

THE QUESTION OF THE INTERPROPORTIONALITY OF VERBAL AND
VISUAL COMPONENTS IN MODERN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE: A
PRAGMALINGUISTIC ANALYSIS

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Abstract: *The article depicts the peculiarities of the ratio between verbal and visual components in modern books for kids. The article reviews some book types where the visual content prevails (wimmelbilderbuch, picturebooks, «bookturepics», etc.). Resting upon the researchers' works, the author points out the complementary and contrapuntal strategies of word and picture interaction in illustrated books. The functions of illustrations are singled out: it can provide visual accompaniment to words, help the imagination to comprehend the plot of the book, supplement the verbal artistic reality; it can also be involved in plot development and changing the narrative of the words; illustration can set a multimodal and two-address character of the book. The loose connection between verbal and visual components sometimes performs an important function of defamiliarization withdrawing both the visual and the verbal out of the automatism of perception. The article underlines the potential of books where the visual content dominates when working over the speech development, especially with children who study Russian as a foreign language.*

Keywords: *children's books; pictures; verbal components; visual components; books for children.*

Аннотация: *В статье рассматриваются особенности соотношения вербального и визуального компонентов в современных книгах для детей, обзорно представлены некоторые типы книг для детей с преобладанием визуальной составляющей (виммельбухи, «книжки в картинках», «картинки в рассказах» и др.). Опираясь на работы исследователей, автор статьи указывает на «комплементарную» и «контрапунктную» стратегии взаимодействия слова и рисунка в иллюстрированных книгах. Обозначаются функции иллюстраций: они могут обеспечивать визуальное сопровождение слов, оказывать помощь воображению при восприятии книги, дополнять словесную художественную реальность, а также вовлекаться в развитие сюжета, менять повествовательную направленность слов, придавать книге*



мультимодальный и двуадресный характер. Книги, в которых визуальный и вербальный компоненты свободно соотнесены, порой выполняют важную функцию остранения, выводя и визуальное, и вербальное из автоматизма восприятия. В статье также подчеркивается потенциал книг с доминантой визуального компонента при работе над развитием речи, в том числе с детьми, изучающими русский язык как иностранный.

Ключевые слова: детская литература; книжные иллюстрации; вербальные компоненты; визуальные компоненты, книги для детей.

Annotatsiya: Maqolada zamonaviy bolalar kitoblarida og'zaki va vizual komponentlar o'rtasidagi o'zaro bog'liqlik xususiyatlari muhokama qilinadi, vizual komponent ustunlik qiladigan bolalar uchun kitoblarning ayrim turlari haqida umumiy ma'lumot berilgan (Wimmelbuch, "rasmli kitoblar", "hikoyalardagi rasmlar"). , va boshqalar.). Tadqiqotchilarning ishlariga asoslanib, maqola muallifi tasvirlangan kitoblarda so'z va rasmning o'zaro ta'siri uchun "bir-birini to'ldiruvchi" va "qarama nuqta" strategiyalariga ishora qiladi. Tasvirlarning vazifalari ko'rsatilgan: ular so'zlarga vizual qo'shilish imkonini beradi, kitobni idrok etishda tasavvurga yordam beradi, og'zaki badiiy voqelikni to'ldiradi, shuningdek syujetni rivojlantirishda ishtirok etadi, so'zlarning bayon yo'nalishini o'zgartiradi, beradi. kitob multimodal va ikki manzilli xarakterga ega. Vizual va og'zaki komponentlar erkin o'zaro bog'liq bo'lgan kitoblar ba'zan idrok etishning avtomatikligidan vizual va og'zakilikni keltirib chiqaradigan muhim chetlanish funksiyasini bajaradi. Maqolada, shuningdek, nutqni rivojlantirish ustida ishlashda, shu jumladan rus tilini chet tili sifatida o'rganayotgan bolalar bilan ishlashda vizual komponent ustun bo'lgan kitoblarning imkoniyatlari ta'kidlangan.

Kalit so'zlar: bolalar adabiyoti; kitob rasmlari; og'zaki komponentlar; vizual komponentlar, bolalar uchun kitoblar.

INTRODUCTION

In Russia, the history of illustrated books for children began with the printing in 1694 of the "Primer" by Karion Istomin: the pages of the book were decorated with numerous images - people, animals, plants and household items. For a long time, publications intended for children (including magazines) were organized according to the same principle: they were dominated by text, pictures were often printed on separate pages, and there were few color images. Over time (and the development of technology), the structure of a children's book and a children's magazine gradually changed: the practice of illustrators from different countries ingeniously revised the possibilities in the ratio of verbal and visual



components. In addition, it turned out that the visual range can be remarkably diverse - in the twentieth century, it began to include not only the author's drawings, but also adapted to illustrate photographs, postcards, newspapers, magazine clippings and more. The range of functions that an illustration can perform has also expanded. Of course, in most cases in a children's book, an illustration provides a visual accompaniment to words, plays the role of a hint, assists the imagination in perceiving the book, “complements” the verbal artistic reality and increases the time of contact with the book. Such a traditional “complementary” approach to book illustrations (criticized, for example, by Hansen-Löwe [Hansen-Löwe 2016: 57–77]) has not exhausted its potential and is unlikely to ever exhaust it. In addition to many other books for children, for example, modern alphabets are based on it, which should help the child get acquainted with the alphabet, establish a connection between letters and words, between letters, words and the world around them.

Among the new illustrated alphabets, one can note the books of Daria Gerasimova: “The ABC of Transformations” and “ABC. A game of words” that complement each other well. In the ABC of Transformations, each letter is visually transformed into something - into an object, a person or a fairy-tale creature. The transformations are accompanied by verses (also by D. Gerasimova). In The Game of Words, each letter is dedicated to a full spread with detailed illustrations and a poem that plays on the letter. The book is intended for children who are already familiar with the alphabet, it develops vocabulary, offers options for a simple language game (selecting words for one letter, and then making sentences from them) and provokes independent experiments with words. The “Mythological ABC” by Igor Zhukov contains mythological and fairy-tale characters: heroes of fairy tales and legends of different peoples (among them are the Serpent Gorynych, the Dragon, Chimeras, Medusa Gorgon, Basilisk and many others). The reader of this alphabet is not a small child preparing to get acquainted with the alphabet, but an amateur child and even a connoisseur of fairy tales who can appreciate the author’s humor, understand that they are playing a literary game with him: under the guise of an alphabet, they offer a dictionary of mythological creatures. The playful tone of the book is also indicated by the illustrations of Maria Yakushina - her dragons and Gorynychy are not scary at all, and the “multi-color” and the character moving from picture to picture, similar to a jester, introduce an element of theatrical or circus performance, which seems to be unfolding on the pages of the book. Modern there are so many books for children that are built on the principle of “consent” of verbal and visual that it is almost impossible to systematize and describe them. Let's focus on more



complex variants of the relationship between verbal and visual, namely, on cases where a) the verbal component is practically excluded, b) words and pictures "exchange" functions; c) verbal and visual codes can contradict each other, conflict, create so-called "multimodal" texts [Salisbury, Styles 2012: 77].

LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

In relation to the latter, Maria Nikolaeva and Carol Scott use the term "counterpoint", meaning that words and pictures tell different stories or somehow "oppose" each other, offer alternative information, which sometimes leads to conflicting interpretations. [Nikolajeva, Scott 2001]. *Wimmelbuchs* (peeping books) *Wimmelbuchs* are "wordless books". The German term "wimmeln" can be translated as "swarm", and the name of this type of book already suggests "an abundance of characters", a large amount of visual material, but also a certain "degree of disorder and chaos" [Rémi 2010: 117]. *Wimmelbuchs*, as already noted, have very little or no text at all, so they do not impose a plot on the reader (you can come up with one yourself and discuss the development of each of the stories). *Wimmelbuchs* are not at all new, this type of book has been used for many years for training memory and attention, speech skills. Thematic *wimmelbuchs* not only develop vocabulary, but also introduce children to phenomena and facts that were previously unknown. The absence of text makes such books practically international (perhaps that is why there are not so many Russian *Wimmelbuchs* proper). Of the small number of peering books published in Russia, *Wimmelbuchs* dedicated to individual cities can be useful for students of the Russian language and culture. In such books as, for example, "Moscow" by A. Khramtsov, children themselves can lay "excursion paths", think over routes and gradually enrich them with details (historical and cultural information) that children are able to find on their own in other sources or on the Internet. According to the developed "book routes", you can arrange quests or come up with adventure games. Picture books (stories in pictures) are the name for books in which the visual code acts as the basis for the narrative (and in most cases does not require verbal support).

In the history of Russian children's literature, picture books are associated primarily with "Stories in Pictures" by Nikolai Radlov and the magazine "Funny Pictures" (published since 1956). "Stories in Pictures" by N. Radlov was first published in 1937 and was built on the principle of a comic book: Radlov built small (usually funny) stories from a sequential arrangement of frames. For the first edition, short comments on the pictures were written by D. Kharms, N. Gernet and N. Dilaktorskaya; later, for ideological reasons, the captions were removed, but Radlov's funny pictures did not lose their narrative clarity. An illustrated book as a "multimodal" text. Books in which the visual series becomes



an important narrative component, but at the same time does not exclude a complex relationship with the word, include some “books of artists” or joint projects of writers and artists. Among the verbal-visual units, in which words and illustrations together create a special narrative rhythm, are the fairy tale books by writer Alexander Blinov and artist Olga Zolotukhina “The Mole Who Dreamed of Seeing the Sun” and “The Puddle that Became the Sun”. The tales of A. Blinov are allegorical stories about the search for oneself and faith in a dream. In both books, the image of the sun becomes a key image - close to both children and adults, it is the sun that is most often associated with goodness, light, warmth. "The Mole..." is a story about a mole who, contrary to all the laws of nature, I decided to see the sun no matter what. He first interrogates all his relatives, finding out what the sun looks like, but they cannot help him, because moles, as you know, crawl out of their holes only at night. The mole asks questions to a familiar owl and a horse friend, but none of them is able to explain what the sun is. A. Blinov's tale is rich even without illustrations (it has a plot, there is humor, elements of a language game that may be of interest to children), but it is precisely thanks to the illustrations that it turns into a small parable: the visual series "spreads the plot" and greatly enhances the aesthetic effect of books. One of the key motifs of the fairy tale, which explains its attachment to the visual (longing for the visual), is the lack of words, the insufficiency of words to explain what seems to be generally understood (In response to the question "What is the sun?", The owl “goggled its round eyes and spread its wings: — SUCH... LIKE HAPPINESS...” [Blinov 2016:18]). little color and light).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Bright colors appear gradually: the more the main character talks to different animals and learns about the world, the more color the artist uses. At the end of the tale, the Mole waits for the sunrise and not only does not die (as his relatives promise him), but also sees how diverse and beautiful the world is. The happiness of seeing in a new way (in a different way) is explained in the book with the help of color, the visual is involved in the development of the plot, a kind of “blockade of the word” is removed by multicolor, which is associated with the sun (brightness of colors, mobility, iridescence, beauty). In the fairy tale "Puddle, which became the Sun, a large flowing puddle turns into Polkan the Dog, then into the Cat Musya, then into the Black Crow, and then becomes a hot sun, although this requires her to disappear. The second fairy tale by A. Blinov is also illustrated by O. Zolotukhina, and, in addition to the expressiveness of color, it also involves the expressiveness of form. On a verbal and visual level, the book is full of metamorphosis; as in the case of "The Mole ...", it is characterized by a



combination of a fun game and parable. In both books, visuals become an important resource for storytelling, illustrations can change the narrative direction of words, they are involved in the development of the plot along with the word. The conventionality of lines and figures (the animals are drawn extremely simply and very recognizably) suits the perception of children and at the same time corresponds to the universality of fairy tales about how to find your dream. An interesting version of the interaction between words and pictures is offered in the book “Lucky Chance” by the Belarusian artist Anna Silivonchik.

Silivonchik created a visual-verbal shifter — she calls it “pictures in stories.” Here, neither the verbal nor the visual becomes an illustration / explanation for each other. The word in this case performs not even an auxiliary function, but an additional one, plays the role of a frame that can be changed at will (or completely removed, turned off). Thus, the story that gave the name to the entire book (“Lucky Chance”) was written for a picture depicting a family and natural idyll: a rural house with a garden, parents and babies in cabbage. The general atmosphere is an atmosphere of comfort, familiarity, well-being, which, nevertheless, does not exclude a slight irony. The story written by the author has something in common with the picture only conditionally: a general (a little anecdotal) tone, characters (man, woman) and an ending, in which well-being is also (as a result of a happy coincidence). However, the plot of the story is not tightly tied to the picture, it is only a possible sketch - and each reader (child or adult) can come up with his own story, one way or another adjoining to the picture. It is in the free correlation of verbal and visual that the developing potential of “pictures in stories” is seen. They provide a variety of opportunities: they allow you to increase your “watchfulness”, teach you to pay attention to color, texture, work with line, and composition. The pictures put together rhyme, threads are stretched between them, forming plots. In addition, Silivonchik's paintings are not the simplest, you need to peer into them, take into account the artist's inherent craving for metamorphoses, however, the strange visual range (and the artistic world as a whole) performs an important function of estrangement, because it removes both the visual and the verbal from the automatic perception. "Pictures in stories" is based on the use of a difficult form, the need to look at the picture, read the story and think about how the verbal "frame" is in contact (and is it in contact?) with the image. Such texts, in which the verbal component can lead in one direction (offer one plot), and the visual component in the other, require an active viewer / reader.

The predominance of the visual component in "pictures in stories" can be effectively used for the development of speech. So, children can be offered tasks of



varying complexity: correlate the author's text and illustration, find roll calls, surprises, contradictions; pick up or come up with language equivalents to visual metaphors; write a creative story, a fairy tale based on a picture (the story should include events preceding those depicted, the moment recorded in the picture, and subsequent events - or only a part of these components); compose a story “in the mood” (based on the general impression of the picture or relying on one visual image / motif). The fairy tale “Glykeria the Mouse. Colored and striped days”, created by Dina Sabitova and Alika Kalaida. The heroine of the book, a mouse named Glykeria, is a cute and funny character, she is interested in everything, she constantly invents and invents something (so that it is not hot, she rides a bicycle - this is how the wind blows her; knowing that loses the keys to the house, decorates the apple tree in the garden with spare keys, etc., etc.). Most of the plots of the book arise from the linguistic "eccentricities" of Glyceria. So, the story where Glykeria chooses a new name for herself (“Glykeria the Mouse and the Green Box”) grows out of the heroine’s misunderstanding of the phrase “bear a name” (playing with the meanings of the word “bear”: 1. dress in something and 2. “bear a name” - be called). Glyceria does not like her unromantic name, she chooses the sonorous “Oleander” for herself and wears it all day like a beautiful decoration, and puts it in a box in the evening, deciding that “the next Wednesday she will get it and wear it a little again. Beautiful name. Elegant. Not every day to wear. And then it will fade, get scratched” [Sabitova 2012: 30].

The story of the quarrel is born from the phrase "scatter salt - to a quarrel" (but since Glykeria lives alone, it remains for her to argue with the mirror Glyceria, with herself). The language game becomes the source of the story in which Glyceria decides to "wind up the clock". The comic effect is created by playing with the meanings of the word “start up” (“set the clock running, tighten the spring” and “purchase, acquire something”). Glyceria does not know how to tell the time, but winds up the clock like a pet, and then gets frightened of his stormy temper (the clock strikes!) and changes the wall clock to a small “manual”, as they change a big beast to a small tame dog. Sabitova's text actively engages in the process of analysis, peering into the language material - this is required of the reader, and Glykeria herself constantly does this. For example, when she is about to write poetry, she reads a literary encyclopedia and discovers that the amphibrach looks like "an old flannel rag with which she dusts the piano," and anapaest - “on a flower, its leaves are long, like those of a sedge, sharp, and the stem is juicy”; white verse seems to her the most poetic — it is “completely white, like fresh snow under the bright sun, or pale, like baked milk” [Sabitova 2012: 42–43]. The verses composed by Glykeria resemble G. Sapgir's New Year's sonnet - a



white page in which there are potentially a lot of words: "the eighth white page was about the sun that rolls behind a distant forest, and the ninth is about how crickets chirp in the garden on a warm summer evening" [Sabitova 2012: 44].

The illustrations by A. Kalaida emphasize the double-address nature of the book. On the one hand, it contains many pictures that help children visualize the situation, as well as many additional, separate ones: for example, ladybugs, which are not mentioned in Sabitova's text, are involved in tiny plots in the illustrations that are interesting for the child to follow. On the other hand, the pictures also appeal to the cultural experience of an adult. It is the adult who captures the eclectic nature of the visuals (there are many elements reminiscent of the aesthetics of the early 20th century: Glykeria's outfits, an old bicycle, etc., and, at the same time, many recognizable Soviet details – from the drawing on the thermos and packaging of soda to statues exercise mice in the park). The reception of the visual commentary of the plot is also oriented towards adults. So, the book cover is a remake of V. Serov's "Girl with Peaches" - and this immediately sets a playful and at the same time touching tone. In the first chapter, where Glykeria is terribly dissatisfied with her tail and really wants to look like a more noble creature (to be someone else, more attractive), the situation is played up ironically with illustrations: on the wall of the Glykeria room there is a fragment of Leonardo da Vinci's painting "Lady with an Ermine", in front of Glykeria is a remake of the portrait of Anna Akhmatova by N. Altman.

CONCLUSION

Speaking about modern culture, researchers rightly point to the ubiquitous reduction of the verbal component, however, it seems that picture books (even those that do not contain text at all) have great potential precisely in terms of activating speech skills. Books dominated by the visual can be effectively used to teach children the rules of storytelling, they force readers to actively participate in the formation of meaning (encouraging them to fill in the gaps that arise between frames-frames), start the process of translating a picture into a word (if the process is organized correctly), and they can also instill children "taste for irony."

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