Round Robin

Dorothy E. Smith

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This summer The United Kingdom Reading Association held its Tenth Annual Study Conference at Totley-Thornbridge College of Education, in Totley, Sheffield, England. As you can imagine, this was an exciting experience, and one which reinforced the adage; "the more we are different, the more we stay the same." We have a real kinship, those of us in the reading field.

Along with making new friends and gaining some new ideas your editor also came away with the following treasure trove of eminently quotable "quotes."

Reading is a psycho-linguistic guessing game.

Marshall McLuhan is only right some of the time when he says that reading is linear and sequential.

Transfer of learning is the cash-in value you should expect of your study time.

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We studied reading patterns of college students, using a Reading Recorder. This recorder produces a graph record as the student reads from a text. The record shows pauses, changes in reading rate, and the points where a student refers backwards and forwards in the text. It also shows where the student takes notes.
We found that there were three different typical reading patterns.

1. **Smooth reading**

   ![Graph showing a straight line for smooth reading]

2. **Item reading; for small details**

   ![Graph showing a step pattern for item reading]

3. **"Gestalt" reading; getting meaning from the whole.**

   ![Graph showing a wavy line for gestalt reading]

Results of our study indicate that the most successful readers used the third pattern; that reading to summarize makes one most able to take essay type and objective tests.

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When you change your habits of reading (or really, habits of any kind) you immediately get worse, and so the tendency is to jump back into the old habits.

Dr. L. F. Thomas  
Director of the Center for the  
Study of Human Learning  
Brunel University
We have given the name “Twilight Children” to those who have emerged from the night of illiteracy, but who have not yet begun to enter the full light of total reading efficiency.

Michael Page & Frank Spooncer
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