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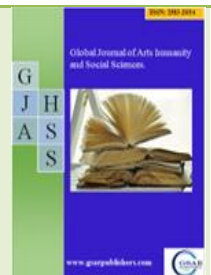
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**GRAPHOLOGICAL MEANING**

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**Abstract**

This article explores the graphological aspect of literary expressions from a linguistic angle in an attempt to find out how those basic components of written language called graphemes are exploited for meaning making. It seeks to find its place among enquiries within the nexus of semantico-syntactic and pragmatylistic endeavours in language. It examines the two concepts of *graphology* and *meaning* in a rather cursory manner and immediately proceeds to bring to the fore the correlation between the two after extensive analysis of graphologically foregrounded data from purposively selected short write-ups including prose and poetry. It found that graphemes are essential for meaning not only from the angle of foregrounding of intention and illocution but also in terms of ability to signal reading pattern and eventual interpretation. The conclusions drawn on the nature of graphological meaning thus points at the extent to which attention should be paid to graphology in the linguistic study of meaning.

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

It is an almost absolutely convenient position to say that the smallest and most rudimentary structure/element of language is the grapheme in writing and its phonological equivalent: the phoneme. This position may however be debated in the face of dissenting views in phonology on the primacy of the phoneme. It has been argued by generative phonologists that certain distinctive features like  $\pm$ voice,  $\pm$  strident, nasalisation and many other acoustic properties of a sound segment exist below the level of the linguistic rank hitherto called the phoneme (Chomsky and Halle 1968). That concern is however obviously insignificant for a study like this as the primary concern is on the written aspect of language, in other words, what constitutes a writing system and how it ultimately generates or exudes meaning.

Taken that a grapheme is the basic element needed for constructing a sentence – a completely meaningful linguistic structure, it would however be rather outlandish and far-fetched to posit that they are correspondingly the most important structures for meaning or that they are meaningful in themselves – in isolation. Graphemes derive their meaning from, as well as make their contributions to, overall structural or semantic meaning through the use to which they are put as well as the positions they occupy within the larger units at

which meanings are mostly considered. Suffice it to say also that graphological meaning seldom exists independent of phonological meaning as the inferences from graphemes in writing most often correspond to “how we might read a text out loud” or better still just reminiscent of the spoken (or thought) form of what has been reduced to writing (Short 1997:54, cf Kolawole 1998).

In the light of this, graphological meaning becomes a rather stringent aspect of the study of meaning. Paradoxically, however an attempt to explicate same is a broad and almost inexhaustible venture as phonological, lexical as well as syntactic and discursal concerns cannot but be delved into if sound and verifiable claims are to be made concerning the semantic significance of graphemes. A work of this nature, however, never takes off without a foray into the definitions and linguistic significance of its title. That is why the next sub-headings shall be dedicated to the meanings of ‘meaning’ and ‘graphology’ before consideration is given in subsequent sections to the relationships that hold between them.

**1.1. Meaning in Linguistic Studies**

The concept ‘meaning’ basically refers to the logic and symbol presented by an idea, a concept, a piece of writing or speech. In essence, meaning would mean what something is all about. This definition is however a very convenient one as several studies on

the concept of meaning have shown in clear terms that the linguistic study of meaning is a quite elusive and engaging task (cf Odebunmi 2006:4,156). In the face of the position taken by scholars, it becomes clear that the task of extracting meaning from an utterance or written text entails a lot of considerations ranging from the text's structural composition to the lexical items used, the extra-linguistic context of the text, the subject matter and even the non-verbal nuances like facial expressions and gesticulations that would have followed its spoken form as well as the peculiar or conventional use of orthographic characters: letters and punctuations (graphology).

According to an internet source, "the semantic aspect is the meaning of an expression as opposed to its form" ([www.answers.com/topic/semantics](http://www.answers.com/topic/semantics)). This view is further extended by the Wikipedia Online Dictionary as follows (all emphasis mine):

*Semantics is the study of meaning in communication.*

*It is derived from the Greek "semantikos" [i.e. ] significant, semaine" to signify, to indicate and from "sema" sign, mark, token. In linguistics, it is the study of interpretation of signs used by agents or communities with particular circumstances and contexts.*  
[www.wikipedia.org/semantics](http://www.wikipedia.org/semantics)

These two definitions seem to have paid a fairly acceptable degree of attention to the idea of meaning making as a process of establishing relationships between signifiers and signified as well as the different structures that work together in a text. They however seem to have ignored the aspect of meaning making as a process inextricably linked with the factor of situational context. This has been treated by Bloomfield (1933:139) who sees "the meaning of the linguistic form [as] the situation in which the speaker utters it and the response it causes forth in the hearer.

This is further extended in the use theory of meaning where of a word is seen as the use to which it is put in a context. Those who subscribe to this Whitensteinian orientation do not rely on the dictionary meaning of words.

Ideally, as can be seen from the foregoing, meaning extraction from a statement does not follow a straight-forward pattern. A text has to be broken into its units to explicate how the individual units affect one another and individually contribute their own meanings to the overall meaning of the text. This logical positivistic view has however been criticized by certain theorists in that meaning is only divided into smaller structural units via its regulations in concrete interactions, outside of these interactions, language may become meaningless (<http://wikipedia.org>). It will therefore be unsystematic and unverifiable for example to say there is more to the multiple-compound structure I like Ade, Tola, Femi and they like me too.

Other than that the speaker (I) has some nice feeling (barring the possibility of multiplicity of meaning in 'like') for the three people and believes they do too. This conclusion is reached through the accumulation of meanings of the lexical items paying close attention to the coordinator 'and' and the cohesive item too'

(meaning 'ditto', 'also', 'the same way'). This interpretation through structural diminution is strictly within the boundary of the linguistic context so that 'I' and 'me' do not refer to different entities, 'like' do not have different meaning as the case would have been in a decontextualized analysis.

In the light of this, theorists on meaning apart from agreeing on the elusive and stringent nature of meaning (see Odebunmi 2006:1, Blakemore 1998:39, Goddard 1998:15) have stated that meaning falls between the precincts of semantics and pragmatics (the study of meaning according to use, user and context: meaning in action). As such, meaning as an aspect of linguistics has grown in scope and practice from Bertrand Russell, Osgood, Weinreich, Gusaf Stein of the 1820s to the John Searles, Hayakawas, Weinbergs Palmers, Meys and Odebunmis of recent years, their considerations ranging from how meaning is made through speech/writing to how meaning is extracted from texts through perception and analysis.

## 1.2. Graphology and the meaning-grapheme nexus

A hypothetical science of graphology would describe the organization of space into usable tokens. These tokens would include writing symbols such as the alphabet and the number system, punctuation and designs. (Cummings & Simmons 1983 p.74)

The use of graphemes is simply as old as the earliest writing system. That is axiomatic. What is debatable however is the time they came to be called 'graphemes', the time scholars began to take an interest in studying them in isolation (outside the context of their function of the word building) and when they began to be viewed as relevant linguistic units in terms of an attempt to account for meaning. 'Graphology', according to an anonymous writer on <http://www.britishgraphology.org/history.htm> was first used as a concept to refer to the study of writing systems and handwritings in 1875 by the French Abbot, Jean Hyppolyte Michon. This he coined from the Greek words 'graph' and 'logos'. The concept through brought up from a different field has however been adopted in linguistic studies to refer to the study of written symbols (codes), punctuations, numerals and the rules guiding their exploitation for the composition of written texts (cf Halliday 1985 a, b). It is worthy of note however that linguistic studies have made graphology shed its original claim to spiritual and esoteric or forensic powers, being used to identify people or to determine people's natures or even future. Such claims are of no significance in linguistic and thus better left at that.

The focus in semantics as it were is to examine how different ways of writing or using graphemes can help in explicating meaning. Semanticists claim for example that meaning is pervasive and every unit of language employed in a text is significant for meaning (see Odebunmi 2006:4). As such graphology which more often than not translates to semantically significant nuances are vital for meaning making. In Enckvist's (1964:35) view, "to a great extent, English graphology imitates phonology [...] the written version of the language is a visual coding of its, spoken version (quoted in Kolawole 1998). Such graphological features are such

that “cannot be produced except during speech...or they cannot be interpreted except in conjunctions with accompanying language” (Cruse 2000:8). These include pitch tempo, voice quality, loudness, intonation and emphatic gestures (cf odebunmi 20006:4).

In the light of this, it becomes clear that writing is at best an attempt to represent thought or speech graphically, thus, a writer tries as much as possible to reflect phonological nuances that would have helped meaning by employing various symbols and styles that roughly correspond to them. The semantic values of these nuances shall be better examined in the next unit. Simply put however, graphological sign include:

CASE: Capitalization or use of lower case

CHARACTER/STYLE: bold, italics etc

## PUNCTUATION and NUMERALS

This is better summed up as [www.answers.com](http://www.answers.com) submitted below:

*In typography, a grapheme (from the Greek;  $\gamma\rho\alpha\phi\omega$ , grapho, write”) is the fundamental unit in written language. Graphemes include alphabetic letters, Chinese characters, numerals punctuation marks, and all the individual symbols of any of the world’s writing systems.*

*In a phonemic orthography, a grapheme corresponds to one phoneme. In spelling Systems that are non-phonemic such as the spellings used most widely for Written English \_ multiple graphemes may represent a single phoneme. These are*

*Called digraphs (two graphemes for a single phoneme) and trigraphs (three graphemes).*

*For example, the word ship contains four graphemes (s, h, i, and p)*

*But only three phonemes, because sh is a digraph.*

*Different glyphs can represent the same grapheme, meaning they are allographs.*

*For example, the minuscule letter a can be seen in two variants, with a hook at*

*The top<a>and without <a>.Not all glyphs are graphemes in the phonological*

*Sense: for example the logogram ampersand (&) represent the Latin word et*

*(English ‘and’), which contains two phonemes*

Before further consideration is given to graphology and meaning, however, it is important to map the scope of the subject matter. It has been said that graphology deals with writing and next composition. This however does not absolutely cover ‘typography’ which caters for the indentations, intra and inter-word spacing as well as inter-sentential spacing. These are mechanical issues that may be outside the precincts of personal linguistic choice or meaning intention. In other words, meaning is rarely suggested by either a conventional or peculiar (deviational/stylistic) use of

topography as is done by graphology. For instance, the different meanings got from

I love you.

I love you?

Is suggested by the graphological units (comma and question mark) and not the typographic spaces between or within the words.

In all, Halliday (1985, a:1) submits and Sefton (1990) expands as follows

*Sentences follow sentences, words follow words and letters follow letters in a simple sequence; they do not overlap, nor does anything else occur in between. The spaces that separate them narrow spaces between letters(at least in print), wider spaces between words, and still wider spaces with accompanying full stop, between sentences-serve to mark the units off one from another. The spaces and stops are not part of the substance of writing; they are signal showing how it is organised.*

## 2.0 Graphological Meaning

There is a relative dearth of studies on the concept of meaning emanating from graphology when placed in the context of related semantic perspectives like lexical meaning, morphological meaning, sentence meaning, thematic meaning and discoursal meaning, justice has been done more to graphological considerations of meaning by the sister field called stylistics. This may be partly due to the evasive nature of meaning itself which makes it rather difficult to put in a straight-jacket and thus makes it safer for meaning to be determined at the level of intrinsically meaning linguistic structures like words and sentences.

That notwithstanding, a few semanticist have taken bold steps, building on Halliday’s (1985) and Waller’s (1980) systemic-functional description of the semantic implications of punctuations as semiotic entities to describe the semantic values of graphemes. This is not to say however that semanticists generally ignore graphology but that treatments of it are only seen explicitly at descriptive levels and such are often devoid of definite theoretical frameworks. In his description of graphological meaning, Don Nilsen in his “various Semantic Models” posits that “the purpose of most punctuation is to try to bring to writing the information and pause patterns of speech. Without these helps, many sentences would be orthographically ambiguous. (in Odebunmi 2006:155). Following up this position in a broader term, Odebunmi (2006:23) posits that “...all aspects of language and arrears of life have inputs in meaning explication. Our sounds, grammatical structures, thought processes, cultural specifications etc are geared towards achieving meaning” Need we say more? Meaning making permeates graphological tools. Each of these tools is examined below:

### CASE (upper or lower)

It is a conventional way of making meaning in writing systems to vary the case of letters. This is almost tantamount to Sefton’s notion of meta-redundancy (Sefton 1990). It is for instance true that ‘God’ (the one and only creator or the chief cosmological sovereign as the case may be) contrasts with ‘god’ (a deity,

immortal being that works for God) just by the difference in the case of the initial grapheme 'g'. A reader therefore interprets God as + unique and god as + member of a group

+immortal    ±immortal    +divine                    +divine  
 +ethereal    ±ethereal    +omniscient    -omniscient    +human  
 -human    +good    ±good

An extension but rather slightly different example is the convention of initial upper case used in proper nouns. This also becomes important especially in a situation of a propensity for dual classification in a word. If we consider this pair of sentences:

I want peace, not you.

I want Peace, not you.

In the sentence (i), peace is a situation while it means a person in (ii). (i) Peace = + condition    (ii) Peace = +human  
 + tranquillity    ± male/female    - trouble                    ± adult/young

The use of case therefore prevents the reader from inferring that the addressee (you) is depicted as being in contrast with peace. It is almost redundant at this point to examine the effect of the comma. This goes to show the significance of graphology in meaning extraction in spite of their lack of intrinsic meaning. Another meta-redundant use of case to make meaning consists in the initial capitalization of every content word in a title/topic. This signals meaning without the writer having to write "this is a topic, mind you"

However, the use of case outside the conventional practice no doubt negotiates meaning in an interesting way. Such a case is seen in stylistics as foregrounding and it plays a very important role in the interpretation of written texts. A typical example can be found in the Ted Hughe's poem "Crow's first Lesson"

Love' said God, 'Say, Love' (stanza 1)

No, no,' said God, 'say Love. Now try it. LOVE' (stanza 2)

A final try', said God, 'Now, LOVE', (Stanza 3) cited in Short (1997)

In Short's stylistic interpretation, it is made clear that "the capital letters in the first three instances of the word 'love' [in non-sentence-initial positions] indicate that it has to have some kind of special pronunciation [probably a simplified 'crow-like' enunciation]. It runs as follows (all emphasis mines):

*Given the teaching situation God is in, if we read the poem out loud we are likely to make the pronunciation very clear and deliberate. Then, when we come to the version of the word written in capitals we must give it an even more marked phonetic form, perhaps by saying it louder, more slowly and with a very wide pitch span. The repetition and the increasingly deviant graphological forms lead us to an interpretation with an increasingly marked phonetic form. This in turn leads us to infer a reason for the change:*

**God is becoming more and more exasperated at his unGodlike failure to Cope with crow's education.** Short (1997:54-55)

It is clear that this interpretation derives largely from the pragmatic resources of knowledge of the world, presupposition and inference, yet, their deployment into interpretation here is suggested by the creative use of graphological tools. The reverse of this situation may as well negotiate meaning in such a way that non-use of the upper case in ordinarily (conventionally) upper case environment could have a stylistic appeal and consequently a semantic implication ranging from monotony of the subject matter to speed of reading and evasive nature of the discourse topic.

## PUNCTUATIONS

In line with Nilsen's (2006) position quoted earlier, Short (1997) claims that deviations made at phonological levels are important for inferences about meaning but since most literatures are written, "they come to us as and are considered through graphology". As examples shall show, punctuations help in meaning making by reducing the tendency for ambiguity in sentences. That is more meta-redundancy. Punctuations may however negotiate and choose meaning when exploited in peculiar, stylistic *fashions* in writing.

To this end, Halliday's (1985.b) typology of punctuation marks is adapted.

### Punctuation: Adapting Halliday's treatment

Halliday, in *spoken and written language*, (1985.b) lists three types of punctuation mark (i) boundary markers, (ii) status markers and (iii) relational markers. The following discussion follows Halliday's (1985.b p 32-39). Halliday's table, displaying this typology, is presented below

Type	Feature represented		Symbol	
	general	specific	name	form
Boundary markers	grammatical units	Word phrase; weaker clause	space comma	(#) ,
		Clause	closing	semicolon ;
			opening	colon :
		sentence	full stop	.
Status markers	speech function	information exchange	statement	question mark ?
		other functions	command, offer, exclamation,	exclamation mark !
	projection	quotation, citation	first order; or	single quote ' '
			Second	Double " "





Relation markers	Any unit	apposition	order;	quote	
		digression		dash	–
		linkage		parenthesis	( )
	(compound)	omission		hyphen	-
	Possessive, negative			apostrophe	'

## (i) Boundary markers

The set of boundary markers comprises the full-stop, the colon, the semicolon and the comma. According to Halliday these punctuation mark can be used to mark either grammatical or phonological boundaries. The grammatical units that can be represented are the units of the grammatical rank-scale. The phonological unit that can be marked is the information unit. In Halliday's table *sentence* is listed as a grammatical unit. However in systemic functional Grammar in general, sentence is not a grammatical category. It would be better to put the grammatical unit clause *complex* into this table as the unit that realised by the sentence.

The different between marking of phonological boundaries and grammatical ones can be seen in Halliday's example (3.6) (1985.b.p.37):3.6

(a)	(b)
Freda leapt down from the gate, and as Sebastian came forward her look of recognition unmixed with any surprise, contrived to suggest that for her, the sudden appearance of someone who had been away for half her lifetime, was the most commonplace event imaginable.	Freda leapt down from the gate, as Sebastian came forward, her look of recognition unmixed with any surprise contrived to suggest that, for her, the sudden appearance of someone who had been away for half lifetime was the most commonplace event imaginable.

In version (b), the punctuation has followed the grammatical structure; but in version (a) it represents an interpretation of the text in phonological terms – each stretch between commas corresponding to a tone group. Note that in neither case does the comma imply a pause, although in loud reading it is often understood that way. (Halliday 1985. b. p37)

## (ii) Status markers

Status markers realise interpersonal meanings. There are two types. One type of status marker is usually conflated with a boundary marker to delimit sentences; the question mark, exclamation mark and the full-stop constitute this set. The other type of the status marker is the quote, either single or double: using a pair of these a writer can mark projection, typically what someone has said or thought (cf Halliday 1985.a 7.5). Quotes can enclose text spans of any length. These text spans must be grammatical units, or groups of them, from words up to whole texts. There is a sub-type of quotation sometimes called 'scare quotes'. Scare quote enclose the last two words of the last sentence. Their function has been described as meta-comment (Sigurd 1987).

## (iii) Relational markers

The relationship punctuation marks (dashes, hyphens, brackets, apostrophes) relate units of text to each other; hyphens build compounds, dashes put things in apposition, apostrophes substitute for omissions and brackets allow digression – 'subroutining' of text. In the system under development apostrophes and hyphens will be taken as given. The lexico-grammar will produce them as part of the wording.

Another graphological device, not considered by Halliday, realises textual functions: the highlighting of phonological prominence in reported speech:

*what can all that green stuff be?* said Alice. 'And where have my Shoulders got to? And oh, my poor hands, how is it I ca' n' t see you?'

In this example prominence is represented by italicising of single words, thus showing the tonicity of

Alice's document. Tonicity realises a textual function.

**Meta-functional diversity in punctuation**

At one level all punctuation, and most typography, must mark boundaries, part of the function of a prosody is to delimit the unit over which is prosodic. The interpersonal function of quotation marks, for example, is in addition to a 'boundary marking' effect, which identifies the relevant text-piece. Thus quotation marks perform a dual role; they delineate the quote as well as marking its *status*. Similarly marking tonality with commas shows the boundaries of information units. Boundary markers, however, lack the extra function of status markers; they only mark off units of the grammatical rank-scale. The interpersonal meta-function is realised by the status markers, the quotation marks and by meta-function comments. The textual meta-function is realised by the boundary making of tonality, in punctuating phonetically and by making of tonicity, through typographic prosody.

Logical relations between text-pieces are realised by the relational markers.

Much of the role of punctuation is in showing the grammatical structure of text. In punctuating grammatically (cf Halliday 1985.b) instead of 'as you speak' the structural organisation of language is highlighted, in a way that it is not in speech. In spoken language the phonological rank scale is organised to package information

and there is little explicit signalling of grammatical organisation. This emphasis on grammatical structure is consistent with the high value placed on writing over speaking. Thus there are fewer resources for commenting prosodically, and more for marking highlighting the text itself, in writing (Halliday 1985 .b; Waller 1980).

Let us consider for example how these sentences will be interpreted owing to the different positions of the comma;

Fear not, death and sickness kill those who fear.  
 Fear not, death and sickness, kill those who fear.  
 Fear not death and sickness, kill those who fear.  
 Fear, not death and sickness, kill(s) those who fear.  
 Fear not death, and sickness kill those who fear.

These sentences would otherwise be understood for what they individually mean in their spoken from.\

Without the commas in the written version however, it becomes chaotic, the nature of meaning in these commas, here may be seen as either meta-redundant of negotiative depending on the goal of the writer. At times, internal consider the effect of the comma in scientific procedures vis-à-vis its use in a recipe where one entails speed and quick succession of steps while the other entails temporal spaces and pauses in between the different activities, consider

Pour HCL into beaker and place on a bunsen burner for 5 minutes  
 add

Fehlin solution and allow to cool before dipping in litmus. And

Peeling yam and wash thoroughly. Put them in the pot, add a little salt to taste, add water and sugar, if so desired. Place on fire and boil for 5 minutes. Remove yams from the pot and serve hot.

In the same vein, semi-colons and colon create parallel structures and negotiate a keener sense of quick and close successions as well as consequence (causality) than when a comma is used.

For example: a news headline that goes *prisoner escapes from custody: kills five warders---IG* seems to better drive the message than *A prisoner escapes from custody and kills five warders as reported by IG*

The colon and dash bring the structures closer, shrink and conflate them in a visually easy way for the brain to interpret as the writer wants.

Another form of meaning negotiation is found in what Kolawole Gboyega in Ilorin Journal of language and literature (1998:50-52) calls aposiopesis and anacoluthon. There are two terms referring to two different concepts that aid meaning extraction from written texts. Aposiopesis is achieved through the use of the ellipsis mark and it implies “breaking off in the middle of an utterance or a termination of speech midway”. It translates to a cue to the writer’s state of mind which would either be fully charged emotionally or due to overwhelming powers of description. Aposiopesis can also suggest the need for supplementing or

improvisation or items by the reader. For instance in God is great, eternal, beautiful, awesome.....

Anacoluthon on the other hand involves the use of the dash to signal abrupt change in grammatical sequence as writer might end a sentence in a way not too related with the beginning. This graphological device helps to sustain coherence and thus keeps meaning intact. For instance

I hope – I don’ t know what I hope (not I hope I don’ t know what I hope).

I believe – what am I talking about?

Boundary markers like the full stop, exclamation or question marks simply add to meaning via meta-redundancy by bringing phonological nuances of grammar such as the falling tune (full stop) to indicate a declarative sentence (mood) or a complete sentence, a rising tune (?) to indicate an interrogative (non-wh) question or a stress (!) to indicate an exclamatory sentence. Consider

You are going. Statement/command.

You are going? Question

You are going! Surprise/fear

This system of meta-redundancy also accounts for the instances of parenthesis, brackets for explanation or additional information, quotation marks or inverted comma for emphasis, or distance between the writer and a person ‘ the quote’ . This last instance can also function through negotiation however by bringing in a few layer of meaning or suggesting conscious need for choice of position by audience, for instance, the writer of the following sentence might be trying to negotiate meaning:

Lawyers prefer not to argue with ‘ unlearned’ people,  
 American look down on ‘ uncivilised Nigerians.

The use of inverted commas here could either be introducing the exact word of someone quoted and at the same time calling on the reader to consider the use more closely. This graphological feature is commonly accompanied in the reading by phonetic emphasis and a paralinguistic sign (gesture) of raising and curving in the index and middle fingers of both hands meaning ‘ in quote’

**CHARACTER/STYLE (bold, italics, underlined, strikethrough, numbers, and picture)**

Often times, writer send signals towards interpretations through the typographic style or character used. An interesting example of orthographic style in meaning explication is

Think you’ re in  
 Heaven?  
 Well you’ ll soon be  
 In H  
 E  
 L  
 L-

(Man-to-man Blues” by Michael Horovitz quoted in Short 1997)

Such graphological nuance seems to negotiate a meaning of hell being down below or a place of lowliness and thus the descending orthographical style. The text could easily have read like

Well – you’ ll soon descend (be descending) to hell.

In meta-redundant terms however, underlining and italics are known to signal the title of literatures, bold characters for title and so on. However, they can also be deployed to negotiate meaning by begging emphasis through their prominent nature in a text almost like an inverted comma (discussed earlier). Picture and numbers are known to appeal better to the sense of sight in a way that £50 seem to real money more than fifty pounds while a picture of Osama bin Laden will better elicit hate and emotional outburst from a critic of his than his description in words.

### The Nature of Graphological Meaning

In the course of the discussion so far, the functions of punctuation have been identified. To explain all of the ways that graphology actually makes meaning, it is necessary to return to the notion of stratification. Meaning is made by virtue of the stratificational relationship between lexico-grammar and graphology, and between graphology, and typography. It is in the interaction between strata that meanings are made. It is possible to identify three main modes of stratificational interaction through which graphology makes meaning. These have been glossed, for the purposes of this paper as, (i) meta-redundancy, (ii) choice and (iii) negotiation. This split into three mechanisms is not completely natural, as they are highly dependent on each other. Nevertheless, it is informative.

#### (i) Meta-redundancy

One way that graphology makes meaning is quite straightforward: it is embodied in the way a particular phonetic tone contour realises a particular key selection. The correspondence between intonation and key is, in a sense, automatic; the term for this is meta-redundancy (cf Halliday 1990, Lemke 1984). Graphological examples include: quote; in which there is a meta-redundant relationship between the illocutionary force of a text-piece and its graphological status; and the realisation of lexico-grammatical words which in turn are realised as typographic words.

#### (ii) Choice

There are also meanings made in the choice of which meta-redundancies should be marked. These meanings fall into two classes. (1) some choice is conditioned by high level semiotic variables to do with register or genre with a particular register having a certain set of meta-redundancies. (2) Some choices are available across different registers. Both of these classes are exemplified below.

#### (1) Inter-register choice

An example of register conditioned choice is the choice between punctuating ‘ as you speak’ or ‘ as you write’ , as discussed by Halliday (1985.b). An example of this choice was given above, (example 3.6) in which either logical-grammatical units or textual-grammatical units were marked.

Crystal and Davy (1969) and Cummings and Simmons (1983) make some attempts to describe the graphology of texts in terms of

register and genre. Typically, this involves looking at the way that grammar is meta-redundant with both typographic organisation and punctuation in different ways for different genres. Halliday notes that this choice can apply over a *whole* text, or in a principled way within a text, or may be more or less random. Presumably the level of correlation of register variables with this graphological choice would form one index of the success of a text. If a text uses both sorts of punctuation then there is intra-register choice.

#### (2) Intra-register choice

Choice which is made within, instead of by register can be exemplified by the use of punctuation to suggest rhythm. The common feature of both the examples below lies in the convention that in reading aloud (and hence in silent reading to some extent) punctuation marks such as commas, colons and stops indicate places to pause.

Halliday’ s (1985.b.p.38) example is a procedural text from a maths textbook:

Take a piece of wood about 25cm long with one edge a straight edge and fix the semi-circle to the wood so that the diameter is along the straight edge. A piece of string about 10cm long has one end attached to the centre of the diameter and a small weight to the other so that it may hang freely. The effect of the lack of sentence-internal punctuation in the example is to “ hurry the reader along” (Halliday 1985:38). Since there are no commas the reader won’ t pause. This constructs part of the meaning of the text. It would be expected that this meaning might be the responsibility of those higher level system which position the text interpersonally.

A similar sort of meaning is constructed in example 3.1 in which there is more, rather than less punctuation. The effect here is the opposite of “ hurrying along” , instead, the punctuation cuts the text up, marking more pauses. The rhythm thus created in the writing is reminiscent of the rhythm of James Brown’ s lyric delivery. The meaning here is textual. In particular, it is intertextual: the form of this text is alluding to the form of another.

#### (iii) Negotiation

The third way of meaning is made when a text either implicitly or explicitly defines its own system defined as *negotiation*. The essence of negotiated systems is that they can be ‘ locally’ systemic, but not conform to any global system. Negotiation occurs between different pair of strata. (1) At the lowest level, between the graphological stratum: different text display different meta-redundancies, that is a paragraph may be realised typographically in different ways in different text-types. (2) Further ‘ up’ the strata: text can negotiate special relationship between the lexico-grammar and graphology in two ways: (a) the graphological system may be enhanced increased in delicacy, or (b) it may be decreased in delicacy relative to some ‘ norm’ . Increases in delicacy must be accompanied by new typographical realisations. The point is that it is possible to vary meta-redundancies across strata without having to tell the reader, explicitly, for example, paragraphs in this text are not indented” .

## Conclusion

It is clear from the discussion so far the analysis that the rank of graphology though small cannot be overlooked in any semantic analysis. Graphological tools serve as key to meaning both in the sense of unlocking the meaning of texts and also the sense of serving as guide to the direction a text is going. This are thus needs better attention in semantic analysis as done in stylistic

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