

Zhat Ting Dere

Gertrude Stein started it, a ting is a ting is a ting,
No you say, “ting” needs an “h” to be a thing.
But I say, “Chinese don’t have to say “R,”
Nor Japanese admit “L” even exists.

Herman Bernoulli waiting in Teutoberg Forest,
Karl der Geller riding to Saxony,
Frederick at Leuthen as dawn was breaking,
“Th...” wan’t in their vocabularies.

In fact, “th” was born in England,
And has cousins living in Spain,
And in Greece, and way off West,
In the Yucatan Peninsula yet.

But nowadays you have to go by
Wisconsin, especially Milwaukee,
To say “ting,” “dere,” or “zhat.”
Or be labeled “illiterate” or worse.

So Gertrude, a rose may be a flower,
Known to all the world as such.
But “ting” a word, it cannot be,
Unless you’re German, just like me!

Covering information is contained in email sent to [32 Poems](#) editors by the writer
(I hesitate to say “the poet.”), Glenn G. Dahlem, Ph.D.