

LINGUISTIC EXAMPLES AS CARRIERS OF SOCIO-CULTURAL INFORMATION¹

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This paper's object of study is linguistic examples, or illustrations, and its subject matter is additional function(s) they can perform besides their primary, i.e. linguistic, one(s). Illustrations are a constitutive and essential structural part of most kinds of linguistic texts of both theoretical and applied character, including dictionaries and works concerned with language learning and teaching. As such, they regularly occur in scholarly and methodic, or linguodidactic, discourse. Therefore, they are indicative of, and can be employed to analyze and assess, various aspects of works they appear in, such as the general validity of approach, the applicability of methods involved, the representativeness of factual material under study, the reliability of observations, the external adequacy and logical correctness of inferences and generalizations, the linguistic and theoretical background of the work's author etc. (Єрмоленко, 2017, с. 91-95).

The roles of illustrative material in these two kinds of works, scientific *sensu stricto* and methodic, differ in that theoreticians use their examples as evidence to prove their hypotheses or infer their conclusions and generalizations from, while in linguodidactics, or language teaching, their purpose is just the one that their name implies, i.e. to exemplify for language learners some abstract or general statements about the way linguistic items are used in actual speech. In both cases, however, even in what is sometimes called *lingualese*, examples share one common feature, which is their partial redundancy. In other words, along with relevant linguistic information, illustrations of necessity tend to carry information that is more or less irrelevant with respect to the point they are to demonstrate. Connected with this is their second important feature, which is fairly typical of illustrations in lexicography and language textbooks but is by no means unknown to linguistic research proper: there usually is a variety of possible examples from which choice is to be made.

My contention in the present paper is that linguistic illustrative material can also convey, intentionally or sometimes even unintentionally, additional, in particular, socio-cultural information, and that this information, although of essentially different, namely, extralinguistic nature, can be regarded as no less important than purely linguistic one. It is my understanding that so far language illustrations have never been studied from this viewpoint.

Correspondingly, my goal in the present study is to draw attention to the phenomenon of additional, more specifically, socio-cultural senses of linguistic examples by identifying and analyzing several cases of illustrations presumably having and conveying such senses. This

necessitates considering both the inner content of examples, where their relevant semantic features should be looked for, and the narrower and wider context these examples operate in, taking into account the text they are part of, the author of this text, the purpose this text is intended to serve, and the target recipients it is meant to address. Besides, it appears viable to treat them semiotically as well, i.e. as signs capable of conveying additional information and as such making up a semiotic system of sorts. In other words, it is necessary to study such cases within the framework of a combined discourse and semiotic approach using corresponding methods of analysis and applying them to both the meaning of examples and socio-cultural factors relevant for their choice (on these methods, see Halliday, 1974, p. 98; Jorgensen and Philips, 2002; Fairclough, 2003; Widdowson, 2004; Geeraerts, 2016). Also, I will compare illustrations in language textbooks that are similar in their subject and purpose but different as to their socio-cultural background. Using the method of contrastive cross-cultural-linguistic comparison will permit to establish distinctive features that distinguish examples in one of them from those in another, including cases where opposition between features can be construed as that between the presence of a feature in one of them and its absence, or lacuna, in the other (on this method, see Анохіна, 2019, с. 110-147).

Since linguistic illustrations are part of the academic and educational discourse and as such are aimed at a fairly wide readership, it can be assumed that if they have socio-cultural significance, then they must have been deliberately selected for exactly that reason. And yet, to bring these features into relief by means of contrast, and also to indicate another possible combination of features characterizing illustrations, I will start with an instance that is both individual and unintentional in its character, the additional content of examples involved emerging as a result of their idiosyncratic perception by an individual recipient.

The following passage from Vladimir Nabokov's English language memoir "Speak, memory", describing how the author as a kid perceived examples from his English grammar and recreated an imaginary reality which they represented, provides an insight in an instance of such idiosyncratic interpretation: "My first English friends were four simple souls in my grammar – Ben, Dan, Sam and Ned. There used to be a great deal of fuss about their identities and whereabouts – "Who is Ben?" "He is Dan," "Sam is in bed," and so on. Although it all remained rather stiff and patchy (the compiler was handicapped by having to employ – for the initial lessons, at least – words of not more than three letters), my imagination somehow managed to obtain the necessary data. Wan-faced, big-limbed, silent nitwits, proud in the possession of certain tools ("Ben has an axe"), they now drift with a slow-motioned slouch across the remotest backdrop of memory; and, akin to the mad alphabet of an optician's chart, the grammar-book lettering looms again before me" (Nabokov, 2011, p. 120). Thus, such irrelevant and unexpected, from the grammar-book author's viewpoint, additional information can differ from an example's purported meaning as something that the example induces in, rather than conveys to, the receiver, insofar as it results from individual interpretation and therefore varies from one recipient to another.

There are, let me reiterate, instances of the opposite nature as well, in which linguistic exemplification is a matter of selection on part of the text's author, in which he looks for some other features in possible examples besides those that are relevant from the viewpoint of their primary function of substantiation and illustration. Supposedly, these additional criteria influencing the choice can be fairly variegated. Among them, one can find cases where an example, fulfilling its main function, also carries some implicit meaning or private message for some reason made covert.

In the epigraph to the introductory chapter of his “Baltic relatives of Slavs”, a popular science book on ethnolinguistic relations between Baltic and Slavonic people (some parts of which were written in verse), Ukrainian linguist A.P.Nepokupnyi, saying that it was one thousand years ago since names of Greek and Latin origin came to be used in Rus’, illustrated this statement with the names of *Павло* and *Олексій*: *Тисячоліття пролягло, / як в іменах по всій Русі / почувлись римляни – Павло – / і давні греки – Олексій* (Непокупний, 1979, с. 7). From the outside it may seem that his choice of these two particular names as examples was purely arbitrary or maybe conditioned by the possibility of their being used as rhymes, which amounts to the same thing. Yet in a private conversation with me, he confided that the real reason why he mentioned them was that they in fact were the names of his father and grandfather, something he would have liked to include in a footnote but was not allowed to do so by his publishers (in the subsequent Lithuanian edition of the book, however, his wish was fulfilled in the form of the translator’s note).

In his textbook of general linguistics, Russian linguist O.S.Shirokov cites, along with other Russian lexemes exemplifying the foneme (f) in their structure, the word *Федот* which is immediately followed by the word *филин* (Широков, 1985, с. 47). This co-occurrence doesn’t seem to be incidental if one compares these words with the name of *Федот Филін*, a leading and controversial Soviet scholar, notorious not only as a proponent of traditionalist attitude towards objectives and methods of linguistic research but also, and to a much greater extent, as a Communist hard-liner exerting ideological control over Soviet linguistics (about this, see, e.g., Апресян, 1995, с. II). Yet whatever were motives underlying Shirokov’s juxtaposing the two words in this context, without his or someone else’s commentary explaining them, its purported implicit meaning will remain anybody’s guess.

On the contrary, sometimes such motives behind the choice of illustrative material are made abundantly clear by the choice itself, rich in socio-cultural, in particular political and ideological, connotations that, as in the following instance, reflect corresponding orientations and preferences of the author, such as his or her political loyalty. Sometime in the last century’s early ‘80-s, I participated in the discussion of a postgrad’s Philology Candidate dissertation plan, according to which factual evidence for her research were to be drawn, among other sources, from Vasil Bykov’s war novellas. The subject matter of the future thesis was, however, the semantic comparison of the prepositions “in” and “on” in English, Polish and Russian. Strange as the emphasis on the war theme in Bykov’s work may seem in this context, it should not be overlooked that the presentation took place during the “Brezhnev era”, when Soviet propaganda was positioning Brezhnev as a great war hero, so that themes and topics relating to World War 2, or, to be more precise, that part of it which was fought by the Soviet Union (called there the Great Patriotic War), was then all the rage with journalism, literature, art, and cinema. Bykov’s many novels and novellas depicting war were among those that were popular and widely read, and also critically acclaimed, at the same time bringing accusations of “false humanism” from the part of Soviet ideological officialdom. Be it as it may, the war theme of Bykov’s works, obviously irrelevant for the comparative investigation of prepositional semantics, was assessed by the postgrad in question as important enough to choose these works as a source of illustrative material; moreover, the importance of this particular topicality, consonant with the Soviet ideological and political fashion of that period, made her even overlook the fact that Bykov was a Belarusian author writing in his native tongue which was outside the dissertation’s scope.

At the same time, some Soviet researchers with opposite preferences and orientations based their studies on literary material which was considered as an alternative to the official one, even when, as in the previous case, it was irrelevant from the viewpoint of their research

purposes (and, of course, there have always been cases in which, whenever examples can be taken from various kinds of texts, the choice of the latter reflects the individual literary tastes of a linguist).

There were, nonetheless, some notable exceptions: M.L.Gasparov, a Russian philologist with an interest in the prosody of Russian poetry, belonged to the liberal, or, in the parlance of that period, “left” (Russian *левая*) intelligentsia in general and was in no way related to the officialdom of Soviet linguistics in particular. Yet, trying to find correlations between certain types of poetic metrics, on one hand, and certain types of poetic themes, on the other, he analyzed works of Anna Akhmatova, an icon of “genuine” Russian poetry and an idol of the intelligentsia, together with works of S. S. Narovchatov, an essentially Soviet author. This, in his colleagues’ opinion, was akin to undermining their common hierarchy of literary values and tastes, since it was them and not specific methods of linguistic inquiry that served as a token distinguishing “us” from “them”, i.e. liberal insiders from bureaucratic outsiders (Брагинская, 1995, с. 90). Gasparov himself mentioned his colleague Y. I. Levin explaining his refusal to make a presentation about O. Mandelshtam as motivated by the change of the status of the latter’s poetry as an object of study: in the previous, i.e. Soviet, period, Mandelshtam had been some kind of a pass code name by means of which one could be identified as a person of certain cultural preferences, but now any “helot” could study his works (Петров, 2006, с. 17).

In this way, quotations can operate not only as metalinguistic signs, but also as signs whose referents belong to other semiotic systems based on language, in this case to the socio-cultural code of literature. Indicating elements of the latter, i.e. literary works as well as their authors, quotations at the same time may connote positive assessment of these, but by no means necessarily, since the range of such reference can be fairly broad, comprising very many various sources quite different and even opposite in their character and value, and this can make the choice among them not significative in the above respect. Understandably, this is true first of all of biggest, comprehensive multi-volume explanatory dictionaries, such as Oxford English Dictionary or, on a somewhat lesser scale, Dictionary of the Ukrainian language in 11 vols. (“Словник української мови в 11 т.”, also known as *SUM*), making consistent and extensive use of literary and other texts available to their editors. However, due to Soviet censorship’s demands as to what works of what authors could be cited and what couldn’t, there are reservations as to the comprehensiveness of the latter with respect to its literary illustrative material (on this, see Ренчка, 2017, с. 73-176). Yet in spite of that, or rather because of that, the list of literary pieces and their authors quoted in *SUM* (whose 11 volumes were published from 1970 till 1980) represents what can be called a Soviet canon of Ukrainian literature, both post- and prerevolutionary. The representation, by the use of citations, of literature as well as other “languages” of culture is an inevitable byproduct of any big enough dictionary. It is collateral to the purposes of lexicographic exemplification, and because of that, it is the ability of illustrations to function in accordance with the goal of metalinguistic lexicographic description that defines requirements put to them by lexicographers (on these, see, e.g., Zgusta, 1971, p. 225-227, 263-268).

At the same time, a fairly similar (of course, *mutatis mutandis*) wide-ranging and, what’s more, intentional representation of a literature by the use of quotations can be found in another kind of linguistic works, as will be shown by the following example. In 1986, “Ukrainian grammar” (“Українська граматика”) was published in Kyiv, which was co-authored by the group of Ukrainian linguists headed by V.M.Rusanivs’kyi. Devised as a reference book to promote the awareness of Ukrainian in scholarly and academic circles outside Ukraine, and therefore written in Russian, its creation was initiated by the then Communist authorities of

Ukraine who also financed the project. The Russian language edition was to be followed by an English language one; the task of translating the former into English was assigned to me by Rusanivs'kyi in 1987 and completed by me three years later, but by that time there was no body to support its publication and so it never appeared in print. The initiative of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine was doubtless influenced by Moscow's change in stance towards national matters, a new stance more liberal and in any case somewhat different from the previous official attitude towards making Ukrainian more known internationally (in his letters to R.P.Zorivchak, Y.O.Zhuktenko, the author of a textbook of Ukrainian for English-speaking learners, mentioned the reluctance of the officialdom to go to any length for its publication as well as its continuous hindering it; see Зорівчак, 2015, с. 50-51).

Somehow or other, it is not only the knowledge of the Ukrainian language that "Ukrainian grammar" was to disseminate but also the information concerning Ukraine's culture, more specifically, its literature. This latter goal was to be achieved by means of quotations. In this work, examples in the form of sentence were of three kinds, two of them comprising few items and one far more numerous. First, there were illustrations of which neither their source nor author was given, e.g.: *Коли, було, не прийду, він завжди стріне – Коли, було, я приходив, він завжди зустрічав – Коли, було, приходжу, він завжди зустрічає* (Русановський, Жовтобрюх, Городенская и Грищенко, 1986, с. 96-97). The illustrations of the second kind, very rare indeed, were drawn from texts other than literary, in which case only the general indication of source's genre was provided, e.g.: *Як дбаєш, так і маєш* (Прислів'я); *Посієш вчасно – збереш рясно* (Прислів'я) (ibid., с. 91); *Передова інтелігенція усіх країн бореться за мир, демократію, проти мілітаризму, фашизму, проти загрози термоядерної війни* (Газ.); *Сидіти без діла – також важкий труд* (Нар. тв.) (ibid., с. 285). Then there was the third kind to which the vast majority of examples in this book belonged, and that was literary quotations. These were only supplied with name of the author: *Маріора сіла – і коні, зігнувши від натягнутих віжок шиї, помчались вулицею, збиваючи цілу хмару куряви* (Коцюбинський) (ibid., с. 311). Besides, among quotations from leading Ukrainian authors, such as O.Dovzhenko, M.Ryl's'kyi or O.Honchar, there are also excerpts which seem to be taken from their non- and not strictly literary works, such as literary criticisms, essays, articles and the like, cf.: *Відтоді як великий Ленін у 1922 році поставив вимогу, щоб була заслужана в Раднаркомі доповідь про діяльність Мічуріна, карта розповсюдження мічурінських рослин зазнала великих змін* (Довженко); *Відома його [Довженка] пристрасть – будувати, перебудовувати, поліциувати, вдосконалювати* (Гончар) (ibid., с. 302). Quite a few literary quotations in "Ukrainian Grammar" leave one with an impression that more than anything else, their aim was to demonstrate the stylistic mannerism of an author, cf.: *Колоसेповеню! Знаком пшеничної віри В небо зійди* (Б. Олійник) (ibid., с. 308); *І скільки хмільної тривоги наліто в дзвінку прохолоду ночей* (Муратов) (ibid., с. 296); *Остання днина опускає чоло. Далекий обрій – голубе з червоним. І павутиння малиновим дзвоном вколисує у вибалку село* (Б.Олійник) (ibid., с. 287). In any case the extensive use of examples drawn from the language of poetry with their highly individual imagery and numerous instances of artistic licence, including the use of archaic words and grammar forms, and also the author's *hapax legomena*, to illustrate rules, regularities and patterns that are not restricted to this register of language but are applicable to its other varieties as well seems to be counterproductive, especially since the grammar is not designed for native speakers, and complicated illustrative material is sure to make it difficult for them to grasp ideas and generalizations behind it.

Among examples in "Ukrainian grammar", quotations as well as those whose provenience is not indicated, not infrequent are illustrations with ideologically marked content, cf.:

Понад тисячу колгоспників усіх братніх республік приїхало вшанувати Героя Праці (Довженко) (ibid., с. 285); Наш труд – це зброя в світовій війні за мир, за щастя, за життя багате (Рильський) (ibid., с. 284); на день Перемоги оповідати синові про подвиг батька (ibid., с. 278); відповідальність перед колективом, обов'язок перед людьми (ibid., 272); відданість народові (відданий народові) (ibid., 268) and the like. However intentional such choices can be, and whatever were ideological and political reasons for making them, it is clear that examples of this kind can't be ignored and omitted in a work whose purpose is to describe the actual Ukrainian usage of the period with its many instances of Soviet newspeak.

The status of the ideological component in an example's meaning can, however, be essentially different in foreign language textbooks, if two language speaking communities, the one of the foreign language in question and the other of the textbook's author(s) and users, besides being different linguistically and culturally, also belong to societies opposed by their ideological and political orientations and values, the former's democratic and the latter's totalitarian. And that was exactly the case with Soviet textbooks of English. Since ideology is part of society's culture, there are many instances of illustrative matter, to be sure, in whose content distinguishing between features imposed by ideological standards, on the one hand, and, on the other, those reflecting more deep-lying traits of traditional ethnic culture and mentality may prove to be problematic, if at all possible. Later I shall give some examples of this kind but now I want to present some illustrative excerpts from a grammar book that seem to be straightforward in their ideological message and therefore clearly designed for student indoctrination. These I will take from "English Grammar" by M. Ganshina and N. Vasilevskaya, probably the best Soviet textbook on this subject, immensely popular among both professors and students of English. For the latter, one of the textbook's assets was its carefully selected (partly from English and American authors) illustrative matter, which was quite plain, not overloaded with unnecessary linguistic details, and unambiguously demonstrated what it was meant to demonstrate, differing markedly in this respect from such textbooks as V. L. Kausanskaya's "A grammar of the English language", another methodical work widely used for teaching English in Soviet universities and colleges. Yet, there are also instances (albeit not very numerous) of quite another nature. Thus, in the chapter on the use of the Past Tense of the Common Aspect, the co-occurrence of this tense with adverbs and adverbial expressions of past time reference is illustrated, among others, by these sentences: *I spoke to him last night. She came in a moment ago. I saw him this morning* (Ganshina and Vasilevskaya, 1953, p. 115). These, however, are preceded by the following: *The Second U.S.S.R. Conference for Peace was held in Moscow in October 1950. On November 7, 1017, the guns of the Aurora trained on the Winter Palace heralded the beginning of the Great Socialist Revolution, which opened a new era in the history of mankind. In the beginning of the eighteenth century, Peter the Great founded St.Petersburg, the new capital of Russia. In 1812 Napoleon's army invaded Russia. In the trying days of the Great Patriotic War, our heroic people stood firm and fought on with herds full of love for their country* (ibid.).

Also, I find expedient to compare illustrations in two editions of this grammar book, the fifth (1945) and the seventh (1953). 1945 was the year of the World War 2's end, so that U.S.A. and Great Britain were still referred to as allies in the Soviet official discourse and there was a lingering semblance of tolerance and good will with respect to them. Internationally, the time that followed, i.e. the period of 1945 through 1953, was marked by the beginning of the cold war between the former allies, and on the domestic Soviet scene it saw the start of the campaign, basically antisemitic, against "rootless cosmopolitanism" and "sycophancy towards the West" (Russian *безродный космополитизм и низкопоклонство перед Западом*, the literal

meaning of *низкопоклонство* “kneeling before someone”) as part of the implementation of the ideologeme of Soviet Russian patriotism in the Soviet people mentality. All this found its way into linguistic illustrations. So, right after the war, natural resource of America and Britain were presumably assessed as ideologically neutral and therefore mentionable in textbook examples, since they for all intents and purposes had nothing to do with the political and economical systems of these countries. By as late as 1953, such positive features, which *per definitionem* belonged to the natural rather than social environment, came to be regarded as unacceptable for, and inadmissible in, the image of these countries as projected by textbook illustrations, an image that the current Soviet ideology dictated and that had to be consistently and thoroughly negative.

That the official ideology and propaganda should have gone to such length to form the Soviet population’s worldview as the prescribing of the territorial distribution of nature’s riches (alloting them to “us” and denying them to “enemies”), is demonstrated by the following excerpt from the popular science book “Tales about precious stones” by the then leading Soviet geologist A.Y.Fersman (1883-1945), in which he claimed that red precious minerals, such as rubies, by that time not found anywhere in the Soviet Union, would eventually be located there, basing his reasoning exclusively on the symbolism of the red color and its ideological and political connotations, cf.: “We cannot put up with the fact that there are no deposits of this red sparkling mineral in the Soviet country. In this country, whose emblem is the red color, a color of intensive quests, energy, strong will and struggle, – in such a country there should necessarily be red precious stones. And we shall find them” (Ферсман, 1957, с. 96).

So, for instance, in the 1945 edition, there are the following examples: *The banks of Newfoundland abound with cod* (Ganshina and Vasilevskaya, 1945, p. 12), *As a fruit-growing country, Florida is especially distinguished for her grapes; she can also grow peaches, pears, and plums to perfection* (ibid., p. 17). *Florida produces most of the grapefruit of the United States* (ibid., p. 14). In the 1953 edition, however, the last was deleted, and the first two remained but were altered to meet new ideological demands by replacing place names referring to “enemy” localities with native ones: *The White Sea abound with cod* (ibid., 1953, p. 19) (the White Sea is located on the northwest coast of the Soviet Union); *As a fruit-growing country, the Crimea is especially distinguished for her grapes; she can also grow peaches, pears, and plums to perfection* (ibid., p. 38). The 1945 edition example *There are slums in the outskirts of London* (ibid., 1945, p. 15) must have been considered too mild and lacking in revelatory force, and therefore reinforced by changing it to *There is slums not only in the outskirts of London, but also in other parts of it* (ibid., 1953, p. 24). However absurd and arbitrary these changes may seem to us now, it should not be forgotten that for the grammar book’s authors; complying with current ideological and political requirements could be a matter of life and death.

Thus, the set of examples in such a textbook can be regarded as representing a normative, or prescriptive, model of what is called the life world (for the definition, see Simpson, Weiner (eds.), 2009), and analyzed accordingly. At the same time, it should be accentuated that no less revealing than the explicit and straightforward expression of specific socio-cultural features can also be the lack thereof, i.e. their omission as something inadmissible or negatively assessed in a given society and therefore unworthy of mention in linguistic illustrative material. To be sure, such negative treatment of substandard phenomena in examples by itself highlights the degree of a society’s openness and tolerance. The existence of such lacunas in the life world model projected by illustrative material can be detected and highlighted by means of comparing it with illustrations in a work similar in its subject and purpose yet different with respect to society’s norms and values. To demonstrate this, I will use Ganshina and Vasilevskaya’s grammar as a background against which I will cite some examples given in

“Practical English usage” by Michael Swan, a British writer specializing in English language teaching and the author of several very popular textbooks and reference works. A consistent comparison of these two textbooks, however instructive and informative, is outside the scope of the present study, yet, arguably, few examples will suffice to show how different are the views, cultures, and societies represented by them. Thus, the equivalents of the following illustrative sentences from Swan’s book, showing the speaker and his neighbors as only human or not at their best as human, would have been unthinkable in its Soviet counterparts projecting a thoroughly, and hypocritically, puritanical world view, cf.: *What I need is a beer* (Swan, 1984, p. XIV), *Where is the loo?* (ibid., p. XV), *I pushed through the crowd to the bar* (ibid., p. 9) *the silly old woman* (ibid., p. XXI), *I hate the noise of crying babies* (ibid.), *I found him drinking my whisky* (ibid., p. 457); *She sat there eating cream cakes like there was no tomorrow* (ibid., p. 73), *All children can be naughty sometimes* (ibid., p. 35) and so on. It should be noted that all of Swan’s illustrations are given without neither reference nor wider context which may qualify their usability; exemplifying English usage, they (especially ones with their subject in the 1st person singular with whom a learner may empathy or identify himself) are clearly intended to be reproduced by learners. Some examples would have been found wrong by Soviet grammarians because of their cultural marking, cf.: *Wherever you go, you'll find Coca Cola* (ibid., p. XIX); *To err is human, to forgive is divine* (ibid., p. XVIII). *I think I was quite fairly treated by the police* (ibid., p. 11), *My soul is exotic, mysterious, incomprehensible* (ibid., p. 21). Then there are also illustrations which are humorous, something that Soviet illustrative matter, “bestly serious” as it was, had nothing to do with, cf.: *You’re like a winter’s day: short, dark and dirty* (ibid) *The bath is the greatest human invention* (ibid., p. 68).

Hopefully, I have furnished enough evidence to substantiate my contention that linguistic examples are not only an essential part of linguistic texts and therefore can and should be studied accordingly, i.e. from the viewpoint of their primary, i.e. linguistic, role(s) in these texts. Arguably, they also can be considered a specific kind of language, i.e. a semiotic system, with its own plane of expression and content, its items and functions and, last not least, its own world view and world picture incorporating, among other, socio-cultural orientations, preferences and values. All of this seem to justify the creation of a new discipline called exemplology, or the theory of linguistic illustrations, I have pointed out some possible vistas of research in this area. To them yet another one can be added, which is seeking an answer to the question of what are relations that can exist between linguistic and semiotic functions of illustrative material, in particular, can the latter interfere with, and influence, the former, and vice versa.

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LINGUISTIC EXAMPLES AS CARRIERS OF SOCIO-CULTURAL INFORMATION

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Background: Illustrative material is an essential structural element of most types of linguistic texts where, depending on a nature of a text, it can fulfil various roles. Besides its linguistic functions proper, it can presumably perform other functions as well, in particular, that of a carrier of socio-cultural information. Usually assessed with regard to the former, linguistic illustrations, or examples, have never been studied from the viewpoint of the latter.

Purpose: The purpose of the author is to demonstrate the role of linguistic examples as signs that, operating in linguistic discourse, can, as a rule, additionally and purposely, convey sociocultural messages and perform various functions, in particular that of representing linguistic cultural codes, or secondary semiotic systems which are based on language, such as

literature, ideology, and propaganda, and correspondingly project world views and pictures that are peculiar to such codes as well to individual languages; also, to compare roles of illustrations in similar kinds of discourse and texts differing, however, in their general sociocultural and sociopolitical background.

Results: The author demonstrates and analyzes several cases of linguistic illustration material conveying its message in linguistic texts of scholarly and methodic character; he shows how various linguistics-external factors can motivate the choice of text excerpts or even their alteration in order to adapt them to their secondary functions of socio-cultural signs. As such they can be regarded as items of a specific sign system, which in its turn provides evidence testifying to the need of a new linguistic discipline which may be termed exemplology, or theory of linguistic illustrative material. From a wider humanitarian perspective, linguistic illustrations are a rich source of factual material for the study of society's orientations and preferences, highlighting these and providing interesting and valuable insights in society's culture.

Key words: linguistics, illustrative material, discourse, secondary semiotic system, sign, sociocultural information, function, message, world view.

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