at texts from a different perspective from the common view at that time, believing that the author's intention could not be the way to understand and interpret a text. He argued that texts can create discourse, but that authors do not have an absolute role in transmitting their ideas and ideologies, but rather that readers find their meaning and actively engage in the discourse. After all, texts exist in their own right, like castings, like a space, and thus provide room for knowledge to be produced pluralistically, contextually, and historically through discourse. Here are some of his sentences that talk about the substance of text and distinguish between the meanings of 'work/author' and 'text/language'.

We shall never know, for the good reason that writing is the destruction of every voice, of every point of origin. Writing is that neutral, composite, oblique space where our subject slips away, the negative where all identity is lost, starting with the very identity of the body writing.⁷

The explanation of a work is always sought in the man or woman who produced it, as if it were always in the end, through the more or less transparent allegory of the fiction, the voice of a single person, the author 'confiding' in us.⁸

We know now that a text is not a line of words releasing a single 'theological' meaning (the 'message' of the Author-God) but a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash. The text is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture.⁹

If you hammer a nail into a piece of wood, the wood has a different resistance according to the place you attack it: we say that wood is not isotropic. Neither is the text: the edges, the seam, are unpredictable. Just as (today's) physics must accommodate the non-isotropic character of certain environments, certain universe, so structural analysis (semiology) must recognize the slightest resistances in the text, the irregular pattern of its veins.¹⁰

The work is held in the hand, but the text remains in language. It exists only in the movement of discourse (or a text is a text because it knows itself to be a text). The text is not a decomposition of the work; the imaginative tail of the text is the work; or the text can only be experienced by writing or production. As a result, texts can never be stopped (e.g., the stacks in a library). The compositional movement of a text is a traverse(traversée) (especially it can traverse a work, or several works).¹¹

He insisted, the actuality of text demands the distance between reading and writing to be gone or narrow down, which does not mean that the projection from readers has to be strengthened, but reading and writing make a bridge in the space with same hierarchy of practice. Through this process, the writing appears in a sense. Texts are composed of complex writing from various cultures with dialogue and satire, and they refute to each other. This diversity is gathered in a space, and this space is not for authors but readers. The story can not be one. How reader can follow enjoy pleasure dismantle reconstruct the text. All those activities are possible going on in the text itself.

Reading is itself an act of structuring, and the basis of this structuring is the body: it is the body, not an idea, that defines the reader as a personal and individual subject. Therefore, the pleasure of a text, even if it is derived from culture, must first be sought in the body of each subject. It is only through a series of personal and subjective contacts and reflections that the cultural aspects of a work penetrate into the reader and into the reader's particular desires. The reception of meaning processes thus connects us more deeply with individual bodily movements than with the culture that moulded them.¹²

Based on this, Barthes imagined a kind of typology of the pleasure of text or readers who derive pleasure from texts, This kind of typology is possible under psychoanalysis that links text as a form and neurosis. I thought it was an interesting way to think about texts with their primal layers, so I associated myself with each category: First, the fetishist, obsessed with fragmentary quotes or words. Second, the obsessive, obsessed with secondary languages and meta-languages. (This category includes all language enthusiasts who believe in language – linguists, semioticians, linguists, etc.) Third, the paranoid, who consume or produce twisted texts, stories that unfold like detective stories, and compositions presented with playfulness or covert constraint. Fourth, the hysterics (as opposed to obsessives), people who regard text as ready-to-use cash, no longer casting a critical eye, projecting themselves into verbal comedies devoid of depth or truth.

7 Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author", Fontana, 1977, p.142.
8 Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author", Fontana, 1977, p.143.
9 Roland Barthes, "The Death of the Author", Fontana, 1977, p.146.

10 Roland Barthes, "The pleasure of the text", New York: Hill and Wang, 1975, p.36.
11 Roland Barthes, "Le Bruissement de la langue Essais critiques IV", Seuil, 1984.
12 Vincent Jouve, "La littérature selon Barthes", Éditions du Minuit, 1986, p.100-101.

Pleasure

The second step to understanding Barthes's text theory is to look at how Barthes defines pleasure. He distinguishes between two words 'Pleasure (plaisir)' and 'Bliss (jouissance)'. While this division is not very strict, it emphasises that text exists in itself, not as objects of perception. Rather than framing text as belonging to either pleasure or bliss, he simply aims to get people talking and writing. 'Pleasure' and 'Bliss' are not exactly opposites, but they are still actual concepts and can be counter-interactive.

Barthes defines, the pleasure of text can be spoken: It is classics, intellect, irony, delicacy, and culture, which fills the text with pleasure. It has any danger of oppression. It is connected to comfort and strengthens the subject. However, the bliss cannot be spoken, but only written. It is intransitive and extreme. This extreme guarantees the bliss. It is aimless, subverts norms, and allows the subject to lose themselves, by shaking their historical and cultural foundations, values, and language. But here, the activity of reading or speaking is the bliss in itself. It may make the subject uncomfortable, but in a flash of a light, it transforms them. This form of text can be closed to a sort of perversion and addiction.

Text of pleasure: the text that contents, fills, grants euphoria; the text that comes from culture and does not break with it, is linked to a comfortable practice of reading. Text of Bliss: the text that imposes a state of loss, the text that discomforts (perhaps to the point of a certain boredom), unsettles the reader's historical, cultural, psychological assumptions, the consistency of his tastes, values, memories, brings to a crisis his relation with language.¹³

The reason he made this distinction was a way to explain how he wanted to criticise the discourses about text of the time in which he was writing, namely around 1975. He thought that the language of intellectuals of the time was too easily subjected to didactic demands that excluded all kinds of pleasure. As a reaction to this, Barthes tried to bring the word into the personal sphere in order to de-surpress this tendency. The appearance or return of the word 'Pleasure' is to allow a certain exploration of human existence. The moment we are torn between 'Pleasure' and the 'Bliss', or imagine the issues of the two, we are confronted with the subject of the theme: Transposition and dislocation.

This distinction was also a way of pointing out that the linguistics of the time were too closely aligned with natural sciences, which made text analogical and imaginary.

Thus, text lost its substance and was reconceptualised as meta language. Barthes thought that this made a speaker unaware of their position, that is, of the ideology in which they were situated. In the end, as well as other sciences, linguistics were powerless to question their own types of speech acts and forms of discourse.

The pleasure of the text can be defined by praxis (without any danger of repression): the time and place of reading: house, countryside, near mealtime, the lamp, family where it should be. i.e., close but not too close.

(...) Texts of pleasure. Pleasure in pieces; language in pieces; culture in pieces. Such texts are perverse in that they are outside any imaginable finality – even that of pleasure (bliss does not constrain to pleasure; it can even apparently inflict boredom).¹⁴

What relation can there be between the pleasure of the text and the institutions of the text? Very slight. The theory of the text postulates bliss, but it has little institutional future: what it establishes, its precise accomplishment, its assumption, is a practice (that of the writer), not a science, a method, a research, a pedagogy; on these very principles, this theory can produce only theoreticians or practitioners, not specialists (critics, researchers, professors, students).

(...) "We are not subtle enough to perceive that probably absolute flow of becoming; the permanent exists only thanks to our coarse organs which reduce and lead things to shared premises of vulgarity, whereas nothing exists in this form. A tree is a new thing at every instant; we affirm the form because we do not seize the subtlety of an absolute moment" (Nietzsche). The Text too is this tree whose (provisional) nomination we owe to the coarseness of our organs. We are scientific because we lack subtlety.¹⁵

Insistence

How the text as an actual space can be appeared? What moves and drives text? What happens to text over the course of lingual animal's interaction with it for a long time in the history? To explore these questions, I took a piece that Gertrude Stein wrote about insistence. In "*Portraits of Repetition*", she sought to experiment with the idea that people perceive things differently, use language differently, and speak it differently, because everyone has different insistence. Stein thought that repetition can not happen to something alive. So eventually, things are captured differently from generation to generation, and there is no such thing as repetition. These are the sentences how she explains about 'generation'.

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Roland Barthes, "The pleasure of the text", New York: Hill and Wang, 1975, p.14.

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Roland Barthes, "The pleasure of the text", New York: Hill and Wang, 1975, p.51.

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Roland Barthes, "The pleasure of the text", New York: Hill and Wang, 1975, p.60.

Portraits of men and women and children are differently felt in every generation and by a generation one means any period of time. One does mean any period of time by a generation.

(...) But the strange thing about the repetition of existence is that like a train moving there is no real realization of it making if it does not move against something and so that is what a generation does it show that moving is existing.

(...) if the movement, that is any movement, is lively enough, perhaps it is possible to know that it is moving even if it is not moving against anything.¹⁶

It is true that generations are not of necessity existing that is to say if the actual movement within a thing is alive enough.

(...) I say portraits and not description and I will gradually explain why. Then also there is the important question of repetition and is there any such thing. Is there repetition or is there insistence.

(...) I am inclined to believe there is no such thing as repetition. And really how can there be. This is a thing about which I want you to think before I go on telling about portraits of anything.¹⁷

(...) if you like, repetition, that is if you like the repeating that is the same thing, but once started expression this thing, expressing any thing there can be no repetition because the essence of that expression is insistence, and if you insist you must each time use emphasis and if you use emphasis it is not possible while anybody is alive that they should use exactly the same emphasis. And so let us think seriously of the difference between repetition and insistence.¹⁸

It is very like a frog hopping he cannot every hop exactly the same distance or the same way of hopping at every hop. A bird's singing is perhaps the nearest thing to repetition but if you listen they too vary their insistence. That is the human expression saying the same thing and in insisting and we all insist varying the emphasising.¹⁹

I became conscious of these things, I suppose anybody does when they first really know that the starts are worlds and that everything is moving, that is the first conscious feeling of necessary repetition, and it comes to one and it is very disconcerting. Then the second thing is when you first realize the history of various civilizations, that have been on this earth, that too makes one

realize repetition and at the same time the difference of insistence. Each civilization insisted in its own way before it went away.²⁰

There was a moment for Stein to experience about this. When she was at about seventeen years old, she was living in Baltimore with a whole group of very lively little aunts who had to know anything, and she got to be conscious about their conversations. She found that there was a difference between what was said and what anybody was saying.: There were inevitable repetition in human expression that was not repetition but insistence.

No matter how often what happened had happened any time any one told anything there was no repetition. And she began to find out then by listening the difference between repetition and insisting and it is a very important thing to know. – people listen as they know.²¹

There was another thing that something has something to do with repeating. When all her eleven aunts were listening as they were talking gradually some one of them was no longer listening. When this happened it might be that the time had come that any one or one of them was beginning repeating, that it was ceasing to be insisting, or else perhaps it might be that the attention of one of some one of them had been worn out by adding something. What is the difference. Nothing makes any differences as long as someone is listening while they are talking. – If the same person does the talking and listening why so much the better there is just by so much the greater concentration.

Stein's notices recall Barthes's thought about the text as a real space. Anyone uses language to represent and describe. Language is a kind of substance, it exists as a casting. It has nothing related to who are saying and who are listening to in itself. What anyone is saying and what anyone is listening to are not the same thing, because the emphases and arguments of each individual can not be exactly the same. Here I can imagine the contrast between the immediacy of speech and the continuity of writing and reading. I think this imagination can be related to Stein's attempts after her finding, which were creating portraits of someone/things by writing. This trial is connected to how she wanted to deal with the contrast between immediacy and continuity, because making a portrait of something raises the question of what is the present.

(...) if it were possible that a movement were lively enough it would exist so completely that it would not be necessary to see it moving against anything

16 Gertrude Stein, "Lectures in America", VIRAGO PRESS, 1988, p.165.
17 Gertrude Stein, "Lectures in America", VIRAGO PRESS, 1988, p.166.
18 Gertrude Stein, "Lectures in America", VIRAGO PRESS, 1988, p.167.

19 Gertrude Stein, "Lectures in America", VIRAGO PRESS, 1988, p.167-168.
20 Gertrude Stein, "Lectures in America", VIRAGO PRESS, 1988, p.168.
21 Gertrude Stein, "Lectures in America", VIRAGO PRESS, 1988, p.169-170.

to know that it is moving. This is what we mean by life and in my way I have tried to make portraits of this thing always have tried always may try to make portraits of this thing.

(...) If this existence is this thing is actually existing there can be no repetition. there is only repetition when there are descriptions being given of these things not when the things themselves are actually existing and this is therefore how my portrait writing began. ²²

Portrait

Talking about the now leads to the question of immediacy and simultaneity. As Stein said, if something is alive, not a single moment for that can prove that it has not changed. There can be no absolute capture. If the movement of this change is very tangible and alive, as Stein says, you do not need to figure out whether it is actually moving, either where it is moving from to where. This is how I see each day in everyday life. Without any friction against something or any unfamiliarity, I do not see where I came from and where I am going, how my generation was created and where it has been going. To be able to perceive movement is to perceive something that is changed, to see the change I see the 'stopped' moment. In this process, there is description, and this itself can be repeated across generations, because the moment is frozen, and description is an act that is performed on what is frozen. 2:56:01 PM on the 28th of October in 2024 is in motion, but it is invisible, and words can freeze it. Time itself is not repetitive. But the words we use to tell time are. It is this observation of simultaneity and continuity that leads me to find that Stein experimented with writing using the word portrait rather than the word description.

So we have now, a movement lively enough to be a thing in itself moving, it does not have to move against anything to know that it is moving, it does not need that there are generations existing.

(...) Then we have insistence insistence that in its emphasis can never be repeating, because insistence is always alive and if it is alive it is never saying anything in the same way because emphasis can never be the same not even when it most the same that is when I have been taught.

(...) I began to think about portraits of any one. If they are themselves inside them what are they and what has it to do with what they do. And does it make any difference what they do or how they do it, does it make any difference what they say or how they say it. ²³

Stein believed that when she wrote a portrait, each person's inner self was revealed,

and that everything about that person could tell someone everything about themselves, and she expected herself to be able to tell that story. However, while writing portraits, Stein had great difficulty distinguishing between clarity and confusion. To speak and to listen at the same time was clarity, but to listen to what was said and to remember to talk about what was said was confusion; she had a habit of thinking of herself as speaking and listening, listening as speaking, speaking as listening, and in doing so she thought of what was then called the rhythm of a person's personality. If listening was speaking and speaking was listening, then at the same time even small movements or small expressions were resemblances, and resemblances presupposed memory. This added to the confusion of clarity.

The difference between thinking clearly and confusion is the same difference that there is between repetition and insistence.

(...) A thing that seems very clear, seems very clear but is it. A thing that seems to be exactly the same thing may seem to be a repetition but is it. ²⁴

But I am inclined to believe that there is really no difference between clarity and confusion, just think of any life that is alive, is there really any difference between clarity and confusion, just think of any life that is alive, is there really any difference between clarity and confusion. ²⁵

Listening and talking did not presuppose resemblance and as they do not presuppose resemblance, they do not necessitate remembering. ²⁶

Each time that I said to somebody whose portrait I was writing was something that something was just that much different from what I had just said that somebody was and little by little in this way a whole portrait came into being, a portrait that was not description and that was made by each time, and I did a great many times, say it, that somebody was something, each time there was a difference just a difference enough so that it could go on and be a present something. ²⁷

You see that in order to do this there must be no remembering, remembering is repetition, remembering is also confusion.

(...) And so in doing a portrait of him if it were possible to make that portrait a portrait of him saying and hearing what he says and hears while he is saying and hearing it there is then in so doing neither memory nor repetition no matter how often that which discovery I made as I talked and

22 Gertrude Stein, "Lectures in America", VIRAGO PRESS, 1988, p.170.
23 Gertrude Stein, "Lectures in America", VIRAGO PRESS, 1988, p.171.
24 Gertrude Stein, "Lectures in America", VIRAGO PRESS, 1988, p.173.

25 Gertrude Stein, "Lectures in America", VIRAGO PRESS, 1988, p.174.
26 Gertrude Stein, "Lectures in America", VIRAGO PRESS, 1988, p.174.
27 Gertrude Stein, "Lectures in America", VIRAGO PRESS, 1988, p.177.

listened more and more and this is what I did when I made portraits of every one I know. ²⁸

As I say what one repeats is the scene in which one is acting, the days in which one is living, the coming and going which one is doing, anything one is remembering is a repetition, but existing as a human being, that is being listening and hearing is never repetition.

(...) It is not repetition if it is that which you are actually doing because naturally each time the emphasis is different just as the cinema has each time a slightly different thing to make it all be moving. And each one of us has to do that, otherwise there is no existing. As Galileo remarked, it does move.

(...) Remembering was the only repetition, also that remembering was the only confusion. ²⁹

The trouble with including looking, as I have already told you, was that in regard to human beings looking inevitably carried in its train realizing movements and expression and as such forced me into recognizing resemblances, and so forced remembering and in forcing remembering caused confusion of present with past and future time. ³⁰

This is the great difficulty that bothered anybody creating anything in this generation. The painters naturally were looking, that was their occupation and they had too to be certain that looking was not confusing itself with remembering. Remembering with them takes the form of suggesting in their panting in place of having actually created the thing in itself that they are painting. This is the great difficulty that bothered anybody creating anything in this generation. The painters naturally were looking, that was their occupation and they had too to be certain that looking was not confusing itself with remembering. Remembering with them takes the form of suggesting in their panting in place of having actually created the thing in itself that they are painting. ³¹

Stein's concern with portrait writing – the confusion caused by memory that makes repetition and created by repetition, reminds me of Foucault's discussion of the relationship of thought and sign to language. Indeed, if thinking, speaking, and being spoken to could always exist simultaneously, things could be clearer. There would be no confusion. But language inherently analyses thought in a sequential order. I thought that the opposition between language and thought that Foucault said could

be related to Stein's idea of the relationship between insistence-simultaneity-clarity and repetition-memory-confusion.

But and that was the thing that I was gradually finding out listening and talking at the same time that is realizing the existence of living being actually existing did not have in it any element of remembering and so the time of existing was not the same as in the novels that were soothing. ³²

In writing the thing that is the difficulty is the question of confusing time, and this is the thing that bothered and still bothers any one in this generation. ³³

What distinguishes language from all other signs and enables it to play a decisive role in representation is, therefore, not so much that it is individual or collective, natural or arbitrary, but that it analyses representation according to a necessarily, but that it analyses representation according to a necessarily successive order: the sounds, in fact, can be articulated only one by one; language cannot represent thought, instantly, in its totality; it is bound to arrange it, part by part, in a linear order. Now, such an order is foreign to representation. It is true that thoughts succeed one another in time, but each one forms a unity, whether one agrees with Condillac* that all elements of a representation are given in an instant and that only reflection is able to unroll them one by one, or whether one agrees with Destutt de Tracy* that they succeed one another with a rapidity so great that it is not practically possible to observe or to retain their order. It is these representations, pressed in on one another in this way, that must be sorted out into linear propositions. ³⁴

But it does stand in relation to all that as the successive to the contemporaneous. It is to thought and to signs that what algebra is so geometry: it replaces the simultaneous comparison of parts (or magnitudes) with an order whose degrees must be traversed one after the other. It is in this strict sense, that language is an analysis of thought: not a simple patterning, but a profound establishment of order in space. ³⁵

Its proper object is therefore neither thought nor any individual language, but discourse, understood as a sequence of verbal signs. This sequence is artificial in relation to the simultaneity of representations, and in so far as this is so language must be in apposition to thought, a what is reflected upon is to what is immediate. ³⁶

28 Gertrude Stein, "Lectures in America", VIRAGO PRESS, 1988, p.178.
29 Gertrude Stein, "Lectures in America", VIRAGO PRESS, 1988, p.179.
30 Gertrude Stein, "Lectures in America", VIRAGO PRESS, 1988, p.188.

31 Gertrude Stein, "Lectures in America", VIRAGO PRESS, 1988, p.188-189.
32 Gertrude Stein, "Lectures in America", VIRAGO PRESS, 1988, p.181
33 Gertrude Stein, "Lectures in America", VIRAGO PRESS, 1988, p.189.

In relation to the dividend, necessary, universal order introduced into representation by science, and by algebra in particular, language is spontaneous and unthought; it is, as it were, natural. It is equally, according to the point of view from which one looks at it, an already analysed representation and a reflection in the primitive state. In fact, it is the concrete link between representation and reflection. It is not so much the instrument of men's intercommunication as the path by which, necessarily representation communicates with reflection.³⁷

Everyday life

I would say that Stein's portrait writing was a way of experimenting with text to explore her interest about things that were alive, things that did not repeat themselves. I think these portraits are less about who the subject is and what they say, but more about the subject itself being alive and in motion. This is not so much about what they say, how much they resemble others or not, but the intensity with which they emphasise and insist something, because, according to her, if what is inside the subject is not really frozen, it would not be a single-remembered fragment that can be repeated. I think she did not want things to happen every day, to be talked about in the same way and thought about in the same way. This is in line with Barthes's desire to distinguish the text from the speaker.

After all, the system of thought of a generation is preserved in texts. The texts take on the role of mould in the discourse of the time. The texts that make up this body of thought are just there, unchanging. In the act of articulating thought, however, the underlying arguments move, change, and do not repeat themselves. It occurred to me that it might be the pleasure that Barthes's said to give us the experience of bumping into them, just as Stein's train is only recognised as moving when we bump into something and see it change.

We in this period have not lived in remembering, we have living in moving being necessarily so intense that existing is indeed something, is indeed that thing that we are doing. And so what does it really matter what anybody does. The newspapers are full of what anybody does and anybody knows what anybody does but the thing that is important is the intensity of anybody's existence.³⁸

The composition we live in changes but essentially what happens does not change. We inside us do not change but our emphasis and the moment in which we live changes. That is it is never the same moment it is never the

same emphasis at any successive moment of existing. Then really what is repetition. It is very interesting to ask and it is a very interesting thing to know.³⁹

There is only one way left to escape the alienation of present-day society: to retreat ahead of it: every old language is immediately compromised, and every language becomes old once it is repeated. Now, erratic language (the metalanguage produced and spread under the protection of power) is statutorily a language of repetition all official institutions of language are repeating machines: school, sports, advertising, popular songs, news, all continually repeat the same structure, the same meaning, often the same words: the stereotype is a political fact, the major figure of ideology.⁴⁰

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Michel Foucault, "Order of Things", Routledge, 1989, p.90-91.
Michel Foucault, "Order of Things", Routledge, 1989, p.91.
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We have begun to examine the role that language and text play in the transformation from individuals to a species – the lingual animal. The everydayness of text is a core part of that role. By analysing the linguistic environment surrounding me, my linguistic habits and characteristics as one of the lingual animals, I have archived examples of this everydayness and actuality, which leads to an analysis of the relationship that other lingual animals (Roland Barthes and Gertrude Stein) have with texts.

In the end, I wrote this because I believe that in the creation of any discourse, the intensely personal and its inherent preciousness and joyfulness leads to an understanding of other beings and an examination and critique of the environment. Pondering more what I say, and talking with other lingual animals about where and how it is read by whom, creates discourse. This is far from being repetitive or pretending to prove absolute values. To question why we are human, why we are not machines that repeat, is to accept that the very obvious is not obvious. And I think this recognition can build the possibility of treating and caring for others while treating and keeping myself as one of the human beings.

Speaking, archiving, having conversations, and interpreting thoughts in text is a constant reminder that we are not monolithic entities. I sincerely hope that more lingual animals verbalise their lives actively, to recognise that, and to think about how we can draw arcs of discourse around the idea of ‘alone together’.

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Dear Lingual Animals:

Ein Vorschlag für die Art und Weise, wie man einen Diskurs durch die Betrachtung der Aktualität von Sprache und Text beginnen kann.

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