

Research on the Textbook of “Illustration Design” for Art and Design Majors

Congcong Jiang¹

¹ College of Art and Design, Yantai Nanshan University, Yantai, Shandong, China

ABSTRACT

This article analyzes the publication of the "Illustration Design" textbook in China from 2003 to 2023 from the aspects of textbook publishing information, textbook publishing time and quantity distribution, and analyzes the number of published works in textbooks, and characteristics of textbook writing style. The author attempts to present the appearance and development of the "Illustration Design" textbook at the beginning of this century, and puts forward suggestions for the compilation of the "Illustration Design" textbook based on this.

Keywords: “Illustration Design”, Textbook, Development history.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the professional division of higher education institutions, illustration, as an art category, is classified under different professional subdivisions such as art, design art, or film and media art under the discipline of art studies. Different schools may have differences in the specific curriculum design and teaching based on specific circumstances. Textbooks are the foundation of classroom teaching and the main basis for teacher-student interaction. “The Outline of the National Medium - and Long-term Education Reform and Development Plan (2010-2020)” clearly requires “strengthening the basic construction of laboratories, on campus and off campus internship bases, curriculum materials, etc. Therefore, the systematic organization and analysis of textbooks provide an important foundation for teaching and talent cultivation.

2. PUBLICATION INFORMATION OF “ILLUSTRATION DESIGN” TEXTBOOK

Through searching the collection information of the National Library of China on "Illustration Design", a total of 80 editions of related books were found, including textbooks, monographs, painting techniques, application software tutorials, etc., from Zhu Linjun's monograph "100 Classic Illustrative Designs" published by Dongfang Publishing House

in 2003 to Yi Yudan's monograph "Illustration Design" published by Tsinghua University Press in 2023. Among them, there are 57 editions of textbooks. Although some books are written in the textbook style, this article will only analyze the books with textbook publishing marks in the 57 editions.

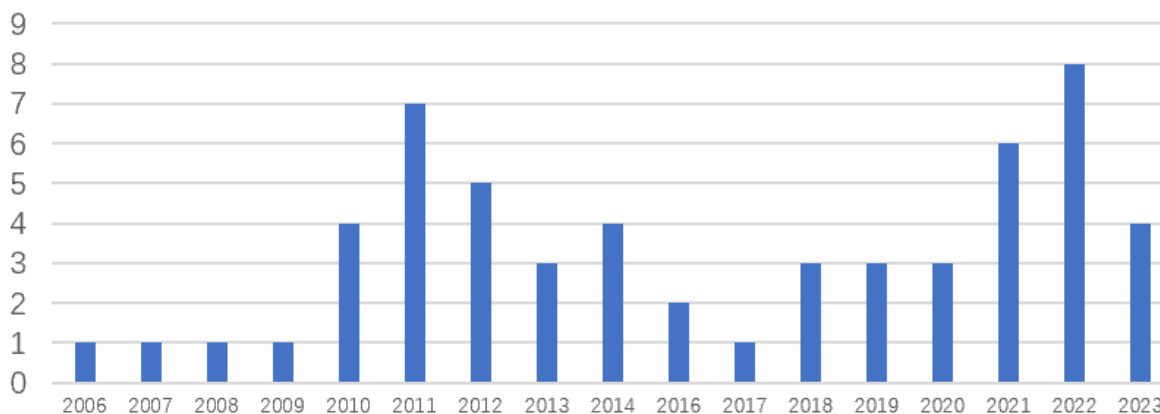
Among the 57 editions of textbooks, there are 38 editions of undergraduate textbooks for higher education, including 1 edition of Internet+ integration textbooks, 3 editions of higher vocational textbooks, and 16 editions of other technical textbooks. The publishing forms are mainly paper textbooks. A total of 35 publishing houses participated in the publication of the textbook "Illustration Design", with 11 publishing houses publishing 2 or more books. Among them, East China Normal University Press, Nanjing University Press, China Youth Publishing House, Electronic Industry Press, and Ocean University of China Press published 3 textbooks, China Light Industry Press published 4, and Huazhong University of Science and Technology Press published 5. The time span for publishing textbooks by China Youth Publishing House is from 2010 to 2012, Nanjing University Press is from 2016 to 2022, Shanghai Jiao Tong University Press is from 2012 to 2022, Huazhong University of Science and Technology Press is from 2006 to 2023, Ocean University of China Press is from 2019 to 2014, Electronic Industry Press is from 2012 to 2020,

China Light Industry Press is from 2018 to 2021, and East China Normal University Press is from 2018 to 2021.

In recent years, published textbooks have fully utilized modern information technology, strengthened digital construction on the basis of paper textbooks, and expanded the information content of textbooks through digital media and means, such as video demonstrations, on the basis of offline content. However, compared with other textbooks, the number of digital textbooks with illustration design is not large. After investigation, it is found that as of 2023, the only officially published integrated textbook is Ye Jianguang's 2019 edition of "Illustration Design" by East China Normal University Press. Other parts of the textbooks also have relevant awareness but lack systematic content design.

3. DISTRIBUTION OF PUBLICATION QUANTITY AND TIME OF "ILLUSTRATION DESIGN" TEXTBOOKS

From the "Figure 1" "Distribution Chart of Textbook Publication Quantity and Time", it can be seen that illustration design textbooks emerged relatively late and have a relatively short development time. They began to gradually rise after 2000, with two peaks in 2011 and 2021 respectively, and their publication quantity fluctuated up and down. Overall, they show a growing trend. In the 1990s, there were also related books whose content and format, although having the function of textbooks or serving as textbooks in actual teaching, were not recognized as textbook publications and therefore did not appear in chart statistics.



■ Distribution Chart of Textbook Publication Quantity and Time

Figure 1 Distribution chart of textbook publication quantity and time.

4. ANALYSIS OF THE NUMBER OF WORKS PUBLISHED IN TEXTBOOKS

The attribute of visual communication direction and modeling design in illustration design determines the importance of incorporating works into textbooks. Through statistical analysis of the number of images included, people can glimpse the breadth and richness of the textbook. Through research, it has been found (specific data can be found in the "Analysis Table of the Number of Works Published in Textbooks") that different versions of textbooks have their own emphasis on the selection of works. Overall, the number of classic works is less than that of contemporary

works, which is related to the relatively short historical development of illustration design. ("Table 1") The number of foreign and domestic works is basically the same or each has its own emphasis. For example, the works selected by Wang Wei (2010 edition) are mainly contemporary illustration works from abroad, covering a large number of authors, a wide range, and high level and quality of works. Relatively speaking, there are few choices for excellent contemporary illustration works in China. The works selected by Gao Rongsheng (2011 edition) and Li Qing (2021 edition) include a large number of contemporary illustration works in China, and a significant proportion of outstanding works by teachers and students in Chinese colleges and universities. The works selected by Chen Lan (2018 edition) also

account for a large proportion of student works. In terms of the selection of foreign works, some versions focus on works from European and American countries, while others emphasize works

from Russia and Northern Europe. Overall, the proportion of works from European and American countries is higher than that from Asian countries.

Table 1. Analysis table of the quantity of works published in textbooks

Author(s)	Press	Total number of works (pieces)	Number of foreign works (pieces)	Number of Chinese works (pieces)
Zhang Yi (2016 version)	Tsinghua University Press	512	271	241
Gao Rongsheng (2011 version)	China Youth Publishing House	592	80	127
Zhang Hongbo (2011 version)	Tsinghua University Press	410	294	116
Wang Wei (2010 version)	People's Fine Arts Publishing House	589	548	41
Fu Shengchun (2016 version)	Nanjing University Press	289	173	116
Li Qing (2021 version)	China Academy of Art Press	571	71	500
Dong Xuelian (2021 version)	Tianjin People's Fine Arts Publishing House	598	286	312
Li Zhaoxian (2014 version)	Huazhong University of Science and Technology Press	322	119	203
Liao Fengfeng, etc. (2023 version)	Huazhong University of Science and Technology Press	292	154	138
Tang Xiaohui, etc. (2020 version)	Beijing University of Technology Press	289	187	102
Han Xiaomei (2013 version)	China Architecture & Building Press	293	215	78
Lin Bin (2018 version)	China Light Industry Press	252	192	60
Dong Guanni (2021 version)	China Light Industry Press	232	197	35
Dong Lingye, etc. (2020 version)	Northeastern University Press	257	185	72
Ye Jianguang (2019 version)	East China Normal University Press	276	161	115
Chen Lan (2018 version)	East China Normal University Press	325	90	235

5. ANALYSIS OF THE CHARACTERISTICS OF TEXTBOOK WRITING

Overall, the compilation styles of various versions of textbooks can be summarized into three parts: theoretical overview, practical methods, and appreciation of works. The theoretical overview

mainly discusses the definition, history, classification, and other aspects of illustration design; The practical methods mainly include creative techniques, expressive media, practical operations, and expanded applications; Appreciation of works mainly includes introductions to well-known illustrators, analysis of classic works, and display of student works. The

emphasis of different versions of textbooks varies, among which Gao Rongsheng's book "Illustration Teaching Throughout the Entire Process" (2011 edition) mainly includes two parts: a brief history of illustrations and practical experience. The practical part focuses on four parts: suitable forms of illustration carriers, character image shaping, phrase visual communication, and illustration creation. The appendix at the end of the textbook, "Undergraduate Teaching Syllabus of the Fifth Studio of the Printmaking Department of the Central Academy of Fine Arts", provides detailed information on the teaching content, course settings, and lesson arrangements for third and fourth year students in the Fifth Studio, which is of great reference value for teaching practice. The 2021 version of the textbook edited by Li Qing is mainly divided into three chapters: basic theory and basic concepts, illustration project training, and appreciation of excellent illustration works. The textbook spends a large part of the content in the project training section, which is divided into five sections based on illustration style. It combines project requirements and examples, illustration knowledge points, student works and excellent works, and extracurricular expansion, and has strong operability and guidance for teaching practice. The 2010 version of the textbook edited by Wang Wei extracts key words from each chapter, and extends the theoretical section to include illustration archives, illustrators and their works, and thematic appreciation; In the formal analysis stage, specialized training, illustrators and their works, and illustration examples are extended, with rich and detailed content and high-quality selected works. The 2019 edition, edited by Ye Jianguang, is an interactive experiential textbook that includes micro lesson videos, teaching materials, extended learning, and online case studies. The 2018 edition by Chen Lan is divided into five parts: Illustration Design Overview, History and Classification, Basic Training, Tool Features and Techniques, and Teaching Cases. The book showcases a large number of excellent student works.

6. PROBLEMS AND DEVELOPMENT SUGGESTIONS OF TEXTBOOKS

6.1 Existing Issues

First, the writing style is single, and the content of the textbook is too general, lacking classification and advanced awareness of skills. As a skill, there are inevitably different stages of development in its learning process, and each stage requires different

focuses to overcome and solve. If not identified and treated uniformly, the guiding role of textbooks for learners will be lost. Most of the existing versions of textbooks focus on popularizing knowledge and skills, so their content covers a wide range, but the specific knowledge points are scattered and evenly distributed, lacking specialized explanations and training for improving illustration skills.

Second, there are problems in the classic and representative issues of the selected works. An excellent painting should have: a systematic artistic language, a unique presentation perspective, a distinct contemporary atmosphere, and a moving artistic appeal. Compared to traditional painting genres, illustration as an independent art form has only existed for a short time and has not formed an independent and complete evaluation standard, resulting in a mixed quality situation in the selection and publication of works.

Third, there is a lack of systematic introduction and training on the narrative function of illustrations. Illustration has purpose and service. The original meaning of illustration is to make abstract text more concrete. It exists to facilitate the public's better understanding of information [1] Narrative is inherent in the development of illustration itself, and the training and cultivation of narrative ability is also a key focus of illustration curriculum and textbook design.

Forth, there is a lack of clear evaluation criteria for works. Illustration design courses are generally assessment courses, which adopt a large homework assessment format to complete an illustration design. [2] The existing textbooks lack evaluation criteria and systems for specific knowledge points and teaching units. If there is a lack of clear evaluation system and standards, it is not conducive to the improvement of students' illustration design ability and the establishment of long-term development concepts and abilities in their professional field.

6.2 Development Suggestions

The first is to pay attention to the construction of a high-quality illustration resource library. Illustration is between painting and design, and is closely related to the art of painting. Therefore, improving its level not only requires proficient operating techniques, but also extensive reading to broaden one's horizons. The construction of a high-quality resource library is particularly necessary. While showcasing classic works, excellent student

works should also be displayed to promote readers' thinking and creativity from both vertical and horizontal perspectives of history.

In addition, illustration design, as a part of visual communication design, follows the trend of the times in its style evolution. How to select classic case works into textbooks in the rapid trend evolution should become one of the difficulties in textbook writing.

The second is to pay attention to the research of the ontology content of illustration discipline. Illustration creation, as a highly practical subject, requires students to hone their skills and enhance their insights through painting practice. There are universal general rules for the improvement and development of skills. How to provide appropriate guidance plans for different stages of development based on the essence of illustration skills and combined with humanistic and artistic literacy is the core content of illustration teaching and should also be the focus of illustration textbooks.

The third is to expand textbook capacity through information technology. It is necessary to incorporate new concepts and technologies, and actively integrate illustration design course content with social practice.

The fourth is to emphasize the development of teaching materials for graduate students. Illustration design, as a modern educational discipline, has a relatively short history of formation and development. In terms of subject knowledge reserves, there are few works related to the collection and sorting of basic materials in the academic community. However, the professional construction speed is fast, and many colleges and universities have established graduate majors. Therefore, it is difficult for students to form a basic and comprehensive understanding of the discipline. One of the goals of graduate education should be to form one's own cognition based on extensive reading of multiple perspectives, so the construction of textbooks and other basic facilities is particularly necessary.

7. CONCLUSION

Through research, it has been found that over the past two decades since 2000, China's higher education textbook "Illustration Design" has reached a peak in publication, mainly manifested in a significant increase in the number of publications compared to before. Most textbooks are aimed at teaching units such as higher education institutions

and vocational colleges, and lack attention to the improvement and development of individual user abilities. The compilation of textbooks is based on a deep understanding and research of the discipline itself. The richness and diversity of textbooks cannot be separated from the researchers' keen perception and practical exploration of the field of illustration.

REFERENCES

- [1] Liu Di, Build a Sense of Order to Influence the Expression of Narrative Illustration [D]. Beijing: Tsinghua University, 2014: 23.
- [2] Zheng Yu, On the Process Assessment of Digital Illustration Design by Hybrid Teaching Mode [J]. Journal of Heihe University, 2022(4).
- [3] Gao Rongsheng, Illustration Teaching Throughout the Entire Process [M]. Beijing: China Youth Publishing House, 2011.
- [4] Li Qing, Illustration Design [M]. Hangzhou, China Academy of Fine Arts Press, 2021.
- [5] Wang Wei, Illustration Design [M]. Beijing: People's Fine Arts Publishing House, 2010.
- [6] Chen Lan, Illustration Design Techniques Tutorial [M]. Shanghai: East China Normal University Press, 2018.
- [7] Dong Guanni, Illustration Design [M]. Beijing: China Light Industry Press, 2021.
- [8] Ye Janguang, Illustration Design [M]. Shanghai: East China Normal University Press, 2019.
- [9] Lin Bin, Illustration Design and Drawing [M]. Beijing: China Light Industry Press, 2018.
- [10] Fu Shengchun, Illustration Design [M]. Nanjing: Nanjing University Press, 2016.
- [11] Zhang Hongbo, Illustration Design [M]. Beijing: Tsinghua University Press, 2011.
- [12] Zhang Yi, Illustration Design [M]. Beijing: Tsinghua University Press, 2016.