

# Tailpiece

## JARGON APHASIA?

A: An Extract from *The Journal of Quantified Schema and Problematic Models* (formerly, 'Notes and Queries')

Towards an Ontological Description of Minimal Physical Units in the Novelistic Narrative.

The linear organization of a graphemically encoded sign-system is predicated on the existence of a spatial device which maximizes and facilitates an auditor's ability to effect a cognitive transition between minimal physical units.

*[Code: A reader turns the pages of a novel.]*

Further, the existence of a minimal physical unit demands from an auditor a corresponding familiarity with conventional closural techniques which allow him to demarcate the temporal and spatial limits of the terminal points of his alliance with a specific semiological schema.

*[Code: A reader keeps his place in a book by using a bookmark.]*

Signalkopf has estimated (using a statistical model standardized at the *Institute for Periodic and Colonic Studies*) that the average auditor demarcates the above limits approximately twelve times during his alliance with a sustained iconic modality. This behavioural constant has significant implications for a metafictional theory of the minimal physical unit in the novelistic narrative. Thus, novelisticity may be defined as the recurrent transactional resultant of a sustained apprehension of a totality of semiological indicators which requires from an auditor the capacity to engage in a serialized transaction with minimal physical units.

*[Code: A book has pages which are turned by a reader.]*

A number of implicit adjuncts follow from this definition. First, the cognitive capacity of the auditor is immobilized at the terminal-initial interface of every minimal physical unit. Second, the perceptual 'frame' or 'set' or 'locus' is released and to some extent energized at the terminal-initial interface of each unit.

*[Code: There is a brief pause while a reader turns a page.]*

Upon completion of a closed series of coordinated indices the auditor may reach semantic saturation and thus terminate his alliance with the iconoc modality.

*[Code: A reader may become bored, and shut the book.]*

*I.A. Rabinowitz*

### **B: Strange Meeting**

So there I was, sitting peacefully in my learning situation, defining and evaluating pedagogical problems, when in walked this highly structured female autodidact.

'Sit down,' I said, 'And let us identify some learning activities and strategies. Let me say, before we begin, that your feedback is *highly* individualized – which gets us off to an excellent start.'

I felt, however, that our goals and objectives, both remote and immediate, were basically unshared. The situation had potential, but our perception and accommodation of it were mutually exclusive.

I turned my mind to learning material, and began to feed the autodidact with small, easily digestible units of it. Absorption of this was slow and, in desperation, I did a quick riffle through all the data encoding and selection procedures. Was there *any* way in which I could make this interview a linear encounter? Indications were negative and – worse – self-testing was at an all-time low. I could feel the onset of non-differentiated somnolence.

I weighed my functional objectives, and played my master-stroke: I defined the auxiliary services. 'Come and have some coffee in the canteen,' I said.

*R. Goodman*