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Visual pragmatics of an early modern book: Printers' paratextual choices in the editions of *The School of Vertue*

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Contemporary texts are commonly of multimodal nature, especially in electronic media, combining different semiotic modes, such as writing, images and sounds. However, the presence of visual aspects in written documents is not a new phenomenon. The visibility and non-linearity of historical texts, especially medieval manuscripts and early printed books, have been recently appreciated as essential for understanding the meanings communicated by them (e.g. Jucker and Pahta 2011, Machan 2011, Carroll et al. 2013, McConchie 2013, Rogos-Hebda 2016). My contribution, likewise, investigates pictorial aspects of a historical text. It fits into the research areas of both *pragmaphilology* and *visual pragmatics* or “pragmatics on the page”. The former studies the context, including its physical and social aspects in which a historical text was produced, people involved in the process of its production as well as its recipients (Jacobs and Jucker 1995: 11-12), whereas the latter, also referred to as “pragmatics on the page”, is defined by Carroll et al. (2013: 56) as “anything on the page that adds meaning to the linguistic message”.

The aim of my study has been chiefly to identify what paratextual, more specifically visual, elements early printers employed (e.g. the style and size of typefaces, the page layout, the placement and size of illustrations), in what way these elements functioned as pragmatic markers, that is what meanings the printers communicated through these devices at particular levels of discourse (including the *textual level*, the *interactional level* and the *stance level*), as well as to trace the evolution of these printers' pragmatic strategies, including the inventory and use of visual pragmatic markers in consecutive editions of the title selected for investigation. The methodology adopted for the analysis follows that proposed by Carroll et al (2013), including four stages: 1) the identification of several utterances of the same text, here the twelve printed editions of an early modern book of good conduct for children, entitled *The School of Vertue* (1557-1687); 2) the preparation of an *etic* microanalytic description of the textual and visual aspects of the earliest available edition of the book; 3) a comparison of the other eleven editions of the same book with the first one with regard to visual differences; 4) the interpretation of the meaning of and motivation behind the diachronic variation traced in the series of utterances under consideration, taking an *emic* and pragmaphilological approach to the material analysed. The source materials for my analysis have been consulted at the *EEBO* website, in the form of facsimiles.

(411 words)

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