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**VISUAL REPRESENTATION OF
CHARACTERS OF CHILDREN'S
LITERATURE IN ENGLISH
LANGUAGE RESEARCHES IN
1990S–2010S**

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Keywords: Visual representation, characters, children's literature, English language researches.

Токар М. І., Мархайчук Н. В. Візуальна репрезентація образів дитячої літератури в англійськомовних дослідженнях 1990–2010-х рр. Метою статті є зарубіжна практика дослідження візуальної репрезентації образів героїв в дитячій літературній класиці, проаналізована нами у контексті двох напрямків: локальному, у межах якого ключове значення мають специфіка національної літератури, що ілюструється, особливості ідентичності творів та характер їхньої передачі засобами книжкової графіки; а також проблемному, що зосереджується на вивченні кола найбільш актуальних тем, які є провідними для розвитку дитячої книги 1990–2010-х рр.

Особливістю сформульованих завдань дослідження є зосередження уваги не тільки на визначенні та широковідомих дослідженнях зарубіжними фахівцями мистецтва дитячої книги, а й на літературі більш вузького наукового змісту, яка є дотичною до тих або інших аспектів нашої наукової гіпотези. Розглянуто сучасний етап активної трансформації книжкової культури, яка зачіпає усі аспекти книгодрукування: від суто конструктивних та дизайнерських до мистецьких. Книжкова графіка ще у середині ХХ ст. визначена західними фахівцями як окремий вид мистецтва із власними стилізованими та образними закономірностями, тому завданням є дослідження стану її розвитку та динаміки змін у 1990–2010-х рр.

Ключові слова: візуальна репрезентація, образ, дитяча література, англійськомовні дослідження.

Токар М. И., Мархайчук Н. В. Визуальная репрезентация образов детской литературы в англоязычных исследованиях 1990–2010-х гг. Цель статьи — проанализировать зарубежную практику исследования визуальной репрезентации

образов героев в детской литературной классике в контексте двух направлений: локальном, в рамках которого ключевое значение имеют специфика иллюстрируемой национальной литературы, особенности идентичности произведений и характер их передачи средствами книжной графики; а также проблемном, которое сосредоточено на изучении круга наиболее актуальных тем, являющихся ведущими для развития детской книги 1990–2010-х гг. Особенностью сформулированных задач исследования является сосредоточение внимания не только на признанных и широко известных исследованиях зарубежных специалистов искусства детской книги, но и на литературе более узкого научного содержания, которая касается тех или иных аспектов нашей научной гипотезы. Рассмотрен современный этап активной трансформации книжной культуры, которая затрагивает все аспекты книгопечатания: от конструктивных и дизайнерских до художественных. Книжная графика еще в середине ХХ в. определена западными специалистами как отдельный вид искусства с собственными стилевыми и образными закономерностями, поэтому задачей является исследование состояния ее развития и динамики изменений в 1990–2010-х гг.

Ключевые слова: визуальная репрезентация, образ, детская литература, англоязычные исследования.

Foreign practice of research of visual representation of the characters in children's classic literature was analyzed by us in the context of two directions:

1. Local, within which the key issue is the specificity of a national literature, which was illustrated, peculiarity of identity of works and the nature of their transmission by means of book graphics;
2. Problematic, which focuses on the study of the range of the most relevant topics that are leading in the development of children's book in 1990–2010.

Besides, we emphasize that the peculiarity of the formulated objectives of the study requires a focus not only on recognized and widely known researches of foreign specialists in the field of children's books, but on the literature having narrower scientific content, which deals with certain aspects of our scientific hypotheses.

In this context the monographies, e. g. by Nodelman P. (1990), Silvey A. (1995) or Darton F.-J. H. (2011) were analyzed as fundamentally important studies of foreign (mainly Anglo-Saxon) art of books of the second half of the 20-th century which laid the foundation of the modern vision of the range of problems of children's reading and art practices in the field of children's books.

However, currently there continues an active transformation of book culture that affects all aspects of book-printing, from purely constructional and design to art. As book illustrations were defined by western specialists as a separate art with its stylistic and imaginative pattern in the middle of the 20-th century, a study of the status of its development and dynamic changes in 1990–2010 is an extremely important task.

So, the graphics in children's books of a narrative style is analyzed by Fang Z. (1996). We emphasize that the illustration of literature for children itself is designed for "expansion, explanation, interpretation and aestheticization of a written text", the author proposes to consider the illustration according to the criteria of the ratio and orientation of graphic and text field of a book [7: 131]. Z. Fang determines the main ways of visual representation as the following: 1) defining and developing of characters (illustrations help clarify the range of protagonists, reflect their emotional motivation and confidence to shape space text) [7: 132]; 2) the expansion and development of the plot (illustrative series can, for example, go ahead of textual narrative preparing emotional perception of the text) [7: 133]; 3) implementing of a different perspective (book graphics has other means of representation, so its "comprehension" differs from the perception of a literary context; in some cases authors specifically break the connection between visual and textual components to form a "different opinion" on the "illustrated narration", for example, the hero in danger, which he does not realize, but there is a hint in the illustration) [7: 134]; 4) promotion of textual coherence (consistency and adjustment of the ideas in the text for children should have a balance between mystery and clarity, illustrations contribute to the formation of the balance) [7: 135]; 5) strengthening of the text through emotional, informative and visual nature of book graphics [7: 136].

American researcher C. Driggs (2007) offers the characteristic method of analysis of children's books, emphasizing on the combination of text book graphics, creates a certain "other" space of art that exists "beyond the contribution provided by each individual form". Thus, the picture book actually changes the idea about the nature of children's reading. It displays a type of a narrative, in which the interaction between the written text and illustrative image are combined as a poetic conscious aesthetic intention [4: 273]. Thus, the "words" and "images" according to C. Driggs never retell the same story. A little reader works himself on overcoming the conflict between what he sees and what he imagines through textual operations reading or listening. This kind of game, where the reader "explores and experiments with the relationship between words and images", is represented by C. Driggs as five-step model where: 1) "symmetry of words and images" that represent equivalent action of characters and plot lines is possible; 2) there is a supplement of two forms and their sequential presence in space of book; 3) a text and illustrative part of the relationship are strengthening each other; 4) it is possible to paraphrase different stories by means of literature and graphics; 5) finally, the conflict between literary and visual layers form a picture of dramatic integrity of the work [4: 274]. The author refers the last model to the so-called postmodern children's books, describing it as the destruction of narrative linearity, both through literary techniques and the nature of illustration [4: 275].

An English researcher S. Elsley (2008) analyzes problems of illustrative character in the field of children's books. From her point of view children's books perform an "ambitiously a wide range of roles and goals" that actually transform a book to the "product with different ideologies", among which it is extremely important to encourage children to learn positive social values, practices, to develop speech and narration and etc. Thus, in social terms, an illustrated children's book acts as an incentive for intellectual socialization [5: 54]. The artistic qualities of children's books are, in author's opinion, an excellent proof of the special role of the hero in the children's world of views, where there is a place for real and national, and for fictitious and non-existent issues. The nature of this representation generates the relation of artists to the types of book illustration, that on the whole resembles of the model (false, according to the author): "book for children made by adults for the needs of a child and, according to an adult, it is adequate and correct" [5: 47–54]. As S. Elsley asserts: "children's books don't represent the complete spectrum of experience and thus cannot present childhood in all its variety and complexity" [5: 217]. The expression taken as a title – "Heroes and heroines – or just like us?" – illustrates this constituent of the study that is related to visual codes of main acting characters of child's stories.

As a separate direction of child's illustrative discourse in English language researches in 1990–2010 it's possible, in our opinion, to define the gender issues, in the context as the separate themes widely discussed in the West, that practically are not examined in researches of the Eastern Europe specialists. For example, a theme of child's sexuality appeal that is expressed through practices of book illustration.

On the whole, the issues of analysis of gender stereotypes in the visual nature of book illustration occupies a noticeable place among works of 1990–2010. For example, we will mention a dissertation research of an Iranian author K. Moattar "The visual representation of gender in illustration of children's books" (2010), that was performed in the University of Lynd in Sweden. The author compares works of Iranian and Swedish literatures for children, considering mutual and distinctive features in relation to gender stereotypes in the visual structure of children's books illustration. Characteristically, a scientist considers this range of problems not only as a current one, but also as a one worked out poorly [11: 10]. The last feature undoubtedly is the estimation of western level of representation of a problem and can't be interchangeably compared with character of development of subjects of gender in Eastern Europe researches. Besides, the author asserts that he expects impatiently for the time, when visual representation of sex and gender behavior in children's books illustration will be more balanced, and notions of masculinity and will not be a visual cliché and will determine not only a gender but also humanistic values irrespective of sexual belonging [11: 47].

From the methodological point of view, dissertation of Canadian Researcher M. Foster (2014) is interesting, that is also devoted to the issues of gender representation of children's books illustration. The range of problems of the main hero of the work is examined by the author as marker of gender and its visual representation as a variety of behavior, art and literature stereotypes. Analyzing two types of books – bestsellers and “multicultural books” (those appealing the audience, various by the nature of identity), M. Foster justifies the model of masculine and feminine visual symbols, that from her point of view, present the corresponding patterns of literary behavior of heroes. In the end, the author defines two main illustrative groups: the first is identified by the feature of ideals and values that relate to a certain type of gender behavior (appearance and capabilities of heroes are her markers); the second combines discourse of literary text and visual discourse oriented at the plot of the text of visual common factors of illustration. Such methodological scheme, according to the conclusions of M. Foster, allows her to define the mutual relations of corresponding gender stereotypes of behavior (a girl is beautiful \ a boy is courageous) according to the character of a book and peculiarity of a literary work. For example, the stereotype of appearance mostly occurs in the best sellers with images of heroes-girls and women, and the stereotypes of socio-economic status are most widespread in multicultural books with illustrations with participation of heroes-men or boys.

As another dominant of western vision of prospect of development of children's books, we will name the matter of creation of visual characters of literary text for children audience with the special needs. The last one relates to discourse of protagonist in children's literature and, accordingly, to character of illustrating books that contain disabled children as characters.

In this way, B. Brenna, a Canadian researcher of children's books, compares illustration of books for an audience from three to thirteen years in North-American tradition and, actually, to the Canadian children's book. From her point of view children's authors from the USA only from 1980 gradually began to include characters with the special needs to visual accompaniment of a literary text, even in those cases, when the plot of a story of a literary work assumed such possibility. In Canadian publishing, a similar practice becomes a noticeable phenomenon in 1990–2000, and as an author asserts, not in the last turn through politics of “stimulation of distribution of cultural and gender differences through literature”, which postulates a different type of hero – a person, whose heroism is based, first of all, on his own achievement and personal efforts [1: 102].

A separate direction is made by the researchers, that are aimed at visual representation of literary heroes within the limits of national authentication of a book.

For example, dissertation of N. Lolina is valuable for the solution of tasks of our research is performed

on material of book graphic arts of the Ukrainian and Norwegian children's book. The author is not only the researcher of practice of book illustration for children but also offers a product performed in the context of her own research the – “fairy tales of Norway”, translated and graphically adapted for native little reader.

As a basis of the research of N. Lolina, the reflections, in relation to traditions of book illustration for children related to folklore (mythological) idea about universe and heroic spirit are fixed. Considering the issues of identity of folklore and literature, the author tries to investigate intercommunication of traditional lines of illustration of Norwegian fairy-tale with character of story, plot and to the construction of characters of protagonists of work. We will mark, that directions of books of Norwegian fairy-tales are worked out by the author as an original dialogue with the Scandinavian artist-illustrator Kittelsen, whose works, as N. Lolina marks, gave her emotional context for creation [10: 6]. The scientist compares the features of construction of form of illustrated book for children, emphasizing that North European model treats dimension, brightness and rhythmic of illustrations differently. Consequently, in case of representation of characters of Norwegian fairy-tale for the Ukrainian reader, an author must justify her own decisions in relation to character of authenticity of graphic arts, because, in fact, home traditions of the illustrated fairy-tale is based on other conceptual rules. [10: 50]

The Turkish children's illustrated book is analyzed by E. Cer (2016). His research is related to development of a typical model of book that contains the considerable field of illustrations and is addressed for the category of readers not older than six years. The age-related specifics of audience requires, in opinion of the scientist, a special approach to visual representation of characters of works of children's literature, because such books, on the whole, are oriented to more quick “consideration” rather than reading itself. Cer considers the model of the illustrated children's book into six positions, each of them describes reference – “a visual step” that helps a little reader to be orientated in a content of a story. Among them there are:

- 1) emotional constituent that is formed by both means of illustration and organoleptics.
- 2) textual speech and font remarks.
- 3) features of figuratively-graphic construction of a cover, that must reflect the common mood of the book.
- 4) features of construction of design oriented to junior age of children.
- 5) visual environment that is able to retain attention of a child during intermingling with a book. [2: 1034]

The last feature is emphasized and in a research of other Turkish scientist Yalmaz, who analyses educational practices of children's illustrated book, as well. The author asserts that among factors that determine duration and activity of communication of a child with a book, a range of problems of visual representation of protagonists of story is vital. According to his opinion,

properties of content of a book (structure, speech, image, mood) are those aspects that should be considered as key ones for children's reading. [14: 237]

The separate constituent part of a problem of visualization of characters of heroes of literary vocabulary is a research of literature orientation, that surely, must be taken into account in the global analysis of the state of investigated problem.

Among most tangents to the range of problems of our research we will mark the monographs of P. Hunt "An Introduction to children's literature", 1994 and M. Hourihan "Deconstructing the hero: literary theory and children's literature" (1997) who determined the basic range of general issues for literature and graphic arts in the field of western culture of children's book.

Thus, analyzed foreign researches at 1990–2010 allow us to define the following tendencies of problem study of visual representation of characters of literary works for children's audience.

1. The image of children's books in the countries of the European Union and the USA was formed in the conditions of market, open space, which has identified a focus of a book design and the nature of its structure as a commercial product. We specially focus on this feature has a directly related to the artistic design of children's book, the nature of its material of construction and techniques and types of illustration.

2. Features of the artistic traditions of the Western countries influenced the formation of the specific art of speech of children's book that shows how analysis contains the following features:

A) The focus of children's book on the formation of abilities and skills with practical (relevant to the specific environment) value.

B) Priority of aesthetics and constructive features design of the book above formal stylistic ones.

C) The trending nature of the genesis of artistic language of children's books, (for example, the dominance of multiculturalism over ethnic or regional art traditions in the USA in the second half of the 20-th century, or quite the opposite trend of ethical identity in France and Scandinavian countries).

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