Emily Troscianko and James Carney: “A picture held us captive”: Imagery, perspective, and the text–mind connection in Kafka's Schloß

We present findings from an experiment on reader responses to the first paragraph of Kafka’s novel *Das Schloß* (in English translation). Specifically, we tested the effect of Kafka’s own manuscript edits by comparing responses to the published version of the text relative to an earlier draft. Our methods were designed to balance the need for structured data and unbiased analysis with freedom of reader response, and involved:

- analysing participants’ pencil drawings of their imaginative experience for presence/absence of specific features and for global entropy values;
- using word embeddings to perform cluster analysis of participants’ free-response testimony on the differences between their drawing and their imaginative experience, in order to generate thematic clusters free of experimenter bias.

We offer our conclusions on the effects of Kafka's textual strategies, and make suggestions for how experimental literary studies might overcome some longstanding difficulties.

⭐ Please complete this task beforehand: https://forms.gle/mRjTikgiZP6WzNJZ9

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