

Methods of translating

MA Graphic Communication Design
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The reading which I chose was *Fuck Content* (Rock, 2013), which was very insightful in helping me to think about the relationship between content and form in the project. The second reading as a filter was *Exercises in Style* (Queneau, 1958). One of the interesting aspects of Queneau (1958)'s reading is that the author designs various forms, not only in typography and binding, but also in the writing style itself. I chose three of these styles and experimented with how the main argument of *Fuck Content* (Rock, 2013) re-presented.

Notation

We designers constantly revise and reshape the world by manipulating essential forms, from the written to the visual, using a range of rhetorical devices. In other words, the designer's content is always design itself.

Retrograde

*The designer's content is forever design itself.
Through the manipulation of essential forms,
designers modulate and reconstruct the relationship
between the user and the world.
This stems from the designer's enviousness of
and insecurity towards the author.
This has motivated a movement among designers
that seeks values in the origination of content.*

Surprise

**We designers are
jealous of the kind of
power and prestige
that authors have!**

But what is content for designers?

**It is the design itself, and we
designers manipulate the form
to build essential relationships
between the user and the world.**

Through the exercise, I found that the impression received by the reader changes significantly depending on the style: the first style gives the impression of monotony; the second has the potential to attract the reader's attention by starting the last part first; and the third style gives the impression of a strong argument from the author. Then, based on these received impressions, I decided to design the form of each text, as described by Rock (2009). I realised I was able to communicate the different tones of each style to the audience. Through this two-stage exercise, I feel that for the first time I have a deeper understanding of what 'designer content is design' means.

From this experiment, I see a link to the Methods of translating. The kind of 'translation' a designer does has a great influence on the recipient. While I feel this 'translation' offers great value to designers, it also gives rise to fear that may lead to the manipulation of false impressions. For example, as stated in *From formalism to social significance in communication design* (Forlizzi and Lebbon, 2002, p3), designers could lead society in the right direction but at the same time, we could also have the possibility of confusing it through our wrong translation. I have not yet been able to answer this question at this stage, but I need to continue to think about it from the perspective of visual communication.

Reference

Forlizzi, J. and Lebbon, C. (2002) 'From formalism to social significance in communication design', *Design issues*, 18(4), pp. 3–13. doi: 10.1162/074793602320827389.

Michael Rock, 'Fuck Content', *Multiple Signatures: On Designers, Authors, Readers and Users*, [1996] [2009] 2013

Queneau, R. (1958) *Exercises in Style*. Translated by B. Wright. Amsterdam, Netherlands: Gabeerbocchus Press.