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**THE ANALYSIS OF THE ROLE AND IMPORTANCE OF THE USAGE OF ILLUSTRATION
IN PACKAGING DESIGN COURSE PROJECTS**

ABSTRACT

The packaging design area focuses on not only protecting the product from outside factors but also communicating with the target audience with proper design language. When it comes to visually communicating with the target audience, illustration is one of the design elements that can preferentially be used in packaging design. Within the scope of education, the packaging design course projects some of the design problems are solved by illustrative approaches. Illustration can turn into a communication bridge in packaging design projects. In this study, the illustrative solutions of the visual communication design students for the packaging design projects are examined.

Keywords: Illustration, Packaging Design,
Visual Communication Design, Design Solutions,
Design Education

**AMBALAJ TASARIMI DERS PROJELERİNDE İLLÜSTRASYON KULLANIMININ
ROLÜ VE ÖNEMİNİN ANALİZİ**

ÖZET

Ambalaj tasarımı alanı, ürünü dış faktörlerden korumanın yanı sıra hedef kitleyle de doğru bir tasarım dilinde iletişim kurmaya odaklıdır. Hedef kitleyle iletişim kurma konusuna gelindiğinde ise illüstrasyonun, ambalaj tasarımında tercih edilebilecek tasarım elemanlarından biri olabileceği söylenebilir. Doğal olarak, ambalaj tasarımı ders projelerinde bazı tasarım problemleri illüstratif yaklaşımlarla çözümlenmektedir. İllüstrasyon, ambalaj tasarımı projelerinde bir iletişim köprüsüne dönüşebilmektedir. Bu çalışmada görsel iletişim tasarımı öğrencilerinin ambalaj tasarımı projelerine illüstratif tasarım çözümlenmeleri incelenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: İllüstrasyon, Ambalaj Tasarımı, Görsel
İletişim Tasarımı, Tasarım Çözümleri,
Tasarım Eğitimi



1. INTRODUCTION (GİRİŞ)

In visual communication design education, students must be guided to the professional life that they are going to face after graduation. The packaging design course, an important area in visual communication design, must be focused on encouraging creativity and exercising for the professional life. In packaging design, the preferential course projects give freedom to the students to reflect their imagination and let them make discoveries in their visual problem solving. When it comes to visual problem solving, illustration appears as an effectual branch and tool. "Illustration is offering a genuine challenge to graphic design as the creative force most likely to engage people's attention" (Shaughnessy, 2009:153). With the help of the illustration, students can produce creative and unique projects.

2. RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE (ÇALIŞMANIN ÖNEMİ)

The Packaging design courses provide students the skills to design visuals for packaging. Illustration, which is one of the most important branches in design, can help students to make new discoveries in the design process of visuals. With the production of the mock-ups, it is also easier to see the results of the visuals and the design. In this study, the selected packaging design course projects from the years 2010-2014 have been analyzed to see how illustration was used as an element of the design solution.

3. PACKAGING DESIGN (AMBALAJ TASARIMI)

Packaging design is identified by Ambrose and Harris (2012:12) as a specialty which includes marketing, the usage of 3D and 2D areas and aims to protect the product from outer factors. In addition to this main property, packaging design has a mission to go up against in contest with other probable packages. According to Heller and Fink (1999:104) as a "foot soldier in the war", so besides protecting and storing the brand, it must draw the viewers' attention in a short amount of time. Cliff (1992:6) also states that all products compete with each other on the shelf and packaging design can give an enormous attraction that can increase sales. With all these dynamics, it can be said that the design factor of a package is vital. Also, one of the differences of this area of expertise is that the design product has a direct communication with the client. The packaging design is mostly on a shelf where the target audience can directly handle, examine and make purchasing decisions about it. During this period the packaging design can communicate with the audience by the help of the visual design. Visual design for packaging has many tools to communicate one of them is illustration.

4. IMPORTANCE OF THE USAGE OF ILLUSTRATION (İLLÜSTRASYON KULLANIMININ ÖNEMİ)

Illustration which is generally defined as an expression of images which enhance the text with subject -related pictures, has an importance in many areas in visual communication design and graphic design departments, including packaging design courses. Becer (2002, p.210) defines illustration as the whole elements that visually portray the text, caption, etc. and categorizes food packaging illustrations as advertising illustrations.

As a hybrid discipline, illustration is a unique tool for advertising. Newark (2007:86) claims that some ideas may only be communicated by illustration, since it both interacts with art and design. The illustration gains its uniqueness as being the reflection of the personal style of the illustrator. Evans and Thomas (2008:81) states that illustration has an expressive property that can reflect a

feeling or a mood and they distinguish illustration from photography as being more expressive. Also both digital and traditional illustration techniques don't change its essential quality. According to Ambrose and Harris (2013:36), owing to the fact that it's mostly manually produced, illustration reflects and has the feeling of being personal. Illustration and illustrative approach can make a sincere and effective design communication bridge in visual communication design. And today illustration can be seen in many visual communication design areas including packaging design.

5. THE USAGE OF ILLUSTRATION IN PACKAGING DESIGN COURSES AND THE ANALYSIS OF THE PACKAGING DESIGN PROJECTS (AMBALAJ TASARIMINDA İLLÜSTRASYON KULLANIMI VE AMBALAJ TASARIMI DERS PROJELERİNİN ANALİZİ)

Packaging design courses provide opportunities to the students for improving their skills on visually and conceptually finding solutions for design problems. This challenging course includes finding and improving design concepts, making lay outs, creating visual solutions for packaging design problems and creating mock-ups (prototypes). In the packaging design course projects that I led, students first worked on creating visuals for the package according to the product's properties. They worked on various visual solutions including typography, photography, and illustration. This study only discusses and includes the projects that are solved with illustration. There are various techniques and tools are used for the production of the illustrations. Digital illustrations are mostly formed with a drawing tablet or with mouse with the help of vectorial or pixel-based programmers. Also in the last project there can be seen a traditional technique with acrylic paint and water colour pencils. The students worked on creating a concept and producing the visuals.

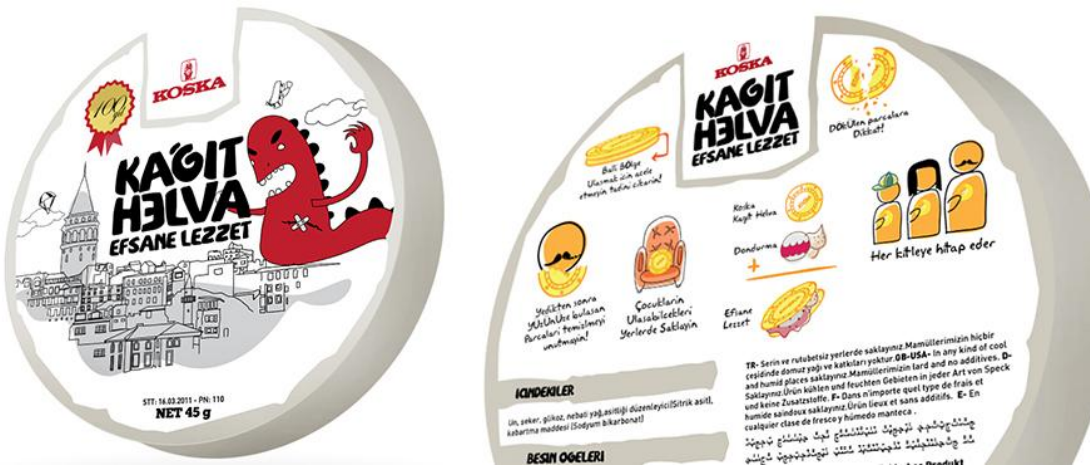


Image 1. Packaging Design Project. (Gazi University, Faculty of Fine Arts, Visual Communication Design Department Student Emre Kosker, Production Year: 2010)

(Görüntü 1. Ambalaj Tasarımı Projesi (Gazi Üniversitesi, Güzel Sanatlar Fakültesi, Görsel İletişim Tasarımı Bölümü Öğrencisi Emre Kosker, Üretim Yılı: 2010))

In one project student from the Visual Communication Design Department Emre Kosker used digitally made illustrations for a packaging design project (see Image 1) for a Turkish traditional sweet, "Kağıt Helva". This traditional street is generally sold on the sweet so the student used "The legendary flavor" as a slogan. On the

round - shaped package which is consonant with the product, there can be seen illustration on both sides. With the illustrations the student tried to express street life on the cover and the usage of the product on the back. On the front cover, a linear style illustration of a city image can be seen. Also this linear silhouette is supported with a light grey background. The student also illustrated a red dominant coloured legendary hungry monster figure which seems as if it is on the way to attack the city. On the back side, the illustrations guide the clients to remove the seals from the package. Also there can be seen several illustrations of people in the line to buy and eat the product. To emphasize the illustrations on both sides, a white background is preferred. On this limited area of the package, there can be seen a little story that is expressed by illustration. "Packaging is storytelling in a compressed area-like posters in miniature" (Newark, 2007:130).



Image 2. Packaging Design Project (Gazi University, Faculty of Fine Arts, Visual Communication Design Department Student Ekin Can Acar.

Production Year: 2011)

(Görüntü 2. Ambalaj Tasarımı Projesi (Gazi Üniversitesi, Güzel Sanatlar Fakültesi, Görsel İletişim Tasarımı

Bölümü Öğrencisi Ekin Can Acar. Üretim Yılı: 2011))

In the second project (see Image 2) the student preferred to make and use a digital illustration for a product named "Macaron" that symbolizes a person having an appetite. The illustration of a giant mouth placed on the corner of the package adds on the drawing a feeling of movement. The simple style of the mouth illustration makes the audience focus on the action of eating and enjoying the macaron. Heller and Fink (1999:104) state that having the "less is more" philosophy in creating a good packaging design is vital. The empty spaces on the cover let us focus on the typography and the illustration with the linear texture on the sides strengthens the cover. Also on the inside cover, the typographic style and colour is coherent with the outer surface. "Colour, typography and illustration all help to carry recognition" Cliff (1992:12)



Image 3. Packaging Design Project (Gazi University, Faculty of Fine Arts, Visual Communication Design Department Student Görkem Tılıç. Production Year: 2011)

(Görüntü 3. Ambalaj Tasarımı Projesi (Gazi Üniversitesi, Güzel Sanatlar Fakültesi, Görsel İletişim Tasarımı Bölümü Öğrencisi Görkem Tılıç. Üretim Yılı: 2011))

In this project mock-up (see Image 3) the main concept of the student was to visualize or to make a character design of a cookie monster for a cookie brand. In the digitally-made vectorial illustration, it can be seen that the imaginary cookie monster is covered by cookies. It can be thought that the aim of being covered by the cookies is consumer guidance for overly eating the product or placing the product in daily life. This project is a proper example for the illustration's strength to reflect the feelings and ideas. Ambrose and Harris (2013:36) defines illustration as having a property to release emotions in a way that photography cannot. Also the light background colour helps the viewer focus more on the illustration. The handwriting type is harmonic with the illustration used for the slogan and the brand name "Kurabiyem".



Image 4. Packaging Design Project (Gazi University, Faculty of Fine Arts, Visual Communication Design Department Student Ezgi Şen. Production Year: 2014)

(Görüntü 4. Ambalaj Tasarımı Projesi (Gazi Üniversitesi, Güzel Sanatlar Fakültesi, Görsel İletişim Tasarımı Bölümü Öğrencisi Ezgi Şen. Üretim Yılı: 2014))

"A designer must make connections in the mind between creativity and process in order to successfully communicate a message to an audience and answer a client's needs" (Landa, 1998:10). In this project (see Image 4) the student made a packaging design for a Spanish spicy olive oil named "Unique". She preferred to use a readymade glass bottle and preferred a red box to make a contrast to it. Vectorial illustrations that are made to reflect the property of the product, the focus point of the design is chosen as a Spanish matador's arm holding a cape as a cultural element. The student tried to identify the spicy flavored oil with a matador's arm holding a red cape waiting for the furious bull. The black arm with a white hand not only makes a contrast with the red background but also uses two surfaces on the box. The red area of the cape is used as an ideal space for typography. On the red box the area of the cape is decomposed from the background with a particular luminous print. It can be thought that the illustration made for this project communicates with the audience with a sincere visual language.



Image 5. Packaging Design Project (Gazi University, Faculty of Fine Arts, Visual Communication Design Department Student Ezgi Şen. Production Year: 2014)

(Görüntü 5. Ambalaj Tasarımı Projesi (Gazi Üniversitesi, Güzel Sanatlar Fakültesi, Görsel İletişim Tasarımı Bölümü Öğrencisi Ezgi Şen. Üretim Yılı: 2014))

In another student project (see Image 5) is focused on a cold tea product. The student chose to illustrate two animals which are identified with the cold feeling resulting from the element of fear and horripilation. The aim of this decision was to get the attention of audience and emphasize the sense of cold. On the contrary the visual language of these vectorial illustrations also reflects sympathy. In the visuals it is seen that a black bat and a black cat illustration with colorful backgrounds. For cold tea with lemon aroma, the eyes of the bat are illustrated as lemon and also lemon slices are used on the background. For the tea with bergamotte aroma, the white eyes of the cat and green tea leaves on background can be observed. Both packaging designs have the central focus. Heller and Fink (1999:104) states that the good examples in package design are the ones which mostly have a central focus.



Image 6. Packaging Design Project / Gazi University, Faculty of Fine Arts, Visual Communication Design Department Student Esra Oğuz Yılmaz.

Production Year: 2011

(Görüntü 6. Ambalaj Tasarımı Projesi / Gazi Üniversitesi, Güzel Sanatlar Fakültesi, Görsel İletişim Tasarımı

Bölümü Öğrencisi Esra Oğuz Yılmaz. Üretim Yılı: 2011)

Edwards states that "Ideas can come from any direction: They can be softly witty, intellectually playful, or something that breaks all boundaries yet is still sharply relevant" (Edwards, Klimchuk, Wallace, Werner, 2011:7). In the sixth project (see Image 6) a series of a various flavored milk box packaging designs named "Kido" can be seen. We can see the 3-D prototype mock-ups are united with the illustration character's shape. It is because the student designed the boxes as happy characters who have bodies and even with their feet. Three different colours (pink, yellow and brown) were chosen for three different flavors of milk; strawberry, banana and chocolate. The vectorial illustrations on the packaging design symbolize a happy and content customer. The logo can be seen inside of the smile of the character.



Image 7. Packaging Design Project (Gazi University, Faculty of Fine Arts, Visual Communication Design Department Student Emel Kaya Betz.

Production Year: 2010)

(Görüntü 8. Ambalaj Tasarımı Projesi (Gazi Üniversitesi, Güzel Sanatlar Fakültesi, Görsel İletişim Tasarımı

Bölümü Öğrencisi Emel Kaya Betz. Üretim Yılı: 2010))



In the final student project (see Image 7) that is going to be analyzed we see a packaging design project for a rosehip tea named "Mia". The illustration produced for the packaging shows a client figure who is drinking a cup of Mia rosehip tea. The illustration are produced with manuel technique by the student and reflects her artistic visual language. The student scaled and changed the size of the illustrations depending on the surface. On the front surface, the illustration placed on the half size of the area with a white background. When it comes to the sides the illustration scaled to the half size of the area and red background is used in contrast. For the tea bags, the texture made with the illustration figure covers the area.

7. CONCLUSION (SONUÇ)

As it can be seen in the examples every project has it's own design concept. Groth (2006:46) associates package to novels and movies and puts forward that each of them include their own story inside. So, every package design problem can be solved within its own components including target audience, product, logo, visual, ingredients etc. Also dealing with many surfaces can be the most challenging part of a package design. Heller and Fink (1999:104) takes the three dimensionality of a package as an essential element to differentiate it from other kind of printed media. With all these areas the design students have to enlarge or construct a design system that refers all surfaces of the package. In some of the analysed projects (see Image 2, Image 4 and Image 6) students made an attempt to continue with the illustrations through the surfaces. These design problems, creating concept and working on three dimension, can be solved and supported with illustration. "Some areas of graphic design, such as illustration, can be predominantly dependent upon image alone" (Barnard, 2005:30). Additionally with the help of illustration the aim is to transmit the feeling of consuming the product to the customers. In conclusion, using illustration as a creative element in packaging design courses can be counted as one of the alternatives for problem solving in design education. Demir (2005:154) interprets that teachers can encourage and guide students to a bold, creative and spontaneous way of thinking. And in the packaging design projects, students can be encouraged using illustration. Finally, giving packaging design courses for more than 5 years, I have observed the effective results of the usage of illustration in the projects.

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