

## **excerpt from placement as language (1928)**

Sigmund Bode

It should be possible to construe a situation in which persons, things, abstractions, become simply nouns and are thus potentially objectified. As “objects” they may be heaped or dumped in any way (a definition of life?).

Or they may perhaps be conjugated in such a way that their positions imply “verbs” in the spaces (silences) between them.

This invisible grammar can be read within and between categories. As a function of placement, it can be permitted to imply different systems, i. e., languages.

Some of these languages we have not yet deciphered, i. e., invented. To identify such a grammar, to read such a language constitutes a test for the reader...

This linguistics of interval and position is usually closed off by themes and titles, complex nouns that immobilize a system in a particular attitude. In this sense, explanations are modes of concealing what is accessible by removing concepts to the area of other concepts (initiating that process which eventually leads to “meaning” in the least fortunate academic sense)...

Placement as a grammatical concept can be extended to any abstraction . . . to a degree we may speak of meaning as a system of permutations, as a mathematics of placement...

It is, of course, also possible to consider how placement is concealed, how the objectified unit (a person, a concept, a period) can conceivably occur without dimensions, in no place and in no time, and thus approach the condition of art.

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