УДК 81’42:008:76:82-028.5
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BOOK ILLUSTRATION AS A LINGUOCULTURAL CODE IN INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION: HISTORIOGRAPHY, EVOLUTION, AND MODERN PRACTICES

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Keywords: book illustration, linguocultural communication, intercultural communication, visual language, graphic techniques, cultural codes, visual semiotics, book design.

Abstract. The article explores the historiography and evolution of book illustration as a linguocultural phenomenon within the framework of intercultural communication. The study interprets illustration not only as an artistic or technical element of book design but as a universal semiotic system that encodes and transmits cultural meanings. The research traces the development of visual narratives from prehistoric imagery and manuscript miniatures to the transformative impact of the printing press in the 15th century, which enabled the large-scale dissemination of culturally marked visual content [1]. Particular attention is paid to the evolution of graphic techniques—from woodcut and intaglio to lithography and modern digital tools—as stages in the expansion of visual communication across linguistic and cultural boundaries [2]. The article analyzes key elements of graphic expression—line, stroke, and spot—as components of a visual language that allows illustrators to interpret and culturally adapt literary texts [3]. It is argued that contemporary illustration represents a synthesis of traditional and innovative approaches, where the illustrator acts as a mediator who translates verbal content into culturally relevant visual codes [4]. The findings emphasize that book illustration functions as an integral part of intercultural dialogue, facilitating the perception, interpretation, and adaptation of meanings in a globalized communicative space.

1. Introduction. The history of book illustration constitutes an essential dimension of human communication, particularly within the context of intercultural interaction. In contemporary humanities, illustration is increasingly viewed as a form of visual language capable of functioning alongside verbal systems [3]. From a linguocultural perspective, illustrations are not merely decorative elements but carriers of culturally embedded meanings that shape the reader’s interpretation of the text. In early stages of human development, long before the emergence of complex writing systems, visual images served as a universal communicative code, enabling the transmission of information across communities and cultures [1]. With the appearance of handwritten books,

illustration acquired additional symbolic and cultural functions, particularly in religious and philosophical texts, where images reinforced culturally specific interpretations of meaning.

2. Theoretical and Conceptual Framework. Within the framework of linguocultural studies, book illustration can be understood as a semiotic system that interacts with verbal language and reflects culturally determined patterns of perception [3]. Visual images function as signs that encode values, beliefs, and collective experiences, thus forming a bridge between different cultural contexts. From this perspective, illustration performs a role analogous to translation, as it interprets verbal content and adapts it for audiences with diverse cultural backgrounds [4]. The interaction between text and image creates a multimodal communicative space in which meaning is constructed through the integration of linguistic and visual elements. Therefore, the study of illustration requires an interdisciplinary approach that combines insights from visual studies, semiotics, and intercultural communication.

3. Evolution of Illustration as a Means of Intercultural Communication. A significant transformation in the development of book illustration occurred in the 15th century with the invention of the printing press, which marked the transition from individual handcrafted images to mass-produced visual content [1]. Techniques such as woodcut enabled the simultaneous reproduction of text and image, facilitating the dissemination of cultural narratives across linguistic boundaries. This period can be regarded as the beginning of large-scale intercultural communication through visual media. Subsequent advancements, including intaglio and etching, expanded the expressive possibilities of illustration, allowing for greater detail, emotional depth, and symbolic complexity [2]. These techniques contributed to the formation of a refined visual language capable of conveying nuanced cultural meanings. The invention of wood engraving further increased the accessibility and speed of visual communication, particularly in printed media such as newspapers, thus strengthening the role of illustration in shaping public perception across cultures. Lithography represented another crucial stage in this evolution, providing illustrators with unprecedented freedom to reproduce artistic styles and techniques [2]. As a result, visual representation became more flexible and adaptable to different cultural contexts. In the modern era, digital technologies have further transformed illustration into a dynamic and globally accessible medium, enabling rapid exchange and reinterpretation of cultural symbols [4].

4. Visual Strategies of Contemporary Illustrators. In contemporary book design, illustration functions as a complex system of visual communication that integrates artistic creativity with linguocultural awareness [3]. The primary task of the illustrator is to interpret the literary text through graphic means—such as line, stroke, and spot—while simultaneously considering the cultural background of the target audience. These elements form a structured visual language through which meaning is conveyed, emphasized, or transformed.

Modern illustrators increasingly engage in processes of cultural adaptation and visual localization, ensuring that images resonate with diverse audiences [4]. In this sense, the illustrator acts as a mediator in intercultural communication, translating verbal narratives into visual forms that are accessible and meaningful across different cultural frameworks. The synthesis of classical artistic traditions and innovative digital techniques further enhances the capacity of illustration to function as a tool of global communication.

5. Conclusions. The conducted analysis demonstrates that the evolution of book illustration reflects not only technological progress but also profound changes in the ways cultures communicate and interpret meaning. From a linguocultural perspective, illustration should be regarded as an integral component of the communicative space of the book, where visual and verbal elements interact to produce culturally significant interpretations.

In the context of intercultural communication, book illustration functions as a universal code that facilitates the transmission, adaptation, and reinterpretation of cultural meanings [3; 4]. By translating textual content into visual language, illustrations enable dialogue between cultures and contribute to the formation of a shared communicative environment in the globalized world. Thus, the role of the illustrator extends beyond artistic creation to include mediation between languages, cultures, and systems of meaning.

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IDIOMATICITY OF LANGUAGE AS A SIGNATURE OF CULTURE

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Key words: idiomaticity, cultural signature, idioms, idiomatic shift.

Idioms are widely used in fiction texts. If language is the skeleton of a culture, idiomaticity is its nervous system. It represents the collective memory, history, and environment of a people, encoded into phrases that seem like nonsense to an outsider but feel like "home" to a native speaker.

Idiomaticity acts as a cultural signature because it archives how a specific group of people has historically interacted with the world. Idioms are rarely