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Localisation as Sociocultural Adaptation of Modern Design of Visual Communications

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Abstract. *The aim of the article* is to ground and formulate the definition of the term “localisation” in design using the example of visual communications. *Results.* A review of definitions and interpretations of localisation in different scientific and industrial spheres highlights that the term has different semantic meanings. In the sphere of visual communications, the concept appeared in web design, programming interfaces of programmes and games in the context of language, as well as technical, normative (State Standards) and legal parameters. Nowadays, the use of the term has expanded to the majority of graphic design, branding and marketing product. Its content is associated with sociocultural characteristics of the target groups. Interviews conducted with experts in the re-publishing and redesign of English-language books in the Ukrainian language, advertising communications, curatorship in mural placement and social poster display confirm the relevance of the content and design adaptation to the specifics of target groups. Localisation in design is defined as a strategy in increasing the functional and communicative efficiency of the project through the adaptation of the content and design to the specifics of sociocultural, legislative, technological, geographical and historical conditions of its use within the country, region, etc. *Scientific novelty.* For the first time in the theory of design, the term “localisation” is grounded and introduced (using the example of visual communications); the specifics of using the concept of “local” in the context of consideration of these phenomena are clarified; the results of interviews of Ukrainian experts with experience in the localisation of visual communications are presented; the necessity in sociocultural adaptation of the content and design of visual communications to the requests of target groups is emphasised. *Conclusions.* In conditions of globalisation, the significance of localisation of visual communication projects is increasing. Its implementation requires immersion in the local culture and/or close contact with their representatives during the design process. However, the most effective localisation can be carried out directly by a representative of the target group as a carrier of its local culture.

Keywords: visual communications; graphic design; sociocultural adaptation; localisation; target group

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Introduction

In the practice of world design, the integration of global brands into local cultures has been growing in recent years. This is evidenced by the increase in publications on the successful implementation of adaptations of visual communication projects according to sociocultural characteristics of target groups and unsuccessful communication due to their neglect. Against the background of globalisation, orientation to the so-called regional context is increasingly becoming a communicative concept. European universities are increasingly paying attention to the formation of designers' skills in order to adapt a product to the needs, perceptions and reactions of target groups of different territories and regions.

In the analytical and recommendatory articles of practitioners and experts, the concepts of “localisation”, less often — “regionalisation”, “adaptation” are used to indicate such a correction of the content and design of visual communications. As an established term, the concept of “localisation” is found in the exact sciences and covers other semantic loads. However, given the prevalence of the term “localisation” in interface design, its increased presence in articles on branding, book design and infographics, as well as subject design and environment design, it is appropriate to normalise this concept in the scientific thesaurus of research in the design sphere.

This research is devoted to the introduction and substantiation of the concept of “localisation” in the scientific thesaurus of visual communication design, the definition of localisation levels, as well as the illustration of this phenomenon in Ukrainian design practice.

Recent Research and Publication Analysis shows that the issue of adapting the content of visual communication projects is developed mostly in the works of designers who totally understand the orientation to regional sociocultural features, and conceptualise this trend into a programme for the development of design as an industry.

Awareness of the necessity to take into account the sociocultural characteristics of the target group, which are manifested within certain territorial locations (for example, a country, region, city), has been made public in the publications and speeches of designers since the end of the 20th century. The rhetoric of the French designer Pierre Bernard is full of criticism of the influence of transnational corporations, whose specific functioning has standardised many aspects, including design as well. P. Bernard insists that the development of visual communication in the world is possible due to the variety that is formed as a result of the direct contact of design (or a designer) with specific social structures (Bernard, 1991–1997). The analyst repeatedly emphasizes the necessity to work with the specific dynamics of certain social situations that are correlated with human dimensions. An individual approach to creating a project is necessary, even if it contradicts the “values of triumphant marketing” (Bernard, 1997).

In 2001, a group of graphic designers led by Noah Scalin, who united in the DAM (Designers Against Monoculture) community, stated their point of view rather radically. Ideologues voiced to their foreign counterparts the dilemma of choosing to be hired guns for the world's multinational corporations, whose interests lie solely in profits and power, or even to be agents of change by amplifying the voices of communities. It was also suggested to join and spread the following concepts: 1) we dedicate ourselves to supporting the unique culture of communities in which we live and work; 2) we refuse to create design that contributes to the creation of a global corporate monoculture (Scalin, 2001).

The issue of the relevance of the local in the design activity was conceptually revealed in the studies of the American designer and teacher Viktor Papanek (2020). He reflected on the needs of developing countries and the place of design as a sociocultural system in meeting those necessities. Also, the author formulates four possible options for the development of design in the mentioned countries in cooperation with the world professional society, and more precisely four levels of effectiveness of design functioning at the local level. Among them, he characterises as the most effective the last, the fourth level. When the designer moves to another country, then he immerses himself in the local culture, designs according to local needs, and trains young local designers: "Then for at most one generation, and at least five years, they will be able to create a group of designers strongly connected to their cultural heritage, lifestyle and needs" (p. 115).

The current state of discussion of the globalisation issue in design is characterised by the increasing orientation of designers to the satisfaction of territorial sociocultural requests, as well as taking into account local characteristics during the broadcast or distribution of global products. For example, an appeal to local cultures is present in modern manifesto of designer-architector Yasmeen Lari (2021). Using her own example, she calls on her colleagues to develop and implement socially and ecologically oriented housing for vulnerable segments of the population. Among the programme items she notes the use of sustainable materials of local origin and the use of attributes taken from traditions and heritage. Designer-analyst Ruben Pater (2021) highlights the need for cooperation between designers of the country of the communicator and authentic carriers of the culture into which the project is planned to be integrated. His book generally denies the neutrality of communication. It illustrates various situational aspects of differences between cultures and, by extension, between people. He gives an example of the operation of the Butterfly Works design studio, which, in working with visual programmes for different countries and continents, never rushes to complete the project without consulting with "local" studios and, most importantly, testing on representatives of the local ethnic group (p. 103).

Authors of the Pedagogical Experiment in Design Education Post, Ashley Hall and Shuxin Cheng (2018), highlight a research project that aims to challenge "easy" globalised communication that requires no effort in project interpretation, and to improve cultural exchange through encouragement to "read" the design. In this experiment, graduate students were asked to use the knowledge gained to develop or redesign a product/artifact that would "localize a global design, globalise a local design, comment on or criticise the global-local aspect of the chosen design" (p. 3).

The word "localisation" appears more and more often to indicate the consideration of the peculiarities of local culture in design in expert publications on design (sub-

ject, visual communications). Among such authors, in addition to those mentioned, are U. Athavankar (2007), M. Nordhoff, T. August, N. A. Oliveria and K. Reinecke (2018), A. E. Syarif Agustin (2023). Other authors use the term “regionalisation” synonymously. For example, A. Gattupalli (2023) points out that in a globalised world, “regionalism” is emerging as a vital strategy for building trust, promoting belonging and maintaining a lasting impression. In the context of brand marketing, “regionalised” design is a force which added value is to create a sense of authenticity. Embracing the diversity and cultural richness of different regions with brands opens up the potential for meaningful connections that enhance the interaction of communities around the whole world.

Close to the topic is the usage of the term “cross-cultural”. For example, J. C. Diehl and H. Christiaans (2006) emphasises that culture affects the behaviour and interpretations of human behaviour. Accordingly, various manifestations of culture affect the productivity of the designer because the macrocontext affects the design models, which affect the results of the planned works.

As a result of the analysis of the publications, there appears a conclusion that the topic of orientation of designers to the requests and sociocultural features of the target groups is becoming more and more relevant, in particular in the practical plane. In the theoretical plane, that is, in scientific publications, this topic is covered, but there is a diversity in the use of terminology. Considering the fact that the term “localisation” is quite common among practicing designers, there is a necessity to introduce it into the scientific and categorical apparatus of the design research.

Aim of the article

The aim of the article is to ground and formulate the definition of the term localisation in design (using the example of visual communications), and offer hierarchical levels of its implementation in design, based on the study of published studies and conducting interviews with industry experts.

Main research material

The basic formulation of the term on which the majority of scientific versions in various thematic branches are based was grounded back in 2007 by a team of scientists and practitioners of the LISA organisation (Localization International Standards Association): “Localization is the process of modifying products or services to account for differences in distinct markets” (Lommel, 2007, p. 49). The authors mention: “Localization involves the adaptation of any aspect of a product or service that is needed for a product to be sold or used in another market. This process significantly impacts both technical and business functions within organizations. This includes how sales are made; how products and services are designed, built and supported; how *financial* reporting systems are implemented; and so on” (Lommel, 2007, p. 11).

Also, in this work, localisation is presented as a component of social responsibility of business companies: “Companies doing business around the world have a responsibility to respect the nations and cultures with which they do business. Localization

provides the means by which companies can enter multiple markets with sensitivity and respect” (Lommel, 2007, p. 54).

A simplified definition of the term “localisation” can be found in the Cambridge dictionary: “the process of organising a business or industry so that its main activities take place locally, rather than nationally or internationally”, and “the process of creating a product or service that is more suitable for a particular country, region” (“Localisation”, n.d.).

The legislation of Ukraine contains the concept of localisation in the context of production (this is an indicator of the local component in the specific weight of the cost of raw materials, materials, units, aggregates, parts, components and components of products, works, services and other components of domestic production in the cost price of the goods that are the subject of procurement) (Localisation in public procurement). In turn, the Great Ukrainian Encyclopedia contains the definition of localisation in geography (assigning any geographical object to a certain place (“Localisation (geography)”, n.d.), and in mathematics (“Localisation (mathematics)”, n.d.). Comparison of data from the open encyclopedia Wikipedia, not as a scientific source of information but as an indicator of the studiedness and relevance of the issue in society, notes the following: the English-language version contains 5 main spheres (biology, engineering and technology, language adaptation, mathematics, physics) and 3 additional ones, in which localisation is used as an introduced term, and the Ukrainian-language version contains only 2 variants of definitions in the sense of spatial limitation of certain phenomena or processes.

The greatest attention to localisation on the part of scientists is observed in the sphere of translation studies. M. Jimenez-Crespo (2022) studies localisation in such a way: “Localization is now a complex technological, textual, communicative and cognitive process by which these digital texts are processed in order to be used in linguistic and socio-cultural contexts other than those of production” (p. 3).

A significant amount of scientist’s work is mostly related to the language localisation of web resources. However, he accumulates various statements and cites, particularly the interpretation of “local standards” as “a set of information related to certain geographical regions and languages, such as elements related to culture, law, ethics, ideologies, politics or technologies” (“information linked to specific geographic regions and languages, such as elements related to culture, law, ethics, ideology, politics or technology”) (Jimenez-Crespo, 2022, p. 4)

In a thorough analysis of studies on localisation in the game industry, Carme Mangiron (2017) formulates the definition of localisation based on the views of Heather Chandler, Minako O’Hagan, Miguel Bernal Merino as a “process of adapting a game technically, linguistically and culturally in order to market it in different territories”.

Christophe Declercq (2012) notes that localisation is a practical area of multilingual projects that contain complex files or software applications, and occurs at the linguistic, technical and cultural levels (p. 3, p. 10). Additionally, the scientist singles out the aspect of localisation in marketing and claims that “localization is also a business model, aiming at selling a product customized to a target locale” (p. 10). Although the degree of localisation of marketing and advertising depends on the general approach of the brand to its promotion in the markets, the advertising success of the product depends also on the cultural characteristics of certain target groups.

In scientific publications of Ukrainian researchers, the following definitions are available: “software localisation (I10n) is the process of adapting a programme to a specific linguistic and cultural audience, including translation from Ukrainian to English” (Shvets, 2024, p. 136); “full adaptation of the translation product to the local conditions of its use in a specific environment” (Ivanytskyi & Statkevych, 2022, p. 231); “adaptation of product names to national linguistic features, as well as their accompaniment with slogans in the advertising business”, and “language localisation as a type of translation activity in the form of cultural and linguistic adaptation of a product, particularly in the computer science sphere, cybernetics and related sciences, for the localisation of games” (cited by: Volkov, 2021, p. 74); “the process of translation and adaptation of its elements to regional, cultural, technical and legal features of the target region” (Osypchuk & Vasylytova, 2024, p. 105). Localisation of mobile applications “covers a wide range of aspects, including linguistic, cultural, technical and social dimensions” (Savchuk & Levchenko, 2024, p. 65).

The authors of the scientific work on the localisation of foreign board games do not set out to define the term, so they use its interpretation as “translation of game content” (Deineko & Slediuk, 2024, p. 54). They note that the language localisation has always been a relevant issue for the sale of products in another country. The scientists also distinguish the concept of “full localisation” (when the rules, packaging, cards and other components of the game are to be translated), and “small localisation” (only the rules of the game or a few of its most important components are translated). “All these decisions are made by the regional publisher, who chooses what the game will look like for their market. This may be influenced by the volume of the game itself, the publisher’s budget, the agreement with the rights holder or other factors” (Deineko & Slediuk, 2024, p. 55).

In general, among the aspects of localisation, scientists identify the following:

- language issues; physical issues; business and cultural issues; technical issues (Lommel, 2007, p. 11);
- interface and content translation; adaptation to cultural differences; date, time and currency formatting; graphic design and visual style; testing the localised version (Shvets, 2024, pp. 136–137);
- adaptation of the names of the heroes of board games, change for a better understanding of the gameplay of untranslatable jokes and the terminology of components (Deineko & Slediuk, 2024, p. 55);
- “sociocultural context, political and legal context, moral norms and customs of a specific region” (Ivanytskyi & Statkevych, 2022, p. 231).

Thus, in general, localisation as a term has been actively spread in the sphere of programming interfaces of computer programmes and games, as well as in web design. First of all, it concerned the language issue, as well as technical, regulatory (State Standards) and legal parameters. For example, this applies to telephone number formats, postal addresses and postcodes, currency codes, measurement systems, battery sizes, plug types, voltage and current ratings, broadcast television systems (digital technology has 4 models). Restrictions also exist in the legal system, which also affects the project in such a way: compliance with the addressee’s rights to privacy, additional warnings on the website or packaging, compliance with censorship of verbal or visual information, requirements for consumer labeling, requirements for universality of design (i.e. accessibility to all social groups). A state’s sensitivity to various political

issues, such as disputes over geographical names or disputed borders, annexed or temporarily occupied territories, is important. These and other factors are important and need to be clarified at the start of the development of any project for which export to other countries is planned.

It is worth to note that in scientific articles, localisation is considered mostly in the field of linguistics and translation studies, to a lesser extent in the sphere of programming. Materials related to the design of visual communications and, in particular, graphic design, belong mainly to experts and practicing designers and are much smaller in number. Although the majority of studies still concerns interfaces, the term has also begun to be used in the context of graphic design, branding and marketing and is associated with the sociocultural characteristics of target groups. The authors of the basic thesaurus of the LISA organisation were among the first to point out the need for localisation: “Local business and cultural characteristics can affect all aspects of product design and localization... These issues are often not taken into account by product designers simply because they do not know about them. Other areas of adaptation include colors and graphics that must be adapted to local cultural norms. In addition, product designers must be aware of political and business issues, as well as local cultural expectations” (“Local business and cultural issues can affect all aspects of product design and localization... These sorts of issues are often missed by product designers, simply because they are not aware of them... Other areas of adaptation include colors and graphics that must be adapted to meet local cultural norms. In addition, product designers must be aware of political and business issues and local cultural expectations”) (Lommel, 2007, p. 14). Additionally, in this programme document, there are recommendations for predicting the possibility of localisation of the following components of graphic design: graphic images (compliance with the target market, planned replacement of images with specific ones for a specific country); colors (correspondence of semantics and use of usual and common colour combinations in a specific country); icons (based on culturally and linguistically specific images of a specific culture for intuitive understanding by the target group); abbreviations (taking into account different interpretations and coincidences of abbreviated inscriptions); marking (provision by design of a place for any specific markings installed in a specific country); forms and other data entered by users in interactive products; compression and expansion of the text (taking into account the different lengths of inscriptions in different languages) (Lommel, 2007, pp. 21–23).

Modern experts define localisation as “a process of product and content adaptation in order to ensure its local perception by the addressee based on a deep understanding of local culture, user behavior and market nuances” (Krimme et al., 2022); “a process of adapting and customising a product to the necessities of a particular market, defined by its language, culture, expectations, local standards and legal requirements. Localization can be applied to any type of product or service that targets multiple audiences from different cultural backgrounds” (Sheldon, 2023).

In order to find out the tendencies of such an adaptation in various graphic design products, an analysis of projects and a series of interviews with Ukrainian designers and industry experts were conducted.

A bright example of localisation based on the principle of reading and writing is the website of the Ukrainian company Brand Ukraine, which is engaged in strategic com-

munication with the world about the war in Ukraine. The page information is translated into 8 languages. Peculiarities of the perception of information by addressees using the Arabic language, in particular, reading from right to left, imply a change in the design of the page. As compared to pages in English, French and other 5 languages, its equivalent in Arabic has a compositionally mirror layout (Figure 1). It is important that the authors of the project did not use a pure translation of the text, which only duplicates the text in another language, but used a systematic approach. They completely changed the placement of the text and images. Such attention to the recipient has a positive effect on interaction with him, and the approach emphasises attention to design. If, according to the design concept, the reader must first see the illustration, and then the textual comment, then this principle is also preserved in the Arabic page. That is, the goal has been achieved, albeit with significantly greater resources (time-consuming work of a web designer) than a simple translation of text blocks.

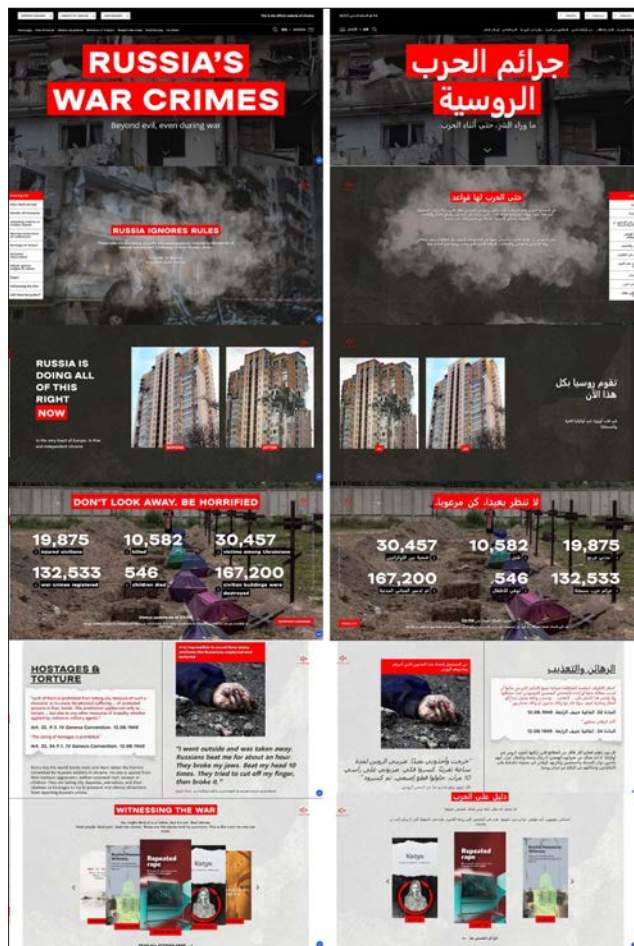


Figure 1. Comparison of English and Arabic web page layout
Source: (*Russia's war crimes of Ukraine*, n.d.)

During a conversation with Kostiantyn Kozhemiaka, a director of ArtHuss Publishing House, it was revealed that the adaptation of book products is one of the main approaches of the publishing house, as it specializes in publishing foreign books on design and art in Ukrainian translation. In terms of localization, the publishing house works in two aspects, such as translation and design. Since the segment of literature chosen by the publishing house is “non-fiction”, translations must take into account the adaptation of not only numerous professional terminology, but also everyday expressions used by authors to be close to their readers. It is quite clear that within this study the accent was put on the design of translated books. In this situation, it should be understood that contracts with publishers-right holders for reprinting provide for various options, including, for example, complete reproduction of the original, or the possibility of adding elements of localisation while preserving the general content of the book. During the public presentation of the work of Kostiantyn Kozhemiaka’s publishing house, organised by the co-author of this article as part of KyivBookFest (September 2023), a very interesting experience was revealed. First, it concerns book covers. In many cases, with the consent of the publishing house, the owner of the main rights, book covers have been created that are closer and more attractive to the Ukrainian consumer in terms of certain elements. The publishing house conducts constant surveys of its subscribers regarding their preferences and requests, and based on this, offers original cover designs. For example, a new design was developed for books “What is it anyway? 150 years of modern art in one pill”. So, the typographic solution that dominates the original has been replaced in the Ukrainian product by a variant with graphic content (by Mykyta Kravtsov). In a similar way, the visual component of the books “100 Ideas That Changed Art” and “100 Ideas That Changed Photography” was emphasised by the Ukrainian versions of the book covers of Kristina Zolotarova (Figure 2).

According to the views of the director of the publishing house and the chief marketer, this option finds a greater response among potential buyers, as it immediately reveals the essence of the content. Additionally, this approach provides a possibility for Ukrainian designers to show themselves. For example, Oksana Hadzhii got the opportunity to design the covers for the series “What you should know...”. In the series of books about photography and photo art, the publishing house fulfills the mission of popularizing Ukrainian photographers. In contrast to small-scale typographical foreign originals, the editorial office places photos of Ukrainian authors on the covers (with subsequent involvement of photographers in the events of book presentations and discussions). In one of the last cases, namely the reprint of the book “Fundamentals of Graphic Design”, the terms of which were the complete reproduction of both the cover and the content of the entire book, a discussion arose regarding the offered Ukrainian version. Considering the fact that the Ukrainian translation of the English adjective “graphic” has a much longer spelling (in the case of this name — “graphic”), the composition required rethinking and caused doubts. In response, the publishing house offered its readers-subscribers an interactive session on design offers for adapting the general composition to the specifics of the language translation. The winner was chosen, although the edition was implemented in the publishing house version (Figure 3).



Figure 2. Comparison of book covers of English and Ukrainian versions of books. The ArtHuss Publishing House design localisation. The authors' collage.
 Source: (*What are you looking at?*, n.d.; *Read this if you want to take great photographs of people.*, n.d.; *100 ideas that changed art*, n.d.; *Shcho tse vzhali take?*, n.d.; *Yak znymaty neimovirni portrety*, n.d.; *100 idei, shcho zminyly mystetstvo*, n.d.)

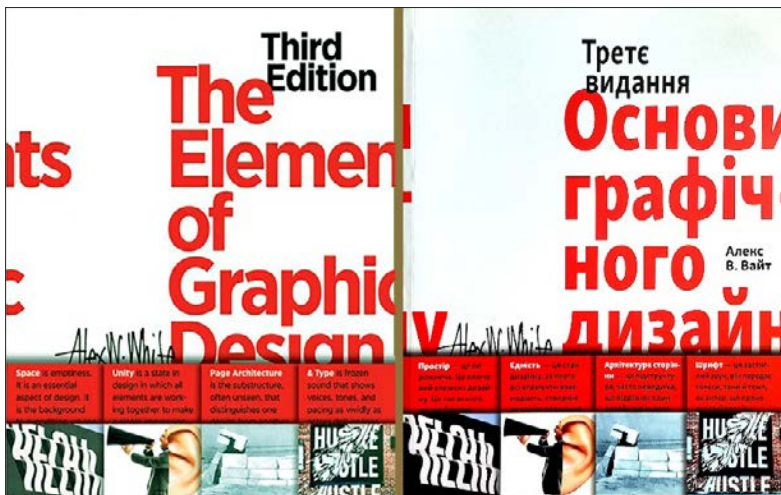


Figure 3. Localisation of book cover design. ArtHuss Publishing House.
 Source: (*The elements of graphic*, n.d.). The authors' pictures

Thus, the localisation of cover design requires the designers to be able to variably adapt the composition (taking into account the different length of words), to choose the illustrative material well, as well as knowledge of the iconic culture system of the community for which the localisation is taking place.

Whenever possible, the publishing house fills the publication with illustrations by Ukrainian artists. This became the already noted book “What is it anyway?”, which included about 30 illustrations by M. Kravtsov about the behavior of people in museums and “Critical thinking” with drawings by Viktor Kudin. We also consider the position of the publishing house in the direction of Ukrainization of the context to be very honorable. For example, on the cover of the book “The Creativity Code” is the work of the Ukrainian painter and sculptor Mykoly Zhuravlia “The Horseman” (Figure 4); the Ukrainian edition of the book “Banksy” includes the works of the artist, which he made in the Kyiv region after the full-scale invasion; the names of the shops on the cover of “Soft City” are in Ukrainian, and the inscription on the bus is “victory”.



Figure 4. Localisation of the book cover design of “The Creativity Code”.
ArtHuss publishing house.

On the cover: the work of M. Zhuravlia “The Horseman”. The author’s collage.
Source: (*The Creativity Code*, n.d.; Zhuravel, 2020; *Kod tvorchosti*, n.d.)

All the mentioned areas of localisation of foreign publications for the Ukrainian market not only contribute to the growth of the success of the publishing house as a business, but also play an important role in the cultural development of the country and the positioning of Ukraine (in the person of the Ukrainian publishing house) in front of foreign partners as a confident player with creative and well-founded offers.

In an interview with Port Agency partner Yuliia P’ianykh, regarding the management of projects of placing murals of Ukrainian artists on the walls of buildings in large European cities (Figure 5), she mentioned a few important conclusions. Firstly, when developing the idea of painting the wall of the building, it should be taken into account that the implemented mural has been in the lives of European residents for a long time, so its contemplation must be harmonious with their information field. That is why the conversation about Ukraine and the war in such projects, according to Yu. P’ianykh, cannot be straightforward and sharp-tongued. The content of Ukrainian

murals must fit into the context of European viewers. That is why the emphasis in them shifted from the issue of the tragic violence by the Russian aggressor to the uniqueness, multidimensionality and “Europeanness” of Ukraine. Additionally, this type of public space design requires personal coordination with all residents of the area. In one of the projects, due to the disapproval of only one resident out of all those who lived in two adjacent houses, the location of the mural had to be moved to another region/district/neighbourhood.



Figure 5. Murals in Vienna and Berlin from the project of Port Agency “The Wall”.
Source: (*The Wall*, n.d.)

Olena Donets, art critic, researcher of the Department of Fine Arts of National University of Ukraine, curator and co-curator of poster exhibitions of the Ukrainian graphic designers community “Creative Resistance KNUKiM/KUK” in Poland (Krakow) revealed the differences in the perception of visual content in an interview. For example, she mentioned that the audience at the exhibitions reacted the most to the posters that violated the topic of violence against women and children, the destruction of families. This is expected, since these topics and their visualisation in an accessible visual language appeal to universal human values, evoke empathy, emotions of sympathy, pity. If talking about the style, authentic naive graphics with an appeal to emotional children’s drawings are easy to understand. Also successful in communication are posters that reveal the terrible aspects of war, but without frank “bloodthirstiness and tragedy.” Complicating the perception of the posters by foreign addressees is the use of metaphors that are understandable to the Ukrainian designer and the viewer due to their local prevalence in other media, for example, trained combat geese or sprouted sunflower seeds, which were spread in the first months of the Russian invasion.

Although O. Donets does not agree with the generalisation of “the West” and “Western mentality” due to the level of heterogeneity of societies and their dissimilarity among themselves (even within the European Union), which has been growing rapidly over the past 10 years, she supports the existence of differences in the inter-

pretation of the concept “patriotism”. This topic is partially discussed in a publication about Ukrainian design during the war (Udris-Borodavko, 2024). According to the views of O. Donets, in the countries of the European Union, patriotism means taking care of the interests of one’s own country first (and not of the whole association), but with a fairly measured behavior and is often mentioned immediately before the threat of war. In Ukraine, patriotism as a phenomenon crystallises and acquires deep meanings, and through pain and trials it becomes synonymous with the willingness to sacrifice one’s own interests for the sake of the country and Ukrainian society. Different interpretations of concepts, as well as the perception of visual signs by representatives of different cultures, must be taken into account by designers when creating content intended for distribution abroad.

The results of the processing of theoretical and empirical materials, as well as the conducted interviews, convincingly show that the relevance of the adaptation of visual communication products for representatives of various sociocultural groups is increasing today; secondly, they provide an opportunity to formulate a definition of the term “localisation” specifically for the sphere of design. The following definition of localisation in the design of visual communications is proposed: *it is a strategy of increasing the functional and communicative efficiency of the project by adapting the content and design to the specifics of the sociocultural, legislative, technological, geographical and historical conditions of its use within the country, region, etc.* Associated concepts that arise in the process of analysing examples of localisation, for example, *local culture, local target group, local designers, local requests*, etc., are interpreted as “local”. It means they are those that are within a certain territory (location), in which widespread and the most similar or identical sociocultural, legislative, technological, geographical and historical conditions function. This strategy refers to the distribution of design objects in an international space that is becoming increasingly segmented and heterogeneous today. In addition, for further research, we consider it necessary to introduce the related concept of “*localised design*”. Localised design is a design adapted to sociocultural, legislative, technological, geographical and historical conditions of the area where it will be deployed.

An important addition to the concept of localisation in design is the definition of its levels. In the practice of visual communication designers, localisation is mostly carried out with a focus on the features of the country, i.e. “the territory that constitutes unity from the point of view of history, natural conditions, population, etc.” (dictionary) and has defined borders. However, a division into lower levels is provided for, which are related to the territorial-administrative system legalized in one or another country. For example, the structure of such administrative-territorial units as region has been introduced in Ukraine; area; community; city; district in the city; village; village. It can be used to divide the territories that have formed historically – Slobozhanshchyna, Podillia, Halychyna, Transcarpathia, etc. The choice of localization hierarchy option depends on the goals of project development and the parameters of the defined target group.

Presented in the article by Academician V. Abyzov (2018), an analogy with the hierarchical levels of the organisation of the subject environment, together with the localisation parameters of visual communications projects allows to structure the process of localisation of visual communications (Table 1):

Table 1

**Localisation of visual communication projects
according to hierarchical levels of organising
a subject and informational environment**

Levels of environment organisation (subject and information)	The essence of the level of localisation of visual communication projects
Social (sociocultural)	Features of the worldview of the target group, priority values, culture in a broad sense
Functional	Language; date, time and currency parameters
Compositional and spatial	Formal and meaningful dominants that attract the local addressee's attention
Artistically figurative	Stylistics, colour scheme with taking into account semantics, balance between concrete and rational content, abstract and figurative
Content (the level of subject content of the environment)	Visual and verbal signs of various types (icons, indexes, symbols) that carry identification with the territory and events within its borders; fonts associated with historical and ethnic protoforms
Level of art synthesis, including the use of decorative and applied, landscape art and symbolic elements	Stylisation of the entire composition and elements according to common techniques, particularly with national identity, citing artifacts known in a specific territory and recognisable by addressees
Use of appropriate building materials and products	Usage of materials common in a specific area and their processing techniques, or imitation on the plane of a printed or electronic project

Source: elaborated on the basis of the scientific work (Abyzov, 2018) and the authors' practical experience.

On the basis of the given analogy, it is expedient to structure the localisation process of visual communication projects at the following levels:

Table 2

Levels of localisation of visual communication design

Levels	Localisation essence
1. Functionality	Language translation, adaptation of parameters of date, time, currency, regulatory markings

Continuation of table 2

2. Artistic imagery	Stylisation of the entire composition and elements according to techniques that approach the national identity; citing artefacts known in a specific area and recognisable by addressees; usage of common variants of colour combinations; balancing between concrete and rational content, abstract and figurative content; usage of fonts related to historical and ethnic protoforms; usage of materials common in a specific area and their processing techniques, or imitation on the plane of a printed or electronic project
3. Semantics	A selection of visual and verbal signs of various types (icons, indexes, symbols) that bear identification with the territory and culture, events within it; colour scheme with taking into account semantics
4. Sociocultural identity	Taking into account and reflecting features of the worldview of the target group, priority values and culture in a broad sense

Source: elaborated on the basis of the authors' practical experience.

Table 2 presents localisation complexity levels from 1 to 4, where each previous level forms the ground of the next one. Due to this, the effectiveness of localisation and communication with the target group increases. The feasibility of using one or another level depends on many factors: the scale of the project; the preparation period; the budget and social responsibility of the brand; the desire to communicate as effectively as possible with representatives of new markets.

Conclusions

As a result of the review of the publications of design theorists and practitioners, conducted interviews, as well as given examples of implemented visual communications projects, it is formulated that localisation in the visual communication design is a strategy for increasing the functional and communicative effectiveness of the project by adapting the design to the specifics of sociocultural, legislative, technological, geographical and historical conditions of its using within the country, region, district etc.

In this study, the localisation levels of visual communication design are offered: the level of functionality, artistic imagery, semantics, sociocultural identity. Each subsequent level contains the previous ones.

As it follows from the conducted study:

- firstly, the process of localisation is an important dominant in the practice of modern design of visual communications. Such a reference point is the antithesis of globalization in its “pure” form with the initial spread of international cultural and subject forms without exception in all countries;

– secondly, it is impossible to effectively design local or localised developments without long-term immersion in the culture and lifestyle of the local population, or at least without close contact with local experts. Otherwise, the result is a surrogate of superficial imaginary templates about this or that cultural heritage and an example of a primitive version of mass culture;

– thirdly, the localisation of the design can be done best by a representative of the local culture, who knows all its intricacies, and can also predict the peculiarities of perception and response by the local addressee.

All these aspects are important in the professional training of practicing designers. Theoretical study of the principles of localisation of design products of various types and their implementation in project tasks should be full-fledged modules of educational components in design education institutions/establishments.

Further development of the topic can be carried out in the direction of studying the relevance of the concepts of “localisation” and “national identity” in the sphere of visual communication design; study of the peculiarities of the perception of the semantics of Ukrainian visual communication projects by representatives of other countries, in particular those projects related to informing about the full-scale invasion of the rf in Ukraine; finding out the experience of Ukrainian designers in localising Ukrainian products to the markets of other countries and vice versa, adapting international brands for Ukrainian locality.

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Conflict of interests

The author declares that there is no conflict of interests.

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Локалізація як соціокультурна адаптація сучасного дизайну візуальних комунікацій

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Анотація. *Мета статті* — обґрунтувати та сформулювати визначення терміна «локалізація» в дизайні на прикладі візуальних комунікацій. *Результати дослідження.* Огляд визначень і трактувань локалізації у різних наукових і виробничих галузях показав, що термін має різні семантичні значення. У сфері візуальних комунікацій поняття з'явилося у вебдизайні, програмуванні інтерфейсів програм та ігор у контексті мови, технічних, нормативних (Держстандарт) і правових параметрів. Сьогодні застосування терміна розширилося на більшість продукції графічного дизайну, брендингу та маркетингу, а його змістовне наповнення пов'язується із соціокультурними особливостями цільових груп.

Проведені інтерв'ю з експертами в перевиданні та редизайні англomовних книг українською мовою, рекламних комунікацій, кураторства з розміщення муралів та експонування соціальних плакатів підтверджують актуальність адаптації контенту і дизайну до специфіки цільових груп. Локалізацію в дизайні визначено як стратегію підвищення функціональної та комунікативної ефективності проєкту через адаптацію контенту і дизайну до специфіки соціокультурних, законодавчих, технологічних, географічних та історичних умов його використання в межах країни, регіону тощо. *Наукова новизна.* Вперше в теорії дизайну обґрунтовано та введено термін «локалізація» (на прикладі візуальних комунікацій), уточнено специфіку використання поняття «локальний» у контексті розгляду цих явищ; представлено результати інтерв'ю українських експертів з досвідом локалізації візуальних комунікацій; наголошено на потребі соціокультурної адаптації контенту та дизайну візуальних комунікацій до запитів цільових груп. *Висновки.* В умовах глобалізації зростає значущість локалізації проєктів візуальних комунікацій. Її здійснення потребує занурення в локальну культуру та/або щільного контакту з їх представниками в процесі проєктування, втім найефективніше локалізацію може здійснити безпосередньо представник цільової групи як носій її локальної культури.

Ключові слова: візуальні комунікації; графічний дизайн; соціокультурна адаптація; локалізація; цільова група

