

Emotional Performance in Illustrated Art Picture Books: Taking The Fat Lady's Skirt as an Example

Kexin Wan ¹, Yijun Tao ^{2*},

²College of Fashion and Design, Donghua University, Shanghai, China

*Corresponding author: YiJun Tao, E-mail: tyj@dhu.edu.cn

Abstract:

Due to the rapid increase in material and living standards, people are facing the distress of obesity, including children and adolescents; however, their impact is not just that their appearance becomes bloated. At present, there have been many investigations and studies on maintaining a healthy body shape and encourage people to maintain healthy living habits, but few are focusing on the inner emotions of the obese. Based on the research experiment, the work studied the psychological changes and emotional analysis of obese people. We tried to promote the understanding of obese people to the public through the art form of illustrated picture books. People are appealed to compare their hearts and let go of their prejudice against obese people; meanwhile, it can enrich the research and techniques in illustration and draw on digging out the characters' emotional changes. The inner feelings of obese people are often inferior and sensitive. When using artistic means to express the characters' inner emotions, it is necessary to consider whether the layers of the story can be used to dig the heart of the to-do list. In the portrayal of the picture, the following aspects are also conducive to promoting emotion and the rendering of the atmosphere: the appearance and action of the characters, the color of the picture, the environment where the characters are located, and the addition of relevant details.

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Obesity is one of the most closely watched health problems in the world today. Whether it is the discussion, suggestions, and measures of the group's physical health for this group of people or the psychological adjustment, it is profitable and harmless. At present, the World Health Organization and countries have issued related

policies to encourage obese people to lose weight and increase the public's attention to the health problems of obesity[1]. In this situation, it is easy to overlook the inner world of obese patients. Many works of art, such as film and television, literature, and paintings, also show fat characters' images. While many classics have been created, some works have deepened people's stereotypes

of obese characters; however, there is little exploration of the characters' emotions. This research will provide a more comprehensive cognition and understanding of character images, enrich the realm of art, and strengthen it. Meanwhile, they speak out for disadvantaged groups such as obesity in society and enhance the general public's awareness of such groups. They are appealed to put aside prejudices and colored glasses and treat them in need with a fair and just, kind and innocent heart.

Emotional world and psychological characteristics of obese characters

Obese patients said that they had the experience of being ridiculed or even isolated because of their obesity at a young age. This experience has caused deep harm and impact on their body and mind today. Some patients also said that they could not find a suitable object because of their obesity, and even dared not express their friendship; they were fired by some companies just because their image was not enough. Most obese patients have taken, or are planning to adopt improper or even extreme weight loss methods, at least three or more weight loss methods.

Most obese characters give the public the impression that they are honest, kind, and shy, but this is why. According to Wang Wei from Jilin University, there is a significant difference in self-awareness between children with simple obesity and children with typical development[2]. Children's self-awareness reflects children's understanding of their social status, social recognition, and values.

Investigations and studies have shown that obese children have significantly lower self-awareness levels. This cognition leads to various psychological and emotional changes in obese children, such as anxiety, sensitivity, suspiciousness, and low self-esteem[3]. Most

obese people have impaired self-awareness at an early age with low self-evaluation ability. They are out of the group or even excluded and have a poor experience of happiness and satisfaction. A significant cause of obesity is a lack of care. Like normal children, obese children have the same psychological needs to be cared for, beloved, and express love. They need fair and reasonable treatment and evaluation[4]. Most obese children and adolescents usually show honesty, kindness, and generosity when making friends. While being self-sensitive, they also attach great importance to the inner feelings and emotional changes of others. It has a significant impact on the development and growth of obese children and will even maintain this inferiority complex and sensitive mentality after adulthood or become more severe or even a mental illness.

In film and television artworks, the characteristics of obese characters and psychological, emotional changes are described from a three-dimensional perspective, which is more classic, specific, and comprehensive[5]. Compared with literary works, film art also uses a more tolerant mentality to create:

(1) Brychs from the movie "Precious: Based on the Novel Push by Sapphire", director: Lee Daniels, 2009[6]. This film tells the story of an obese black woman. Precious (See Figure 1) is a fat and ugly girl with a miserable life experience in the film. In the film, Precious often imagines that she has a charming figure, dances on a gorgeous stage, and has a handsome boyfriend who loves her, which only exists in her daydreams. In real life, she can only endure the abuse of her mother and the rape of her father. She goes from inferiority complex to sadness, numbness and loss of hope. She, who is about to lose her enthusiasm for life, chooses not to give up by coincidence and still lives strong and faces difficulties[6]. In many works

of art, the image of obesity is "strong," the firm idea of changing oneself and destiny. Such an ill-fated but hard-working image will often greatly drive the audience's emotional changes and attract deep resonance.

(2) Mei Jiao from the movie "CJ 7", with the director of Stephen Chow in 2008. This image can be said to be exaggerated and impressive. First, in terms of appearance, Meijiao (See Figure 2) is much taller than other regular classmates in the class, and her figure is rounded. From facial features to limbs, all are large arc lines. However, Meijiao's psychological and emotional characteristics are very different from her body shape. Meijiao is a shy, cute, and gentle girl who will become brave when the person she admires is in danger. The huge figure is filled with a kind heart. This contrast adds to the taste of the artistic image, which enriches the whole plot and leaves a deep impression on the audience[7].



Figure 1



Figure 2

In advertising graphic visual artworks, most artists rarely use the image of fat characters.

The main reason is that advertisements are for ordinary people. The feelings of the masses and their impact on them must be considered. Therefore, promoting health and beauty has become the main core content of advertisements. Most fat people play a "contrast" and "set off" role in advertising design. For example, some slimming products often use distressed, sad, and inferior fat people as their pre-transformation image. After using the products, they transform into a graceful beauty.

In recent years, there have been many advertisements and graphic designs with "Fatty". For example, The Story of Eatkarus (See Figure 3), from the German supermarket chain Edka[8]. This short film tells the story of a fat child who succeeded in losing weight by changing his eating habits and realizing his dream to fly into the sky. In the short film, there are many images of obese people, including little boys. Most of them feature exaggerated waist and hips with small heads and small feet. There is always food on hand, chewing, and sitting on a stool for a long time. The short film's back is a world of fat people, so there is no emotional expression of inferiority in boys. However, when the boy sees that the bird can fly freely, such a beautiful intention significantly impacts him. It makes him yearn for it and produces envy and yearning. After trying, he encounters setbacks and becomes frustrated, but he quickly rekindles his confidence and strives towards the goal again. However, the advertisement was once bombarded by netizens. The advertisement producer stated that he only wanted to promote healthy eating for everyone through the film. Netizens believed that this was discrimination and ridicule of obese people, which would mislead the audience's cognition and understanding of obese people.

Including "Victoria's Secret", the female underwear brand in the United States, a graphic

poster was published in November 2014 (See Figure 4): 10 models with long hair, long legs, and slender, wearing brand underwear in different poses[9]. The words "The Perfect Body" are written in the center of the screen. Such copywriting and images have caused public dissatisfaction: Is it true that only models are perfect? More than 16,000 people across Britain signed on Changer.org to boycott Victoria's Secret and left messages on the Internet to express that all bodies are perfect, no matter how tall, short, or thin.



Figure 3



Figure 4

Expressive elements of emotion in illustrated art picture books

When emotions are conveyed with illustrated art picture books' artistic techniques, good story content, and framework are indispensable. However, this story should be interesting and vivid to arouse the interest of readers and have

the interest to allow readers to read it patiently. Thus, content and rhythm are indispensable.

In terms of the story's content, in addition to the narrative of the mainline, more descriptions of the psychological content of the characters should be added. Before this step, it is important to design the characters well. Besides appearance, the character, age, educational background, and living environment also need appropriate arrangements. After the protagonist has basic conditions, they need a reason for behaviors, that is, motivations. We can usually reason in the opposite direction. For example, a person is angry. So why is this person angry, because of what? Was he/she angry because of this incident? Which characters or experience does he/she have? After arranging these, it is more convenient to create a portrayal of the characters' inner emotions. Example: A lonely boy has never felt friendship since he is a child. Finally, he makes and is deceived by a friend. After being furious, he cries in grief and runs home angrily. Such a piece of content has the "cause, process, and result" of the character's emotions, which will make the story more full and three-dimensional[10].

Making the whole story more vivid and full of rhythm lies in making the story more musical. Every word, every detail, and every scene in a picture book story is valuable. They are all developing the story, echoing the changes in the story. In terms of the story's rhythm, several methods, such as parallelism and metaphor, are usually used. Parallelism is just like the usage learned in Chinese knowledge. Parallel sentences are used to describe several scenes with the same effect. For example, the boy ran to a hut on the mountain angrily. Along the way, he walked through a field like a breeze, rushed into a wood like a wild horse, and finally plunged into a torrent like a fish. Such three parallel sentences, using metaphor, progressively show the

changing direction of the protagonist's heart. In the picture book, several images of different scenes can be drawn, progressively increasing the emotions and eliciting the following text.

There are several common expressions in portraying the character's expression, such as frontal description and side description. A positive description is to describe the protagonist's intuitive attitude to express his inner emotional changes. For example, the boy fell on the ground because of a fall, and the smile on his little face gradually disappeared. There are two more ways of profile description. Let me give you an example: After school, the parents of other classmates come to pick them up. Everyone is smiling, except for the boy who is alone. The boy walks alone on the empty street, the sky becomes darker and darker, and light rain gradually starts to wet the boy's clothes. In this passage, the first half of the sentence expresses the changes in emotions through contrast, and the other is to express the changes in the characters' inner emotions from the description of the environment. The use of these two methods in the illustrated picture book can comprehensively show the ups and downs of the protagonist's inner emotions and bring deeper feelings to the readers and deepen the resonance. In the creation of illustration art, colors enrich the picture and add appeal and atmosphere. Color can attract the attention of readers and lead readers into the picture. After being stimulated by colors through vision, human thinking will produce different emotional changes, which play a great role in suggesting. For example, dark and cool colors are easier to express a depressed environment, while bright and warm colors express joy and happiness. In different picture environments, different emotional atmospheres will be highlighted. For example, a dark and depressing environment can better express the feelings of loss, loneliness, and sadness in the

character's heart; a brightly lit environment is more suitable for expressing the protagonist's joy, satisfaction, and pride heart.

The environment in the story, the decoration of the environment, and the selection of representative elements are particularly important. After setting the protagonist, the matching clothing, environment, and objects should be considered, such as the location where the story takes place and the representative objects with which the location needs to be equipped. For example, according to research and analysis, most obese people are sedentary and do not like to exercise. The background of the story is mostly in the protagonist's own home or in the personal room. The details that need to be equipped are small objects related to fat people, high-calorie, various snacks and snacks, and various sports and fitness equipment used during the craving for weight loss. The addition of details enriches the story and vividness of the entire picture book, making it easier for readers to immerse themselves in the author's world.

An artistic experiment to express the inner emotions of obese people in the illustrated picture book

In art, the inner emotional changes of obese characters are rarely paid attention to and created. The exploration of the inner world of obese people is conducive to increasing the awareness and understanding of the masses. We have learned about the appearance and psychological characteristics of obese figures through investigation and analysis. After studying many works of art for reference, we decided to use the creation method of illustrated picture books to narrate a story about obese people, expressing our views on obesity and appeal to the public.

After regarding the images of obese people, research and summary analysis show that most

obese people have the most apparent waist and abdomen fat. Moreover, according to survey and research findings, women are more likely to gain weight, and their inner emotions will be richer and more sensitive. Therefore, we believe that female characters are more likely to get close to readers and resonate, and the protagonist of this experiment is set as an obese girl.

Initially, we referenced several illustrators' works and learned painting styles and techniques, such as Jimmy, a Taiwanese picture book painter. Some relaxing painting methods were tried to feel and create characters of our style, such as painting a fat girl with the right hand, left hand, and feet, or closing my eyes and painting with different materials. Finally, when observing these drafts, we summarized my thoughts and brush strokes and tried to draw the first usable draft character: a cute student girl with short hair with a small head, hands, and feet but a huge body, forming an exaggerated contrast.

According to the script and character settings of the story, we start to sketch the story. Sketches should focus on the integrity and story of the pictures and the changes in scene and space. According to the story compiled, we draw 20 sketches according to the story (See Figures 5 to 8) to narrate the entire story. In this part, much parallelism is used to express the process of the fat lady's constant frustration and the progress of inferiority and sadness. It also expresses everyone's dissatisfaction and incomprehension towards the fat lady through contrasting methods, even the mean ridicule, and sarcasm, alluding to her loneliness and sadness.

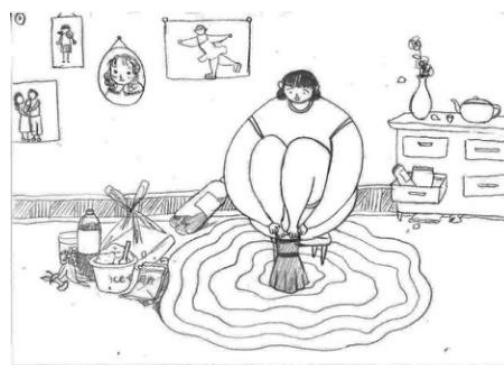


Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7



Figure 8

A slight adjustment is made based on the sketches, which refers to color matching and

texture. We use rich and contrasting colors as a collocation, compounding crayon's texture and giving a warm and delicate feeling. First, a large area of color is used as the color draft to determine the entire picture's correct relationship. After the detailed description, some adjustments are made to unify the details of the 20 pictures (See Figure 9-14). Many pictures are deliberately arranged according to the cold and warm, and light and shade. For example, in the fat lady's own room's color scheme, she chooses dark blue (See Figure 9) and opens a small window. The passing of a light also implies the glimmer of hope in her heart for putting on the skirt again.



Figure 9



Figure 10



Figure 11

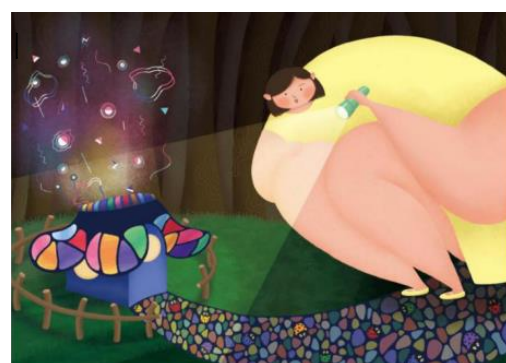


Figure 12



Figure 13



Figure 14

Based on the entire storyline, we perform a font design that fits the style and plot (See Figure 15) and bookbinding design (See Figure 16-20).

In terms of font design, the text's strokes round and lovely are made based on the font of Song typeface, which is more in line with the style and design of the entire picture book. The front cover and back cover are drawn, and the protagonist has two different shapes under the shaking skirt. On the one hand, it echoes the name of the picture book; on the other hand, it implies the story's development.

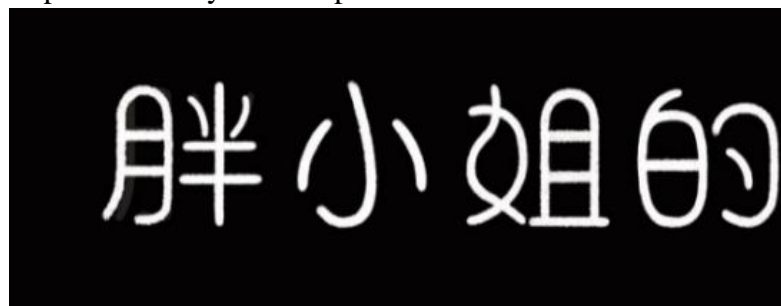


Figure 15



Figure 16



Figure 17



Figure 18



Figure 19



Figure 20

Illustrated picture book, an artistic expression technique, has made a profound, progressive, multi-directional, and three-dimensional depiction of the emotions of the characters in four aspects—the content and rhythm of the story, the manners and actions of the characters, the brightness and warmth of the colors, and the addition of related details. Through this experimental research, we summarize and

mastered the artistic methods of expressing emotions in illustrated picture books and learn a lot about the knowledge and content of obese people.

Obese people often have more or less psychological problems in their hearts. Most people will experience rejection and incompatibility, which causes their inner self-esteem and sensitivity. This psychological sentiment will accompany the person's growth and may even cause severe psychological shadows and other adverse consequences. Most people have a deep prejudice against obese people. Because of the difference in body shape and appearance, obese people are comfortable to appear unique in the crowd, which becomes the fuse of prejudice. Many people claim to have deeply hurt the hearts of obese people in the name of jokes, causing subtle psychological harm to them. It is very irrational and immoral behavior. Of course, most obese people have become stronger and brave due to setbacks, have a greater ability to frustrate, and are more likely to face difficulties. Although their appearance is strong, they are contrary to their hearts' softness, which makes them understand and feel the thoughts of others, and have a kind and tolerant heart.

This art experiment enriches the insufficiency of exploring the inner emotional world of the images in the illustrated picture book. Besides, it interprets the difficulties and hardships of the obese people's lives in the form of the illustrated picture book and more or less discrimination from most people and exclusion and incomprehension of classmates. In this way, we hope that more people can pay attention to them to understand their inner world and call on everyone to let go of their prejudice against obese people with more tolerance and encouragement.

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