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Let's Make it Clear!

Kinetographic and Rebus Definitions

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The design of legible typographic images demands that graphic designers consider the diverse considerations of authors, readers, editors, publishers, and many other technological mediators. They must then choose an appropriate medium and devise an efficient plan. Such a plan, with the inherent perceptual attributes, education, and training of the designer, constitutes the first step toward legible output of multivariate¹ typographic or kinetographic images. Designers must, therefore, possess knowledge of the human elements that relate to the communication process plus the skills that enable them to use electronic tools. This sophistication derives from a comprehensive education and training in typography and type design. It does not derive as a by-product of using electronic tools.

Typographic legibility² contains the properties of text/images that symbolically represent readability³. It forms an integral part of the design algorithms of visible language⁴. Therefore, legibility results from an interpretation of readability: a property of text that results from developing verbal language in an easily understandable rhetorical style. It requires the expert consideration of a set of infinitely adjustable, concatenated⁵, multivariate, overlapping, geometric modules and complexes known as typographic style.

Graphic designers and typographers variably define the typographic element in graphic design as either visible language, visual language⁶, or visual literacy⁷. This causes confusion as visible language depends for clarity and purpose on verbal language and requires literate comprehen-

sion, whereas visual language does not. However, both visible and visual language embrace arts, involve crafts, and adopt similar techniques. The glossarial definitions show the contrast between visible and visual language and describe the very different meanings. The ambiguous term visual literacy has no place in graphic design.

Legible typographic design comprises a codirectional concatenation governed by a reader profile that relates to style or visible rhetoric⁸. The profile results from analysis of comprehension levels on age, education, and culture. The term kinetography⁹ defines the combined verbal/visible, rhetorical function of typography in technological environments.

The typographer must take three distinct actions to achieve legibility:

1. Analyze and comprehend author's and editor's intent.
2. Translate the intention through symbolic reference into typographic signs.
3. Arrange the typographic signs into recognizable and comprehensive gestalts.

Legible typography has two attributes: it serves as a separate and independent sign and as an interpretable function. These attributes relate to important processing considerations: as an independent sign they include typeface selection and refer to weight, height, stress, serif, x-height, extruders, and medium; and, as an interpretable function they include type size, character and word spacing, measure (line length), leading (line spacing), spatial disposition, and grapholectic¹⁰ affiliation. All facets of the interpretable function affect and control the use of negative space within geometric constructs.

Notably, geometric constructs (visible algorithms) contain the elements that control typesetting and imagesetting and act as an important guide for text and graphics integration. Composed as grids, based on Cartesian coordinates, they result from the design function, relate to both text and graphics, and may ultimately control a variety of output peripheral devices. An example of bad typography might consist of randomly selected typefaces (no significance to the readable symbol), loose or tight character

or word spacing without grapholectic identity (no interpretable function), and design without geometric consideration (no grid coordinates).

For summary, typographic legibility contains the properties of text/images that symbolically represent readability. It forms an integral part of the design algorithms of visible language. Thus, legibility results from an interpretation of readability: a property of text that results from developing verbal language in an easily understandable rhetorical style (verbal language). It requires the expert consideration of a set of infinitely adjustable, concatenated, multivariate, overlapping, geometric modules and complexes that constitute typographic style (visible language).

Typographic designers must possess knowledge of the human elements that relate to the communication process plus the skills that enable them to use electronic tools. The knowledge and ability to interpret readability into legibility derive from a comprehensive education and training in typography and type design. It does not derive as a by-product from using electronic tools.

1. multivariate. Exhibiting diversity conditioned by the variables in communication (human reason) and/or communications (technology) criteria.
2. legibility. The property of text/images that results from the symbolic aspects of readability and several other criteria that aggregate as design algorithms and typographic style.
3. readability. The property of text that results from the development of verbal language written in an easily understandable rhetorical style.
4. visible language. A graphic art constituent and a communication channel or medium, the counterpart of verbal language, describes a system of arbitrary orthographic signs or rebuses that correspond to phonetic sound or have specific meaning. It also describes paragraphic, diacritical, and extraneous signs (punctuation, accent, mathematical and ornamental signs). Visible language embraces typography, iconography, and kinetography. It adds emphasis to, and helps the interpretation of meaning in, chirographic or rebus statements, and parallels verbal language in the dissemination of information.
5. concatenation. Unification of concepts or methods as a series or system in which the cognitive or perceptual modules function as links in a chain.
6. visual language. A fine art constituent and a channel for personal, cultural, edificatory, erudite, and subjective expression. Visual language also deals with cultural enlightenment, moral and spiritual uplift, scholarship, and depiction of objects and ideas. It does not describe the functions of graphic communication.

7. visual literacy. This term contains ambiguities that do not convey meaning. Visual describes sensory perception and literacy describes cognitive process. Consequently, the conjoined words become an incompatible term that classifies as non-sequitur because it contains inferential supposition and paradox.
8. rhetoric. The theory and practice of discovering the most effective means of persuasion. The art of public relations and the presentation of images. The denotative or connotative, persuasive, metaphoric, or metonymic use of both verbal and visible language.
9. kinetography. A dynamic secondary orality, or technological verbal/visible rhetoric, that applies to multivariate online, interactive, and broadcast media.
10. grapholectic. Written vernacularisation of transdialectal language.