



FREIE UNIVERSITÄT BOZEN

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FREE UNIVERSITY OF BOZEN - BOLZANO

Fakultät für
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1+1=3

Multilingualism in visual communication

Abstract

Even if in modern times the western world has divided itself up into various language-specific units, related to respective states, the question of communication at a multilingual level has never really been solved. Quite the opposite. In the not too distant future, it could turn into a problem of new dimensions, because, although globalisation has opened up borders, it appears not to create any unity around English.

Even a communication fixed only visually can evoke multilingual problems because each form of communication is only effective if it allows itself to be integrated into the respective cultural environment of the individual.

Normally we try to solve this problem by simply using written messages together with visual information in several languages. That is however in no way an optimal solution. In addition the visual information (photographs, graphic pictures etc.) also needs to be translated into the respective culture for which it is intended.

This research project concerns itself with questions raised from a design point of view. It does not want to conduct an historical, sociological or linguistic investigation of the initial situation of multilingual real life experiences, but much more to point out the multitude of technically advanced solutions that have been used so far in different social and historical contexts, and to make suggestions of renewal and further development in this regard.

Criteria, based on various methods used in projects to respond to multilingual problems in visual communication, should be developed to implement possible innovative solutions for the most frequent problems.

Objectives

- 1.) analysis of best practice of visual communication by means of multilingual initial starting points in local public transport
- 2.) developing innovative visual solutions for the principle life and work situation problems examined under 1.)
- 3.) establishing criteria that help in the process at a general operative level to handle visual communication with multilingual situations innovatively.



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