ROYALS IN GASTRONOMIC METAPHOR AND POLYCODE COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT

Elizaveta V. Shustrova
Ural Federal University named after the first President of Russia B. N. Yeltsin (Ekaterinburg, Russia)
ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5923-5264

Anatoly P. Chudinov
Ural State Pedagogical University (Ekaterinburg, Russia)
ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5436-5273

A b s t r a c t . This article examines different ways of using historical and linguocultural data while conducting theoretical classes and tutorials in professional language groups. We share our experience how to form problem-based tasks on the basis of the so-called polycode or multimodal texts. We also demonstrate how purely linguistic facts can be revealed and taught with the help of graphic means. We discuss the history of key terms and express our own understanding of the matter. Another aim of the article is to share possible sources of polycode data. Examples of English political cartoon of the end of the 18th centure created by James Gillray illustrate the methodological procedure. As a more specific type, we focus on graphic examples of gastronomic cognitive metaphor, which is defined and discussed as a separate object of investigation. The research is aimed to join the principles of polycode text analysis with the principles of the competence approach in language learning and teaching. This aim justifies both the theoretical and practical importance of our research and its results. The results are of interest to the university staff who introduces linguocultural data while conducting various theoretical disciplines in linguistic professional training. The results may also be of interest to the staff and scholars dealing with linguocultural data in general.

МОНАРХИЯ В ГАСТРОНОМИЧЕСКОЙ МЕТАФОРЕ И ПОЛИКОДОВАЯ КОМПЕТЕНЦИЯ

Шустрова Е. В.
Уральский федеральный университет
имени первого Президента России Б. Н. Ельцина (Екатеринбург, Россия)
ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5923-5264
SPIN-код: 6690-1583

Чудинов А. П.
Уральский государственный педогогический университет (Екатеринбург, Россия)
ORCID ID: https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5436-5273
SPIN-код: 4516-4166

А н н о т а ц и я . Статья посвящена описанию опыта использования исторических и лингвокультурных данных в практике преподавания теоретических курсов в рамках профессионального языкового и иноязычного образования. Мы также делимся опытом разработки и внедрения проблемно-ориентированных заданий и задач, предполагающих опору на поликодовый текст. Авторы обращаются к описанию пошаговой процедуры введения и закрепления языкового материала при помощи графических средств. В статье также обсуждаются история вопроса и стадии формирования основной терминологии, связанной с поликодовыми системами. Еще одна задача статьи – представить возможные источники поликодового материала. В качестве иллюстративного материала были использованы примеры английской политической карикатуры конца XVIII в. Джеймса Гилрея, которые содержат гастрономическую концептуальную метафору. Последняя обсуждается как отдельный объект исследования. Методология исследования построена на комбинации проблемного метода лингводидактики и лингвистических методик анализа, в частности структурно-семантических, сравнительно-исторических и дискурсивных. Основные результаты будут полезны преподавателям, работающим с материалом лингвострановедческой направленности в рамках различных теоретических курсов профессиональной предметной подготовки. Отдельные итоги будут полезны ученым, занимающимся проблемами лингвокультурологического характера.

Introduction

Addressing the problem of new requirements in professional language training, we sought to bridge the gap between the existing theoretical research and its practical application. The main problem arrives as a result of the discrepancy between what students of university linguistic departments can do while analysing linguistic data and what they are expected to do in modern environment. Polycode texts turn to be one of the most problematic sources and objects. The research is aimed to align the principles of polycode text analysis, elaborated in a modern linguistic research, with the principles of the competence approach in language learning and teaching. This aim justifies both the theoretical and practical importance of our research and its results.

Discussing the main term "polycode text" and its history, we should mention that the role of metaphor in blended semiotic systems constitutes a separate trend in linguistic studies. In Russian linguistic studies Y. A. Sorokin and E. F. Tarasov were the first to use the term "creolized" in reference to texts [Sorokin, Tarasov 1990; cf. Tarasov, Nistratov, Matveev 2020]. These are such textual forms that combine various semiotic systems including both verbal and visual components. At the same time other terms, such as *multimodal, polycode, polymodal* texts have come into wide use [Bearne 2010; Benson 2016; Bowcher 2012; Jager, Ucht 1974, Ferdig, Pytash 2014; Forceville, Urios-Aparisi 2009; Koller 2009; Kress, Van Leeuwen 2006; McNeill 2005; McQuarrie, Phillips 2008; Molchanova 2021; Müller 2004; O'Halloran 2004; Ventola, et al. 2004]. Alongside other terms coexist, including *cinematographic metaphor* [Whittock 1990], *linguovisual complex* [Bolshiyanova 1986], *izoverbal complex* [Bernatskaya 2000], *izoverb* [Mikheev 1987], *semiotically complex texts* [Protchenko 2006], *visual metaphor* [Carroll 1996], *videoverbal texts* [Poymanova 1997], *visual hybrid* [Carroll 1996], *pictorial metaphor* [Forceville 2009], *multisemiotic text* [Trklja 2014].

According to Ch. Forceville, "In contrast to monomodal metaphors, multimodal metaphors are metaphors whose target and source are each represented exclusively or predominantly in different modes. The qualification 'exclusively or predominantly' is necessary because non-verbal metaphors often have targets and/or sources that are cued in more than one mode simultaneously" [Forceville, Urios-Aparisi 2009: 24]. L. S. Bolshiyanova singles out linear and non-linear texts, the latter falling into three subtypes: monocode, polycode and creolized [Bolshiyanova 1986]. Thus, the author uses the terms polycode and creolized texts not as synonyms but as phenomena of different nature. Initially, however, all these theories are based upon semiotics and intertextuality.

Various forms that a comic element may take in a polycode text are undoubtedly connected with the genre, textual functions, and an expected pragmatic effect. It is common knowledge that there is no universal typology of genres even in reference to the traditional textual forms. It is quite a challenge to introduce a universal typology of polycode texts which are initially a blend of various semiotic systems. In far general terms we can single out genres with the predominance of the **arts** component (feature films, screen versions, cartoons, clips, comic strips, collage), **political**, including propaganda, component (political cartoons and caricatures, collage, clips, demotivators, fliers, handouts, memes), **advertising** component (posters, clips, fliers, stuffers, videos), **private** component (blogs, graffiti, all kinds of laptop publishing and 'domestic' amateur photo and video production, scrapbooks).

For sure, each of the trends may in its turn include genre variations of its own dependent on the aim of creation, expected functions, pragmatic effect, means of circulation (TV, Internet, print, etc.), environment, and other numerous factors. At the same time one and the same text may easily combine different components of the above-mentioned types. Thus, a feature film, which initially falls under the category of arts, may show elements of bitter political or social irony and thus become blended with political and private types. In recent years much popularity has been won by feature films that together with the esthetic effect include an advertisement in disguise.

The connection between the iconic and verbal parts is described on the levels of content proper, content and composition, content and linguistic means [Anisimova 2003; Chudinov, Segal 2024; Marchand 1986; Ruzhentseva, Shustrova, Voroshilova 2015; Shustrova 2014].

The scholars [Anisimova 2003; Bernatskaya 2000; Ruzhentseva, Shustrova, Voroshilova 2015; Shustrova 2014] describe two basic types of creolized/multimodal texts as far as their structure is concerned: texts with partial creolization and completely creolized texts. In the first case the verbal elements are more or less autonomous with the graphic part just supporting the verbal one. Here we find scientific discourse and traditional fiction. In the second case the verbal part is blended with graphics the latter serving as an integral component. Cartoons and advertisements are the most vivid examples.

Taking all this into consideration we may state that it would be better, especially in cognitive studies, if the linguistic data were married to the non-verbal means, and then conceptual metaphor and its transformations will be an excellent connector between the two. Of importance are the results of psycholinguistic studies which prove that the information, being perceived from sources of different nature (verbal and visual), is further "integrated and processed by the recipient in mode and the same universal object-oriented mental code" [Zhinkin 1982]. It gives us grounds to say that in the structure of the multimodal text the verbal and visual images are interdependent. This bond of different semiotic elements justifies and provokes the creation of a new, more complex, creolized, metaphoric image which meaning cannot be taken as a simple sum of the verbal and non-verbal components. The purpose of our investigation is connected with interpreting the new product, political cartoons being the database as they give the conflict, the tension of the parts.

It is true that polycode texts are easy to be found

in the long history of humanity, including icons, illustrated hagiography, chronicles, etc. But it is the era of advertising and consuming together with the film industry appearance that brought polycode texts into the centre of modern civilization. That being an important part of our life makes them an easy and often entertaining source of linguocultural information and gives rise to scholarly interest. At the same time such types of texts cannot but become a user-friendly source in teaching, helping to add to a student-centred, adaptive environment. The potentials of such polycode systems in their new varieties become part of implementing technology-based, AI-relied teaching techniques and design thinking. The problems of new approaches in university education in connection with these data are being discussed in numerous publications.

As D. Swallow and B. Tomalin describe the process: "the field of education is witnessing significant changes... Increasingly, educators are exploring its potential to reshape educational practices, particularly in language learning – a domain deeply intertwined with communication, cultural exchange, and adaptability. Although design thinking has proven effective in driving creativity and flexibility in other areas, its application within education, especially in language instruction, cuttently remains limited. Language acquisition continues to face obstacles such as rigid teaching practices, cognitive overload, and cultural misunderstandings, all of which can hinder student engagement and progress. Traditional approaches, often reliant on rule-based learning and memorisation, struggle to prepare learners for the interactive demands of real-world communication. Furthermore, existing studies tend to focus on the theoretical possibilities of design thinking and suggest little in the way of practical, field-specific strategies" [Swallow, Tomalin 2024: 86].

While addressing modern educational challenges in connection with AI and digitalisation, L. Stošić and F.D. Guillén-Gámez emphasise the problems as follows. "IT tools have undoubtedly become integral to contemporary education, yet their application in foreign language instruction remains inconsistently implemented and inadequately studied. The global shift towards digitalisation in education has created a disparity in access to technological resources, exacerbating the 'digital divide' and limiting equitable learning opportunities. Furthermore, teachers frequently lack the requisite skills or professional development to effectively integrate advanced IT solutions, such as artificial intelligence (AI) or virtual reality (VR), into their pedagogical practices. This gap in teacher competency undermines the potential of IT to maintain learning and perpetuates reliance on conventional teaching strategies, which may fail to address the complexities of modern language acquisition" [Stošić, Guillén-Gámez 2024: 95–96].

In this aspect, of interest is the thought of M.-L. Liaw and H.-I. Chen, who claim that all our communication has multimodal or polycode character [Liaw, Chen 2023]. It means that our salient beliefs are formed under the influence of polycoding. It brings us to the conclusion that under modern circumstances

and educational challenges polycode systems should become a more frequent subject for investigation and close reading in professional language training. The students should acquire competences of new types resulting in the students' potential not only to understand and decode such semiotic complex but also to produce such products, including those, which may be heavily loaded with linguocultural information. Further on, we will combine methodological steps of linguistic analysis with linguodidactic ones and demonstrate how professional language acquisition and training can be supported via the suggested framework of activities on the basis of polycode texts.

Data and Methodology

In the methodological aspect polycode texts still remain a very problematic object of investigation due to the complexity of their nature. In this article we demonstrate how linguocultural, social, semantic and semasiological, discoursive methods may be applied to political cartoon as a kind of polycode texts. In the field of linguodidactics these are the problem-based and competence approaches. They imply that educational environment, especially in universities, should be structured on the basis of problem-solving assignments. In the course of professional linguistic training it would add to the formation and development of design and creative thinking, critical assessment, alongside professional competences of a mediator and a researcher.

We also present new results and argue that design of such tasks on the data of polycode texts and with proper linguistic instruments should become a constant and integral part of university linguistic training. Moreover, it assists in creating student-friendly environment, easily adoptable for traditional theoretical subjects such as lexicography, history of a particular language, stylistics, linguocultural and cognitive studies.

As the data is concerned, for this research we have chosen archive materials of British political cartoon, created by James Gillray – one of the most renowned British caricaturists at the end of the 18th century. Here we shall analyse only several examples of the royal family turning into part of gastronomic cognitive metaphor, including graphic representations. We understand graphic cognitive metaphor as a cognitive operation, which results in the creation of a visual image. This image is designed on the parallel bonds between two objects (known in linguistics as 'denotations', 'denotata'). These bonds may depend on transferred, auxiliary semantics and potential axiological projections.

Results and Discussion

Traditions of national cuisine and eating habits have always been considered an important aspect of both speaking practice and linguocultural activities when learning and teaching languages. Such material allows introducing to the students many other national traits and historical aspects. As far as British cuisine is concerned, many find it solid, heavy, not very varied, sometimes not even tasty. But the English folklore and

literature are abundant in mouth-watering descriptions of delicacies to be found part of everyday life. In connection with this it should be mentioned that eating is used to propagate certain regimes, benefits and values. Thus, political aspect of such objects when they are used as certain symbols should be born in mind. These features should become part of thorough analysis both in-class and in individual problem-based assignments.

Further on we will demonstrate certain metaphoric, symbolic, axiological and other characteristics of food and eating typical for the British political cartoon at the end of the 18th century. We will limit the analysis with four cartoons in which eating habits serve as an important political vector because they represent the clear-cut opposition in the royal family and the slow transition of power. This is done to better illustrate the linguodidactic procedures, which we suggest introducing in professional language training.

When the cartoon shows some heavily and richly laid tables or plenty of savory and fatty products, it is often the case of ridicule for greed, unrestrained am-

bitions, avarice. Although in the English cartoon this can also be a sign of cheating with some scapegoat to pay for that. As a rule, it is some stereotypical taxpayer, John Bull being one of them, – the incarnation of the middle class or a tradesman. At the same time, too lean or sickly constitution, a lack of food often arrived as a feature of either foreigners, especially French, or some bad times and tides in domestic policies. When creating problem-based tasks, the specialist may rely on these traits for demonstrating binary privative oppositions which are ideologically loaded. "Overeating – vs. undernourishment, hunger" as the basic opposition of vice and victim may become a good basis to start from as it is easily understandable in Russian culture as well. Let's turn to the polycode texts of James Gillray, and the first subject will be His Royal Highness, the then-Prince of Wales, the would-be George IV, King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and King of Hanover (for official portraits see Fig. 1, 2).

Fig. 1. George IV, King of Great Britain and Ireland. Miniature by R. Cosway[1]

Fig. 2. George, the Prince of Wales. Portrait by W. Beechey[2]

[1] Сайт Национальной портретной галереи (The National Portrait Gallery). URL: https://www.npg.org.uk/; https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait-list.php?search=sp&sText=George%20IV%20%201792&firstRun=true&OConly=true (accessed: 11.10.2024).

[2] Сайт Королевской академии изящных искусств (Royal Academy of Arts). URL: https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/; https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/art-artists/work-of-art/the-prince-of-wales-later-george-iv (accessed: 11.10.2024).

Fig. 3. A Voluptuary under the horrors of Digestion[1]

Fig 4. Temperance enjoying a Frugal Meal[2]

The first cartoon (Fig. 3) is devoted to sensual life and pleasures of the Prince of Wales. This picture was the first in the series of cartoons which would be connected with eating habits of the royals and which we would discuss later. It was published on July, 2, 1792 under the title "A Voluptuary under the horrors of Digestion". J. Gillray chose not to call his model directly. Instead, he used the word «voluptuary – a person devoted to luxury and sensual pleasure». Digestion is also used both in the direct and metaphoric meanings as His Royal Highness was well-known for his debauchery and long rows of mistresses. The Prince, as the majority of royal male heirs, was proclaimed as an example of man's beauty, a paragon of style and taste. His official portraits by W. Beechey, R. Cosway, T. Gainsborough, T. Lawrence, J. Reynolds, and D. Wikie show His Royal Highness as very sophisticated, spiritually-set, attractive and romantic (cf. Fig. 1, 2). J. Gillray took them as precedent texts and produced a caricature which gained much more popularity than the prototypical portraits. The facial features are very much the same but the expression of the face is that of satiety, surfeit, a mixture of indifference and effrontery.

The cartoon presents a very rich semiotic complex. Thus, there are numerous significant details which deserve to be given due attention. Just behind the Prince there is an overflowing (just like him) chamber-pot which is firmly placed over the unpaid bills from the baker, the butcher, the poulterer and the doctor. Another name for a chamber-pot is a Jordan. And this gives a very transparent allusion to the younger brother of the Prince of Wales, Prince William, who shared his elder brother's exuberance and love for sensual pleasures. As the cartoon appeared in 1792, there are good grounds for connection with the affair of Prince William and Dorothea Jordan (Dora Jordan, Mrs. Jordan). The latter was an actress and a courtesan, the would-be mother of 10 illegitimate children of the Prince, all of whom received the surname FitzClarence. Among the successors of this bond is J. Cameron, the former Prime Minister of the UK. The affair started in 1790, and in 1791 J. Gillray produced a series of cartoons on the subject, using the connection between the night vessel and the name 'Jordan'. Here it stands for something like "Birds of a feather flock together" or "Great minds think alike, fools seldom differ" as the brothers were plunging (yet another word which comes here to mind in connection with any liquid substance, including feces) in sin, lust and dissipation. It would further end in a very tragic way for the monarchy being left with no legitimate heir or heiress and the throne being inherited by Princess Victoria. In the cartoon this Jordan is made visible to the observer but if we take another angle, the Prince may think that he is blocking the sight, fully covering his unpaid debts in connection with his enormous love expenditures.

The wall is also full of interesting artifacts. On the shelf with multi-coloured jelly-glasses, resembling light colours of lady's dresses, there are jars and small bottles with medicine – "For the Piles" (another common name for hemorrhoids), "Drops for a Stinking Breath", "Leakes Pills", "Velnos Vegetable Syrup". The last remedy was patented by I. Swainson who proclaimed the syrup could cure venereal diseases as well as many other ailments including diarrhea. The candle-sconce is decorated with all pretence: lavish ostrich plumage over the gilt coronet and the coat of arms. The incongruity of this is intensified by the huge plate serving as the field and the crossed knife and fork

playing the part of the most important herald symbols.

The candle-holder comprises two branches: one with a wine-bottle and the other with a wine-glass supporting two not matching sticks of candles. The branches should stand for the gold lion rampant and the silver unicorn, which support the real shield for the coat of arms of the Prince of Wales. It helps to emphasise again not only unhealthy eating and drinking habits of the Prince but his constant fornication. The motto for the real coat of arms is "Ich dien" – "I Serve" but instead of that the sound imitation of these German words in English would lead to "I Dine". This would be completely in accord with what is shown. Right behind the Prince, imitating the rounded form of the coat of arms there is a portrait of Luigi Cornaro of Padua by Tintoretto. Luigi Cornaro was famous for his healthy diet discovered when he was on the death brink at the age of forty. The humor of this fact is connected with the products which Luigi Cornaro recommended. These included bread, meat, soup, eggs and light wine. The principle was in quantity of food and its being minimally processed. According to these standards His Royal Highness is the true adept of this diet as his menu consists of a hearty portion of beef, raw or half-done, port, brandy and pepper. The decanters resemble a woman's shape, and the wine glass is practically the exact copy of the glass with water held by Luigi Cornaro. The plate with some bony leftovers compliments the coat of arms. If we take into consideration that the real coats of arms includes the shield with the so-called Royal Arms and the synonym for 'arms' is 'weapon', then the 'Royal Weapons' would became just the knife and fork.

The window overlooks the Carlton House – the new residence of Prince George – but the heavy smoke from its chimneys in Gillray's cartoons usually stands for some bad omen definitely not wealth or some luck. It would become especially important taking into account the revolutionary events in France. In the right front corner there is a dice-box, two dice and three volumes "Debts of Honor Unpaid", "Newmarket List", and "Faro Partnership Account Self Archer Hobart & Co.". The number of dice and the combination "Self Archer Hobart" stand for the company of the Prince, Mrs. Hobart (Lady Buckinghamshire) and Lady Archer. These ladies of society were notorious for their so-called "faro-tables" or gambling tables, making huge money, and the Prince was suspected to share in their profits and cover up the activities thought to be scandalous. The fact was that at that time the expected proper social behaviour for an aristocratic woman in contrast to man was not to gamble. Gambling women would often lose their "pin-money" and then the only way to cover the debt was to prostitute. Yet another gruesome aspect was to try and manipulate the politics thought to be part of a joint company of ladies and gentlemen – again a much discussed thing. Thus, the faro-tables and ladies were associated with witchcraft, sin, sexual misconduct in general, undue political advances and pretentions, attempts to seduce and manipulate younger women. Other famous Faro Ladies, or "the company", included Mrs. Sturt, Mrs. Concannon, and Lady Luttrell. As a result of all these exuberances

King George III and Queen Charlotte made their son marry on the condition to cover up his debts and increase his stipend.

It might be of interest to compare this cartoon with the cartoon "The Prince of Whales or the Fisherman at Anchor" by George Cruikshank and the poem by Charles Lamb "The Triumph of the Whale" (1812). There the Prince, having become a regent, is described as a 'mighty whale', 'not a fatter fish than he', being surrounded by 'mermaids, with their tails and singing, his delighted fancy stinging'. Yet another typical feature is his ability to digest everything – 'In his stomach, some do say, no good thing can ever stay, had it been the fortune of it' [cf. Lamb https://allpoetry.com/The-Triumph-Of-The-Whale][1].

This social misconduct could not but become a great concern for the royal family. At the same time the mental health of George III was evidently declining, and his ability to stay the king was being questioned. Thus, the series of other cartoons by James Gillray appeared among which were those both fully supporting the king and showing his weaknesses. But there is an opinion [cf. Anatomy of Laughter 2016: 10–11] that these very attempts at ridicule greatly assisted in saving the monarchy in England when in France it fell prey of the revolution. Further on we will discuss three cartoons showing eating habits of Prince George's parents deeply contrasting with his.

Fig. 2 shows the cartoon "Temperance enjoying a Frugal Meal". The title in the phrase syntactic model imitates the one of the previous cartoon but the words create an opposite meaning. It is thought to satirise the miserliness of the royal couple but we are of the opinion that, appearing the same month together with "Frying Sprats" and "Toasting Muffins", it propagated the domestic economy of the Crown, King's wisdom, prudence, austerity and carefulness, lack of selfishness, financial discipline and constant self-restrain. When compared with "A Voluptuary under the horrors of Digestion", it should become evident who is the true and shrewd leader of the country. It becomes more necessary if we consider constant attempts of the Whigs party and the Prince of Wales himself to seize the throne on the pretext of George III's cognitive weakness and disability to rule. It also helped to tolerate more and more new taxes imposed by the government.

The royal menu includes very cheap and sensible products, such as soft-boiled eggs, salad greens, some mustard and water. The upholstered furniture and the bell are covered not to be worn out. Instead of table linen the couple uses the table cloth, and the carpet is protected against wear by some plain rug. The clothes show evident signs of long wear, stitching and patching. No signs of extra expense as there is no fire to warm up, the statuette of Munificence has nothing to offer, the candles are definitely economised. The only pictures to be seen are the miniature of George III himself and "The Fall of Manna". The gilt empty frames belong to the pictures of Epicurus, "The Parting of the

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[1] Lamb Ch. The Triumph of the Whale // All Poetry. 21.11.2024. URL: https://allpoetry.com/The-Triumph-Of-The-Whale (accessed: 21.11.2024).

Loaves and Fishes" and "The Triumph of Benevolence". These should stand for what is not to be expected at court. The books are also allusions and have such titles as "Dr. Cheyne on the Benefits of a Spare Diet", "The Life of Old Elwes, a famous miser" and "Essay on the Dearness of Provisions". It adds to the general at-

mosphere of severe economy. At the same time the heavy chest at the King's feet and the safe with the table of interest behind the Queen show that their efforts are well-justified and rewarded. The scales at the mantelpiece demonstrate equality, impartialness and balance.

Fig. 5. Queen Charlotte, spouse of George III, King of Great Britain and Ireland супругаи Георга III[1]

Fig. 6. George III, King of Great Britain and Ireland[2]

Fig. 7. Frying Sprats / Toasting Muffins[3]

[1] Сайт Национальной портретной галереи (The National Portrait Gallery). URL: https://www.npg.org.uk/; https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/sir-thomas-lawrence-queen-charlotte (accessed: 11.10.2024).

[2] Сайт Национальной портретной галереи (The National Portrait Gallery). URL: https://www.npg.org.uk/; https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portraitExtended/mw02455/King-George-III (accessed: 11.10.2024).

[3] Сайт Британского музея (The British Museum). URL: https://www.britishmuseum.org/; https://www.james-gillray.org/pop/sprats.html (accessed: 11.10.2024). © Trustees of the British Museum.

"Frying Sprats" and "Toasting Muffins" (Fig. 7) were intended as parodies of companion portraits of man and wife. Of interest may be the contrast between these cartoons and the real official portraits of King George III and Queen Charlotte (Fig. 5, 6). In the cartoon both spouses are preparing their family supper and breakfast, thus, "Temperance enjoying a Frugal Meal" creates the extension for these portraits. The fire is used in a very economical way, both for heating and cooking and boiling the kettle. The clothes are not appropriate for aristocracy, being cheap, untidy, mismatched, and showing signs of repair. The garter of the king bears the motto: 'Honi soit qui mal y pense' – 'Shame on him who thinks evil of this'. It is the Anglo-Normal maximum further connected with the Order of Garter. Here it is a sure allusion to what is happening in the cartoon. The inscription below gives the first two lines of the popular song from the comic opera "The Duenna": "Ah, sure a pair was never seen, / So justly formed to meet by nature...". The next rhyming lines are "The youth excelling is in mien / The maid in every grace of feature". As the couple is definitely not excelling in these, the main object of parody becomes their domestic economising, which brings coins to the pocket. Yet another aspect is added by the fact that the libretto for the opera was written by R. Sheridan – an ardent critic of the official line and a talking head of the Whigs party. Thus, even he cannot but pay due to the royal couple, although it is definitely an irony.

As for the assignments on the basis of such data, they should be problem-based in general character. The first stage should imply various techniques of decoding. The more complex the material, the better. The students would evidently benefit from being introduced to and themselves suggesting a variety of interpretations. This process should come together with a prolific study of historic and lexicographic sources. Such decoding should include both graphic and verbal constituents and should be done step-by-step accurately following the previously designed algorithm. Comparison of the results within the group would be welcome.

While giving instructions, it is worth taking into account the interdisciplinary connections and relying on these data illustrate different ways and angles of analytical procedures or, a better way still, lead the students to such results. It would also assist in building and accumulating practical language skills, linguistic awareness and assurance. These competences cannot be overestimated when in future students become exposed to the hard realities of interpreting and other spheres of mediation.

Yet another, very important, component is connected with students becoming researchers and their potential in reading, perception, interpreting, predicting and producing various types of information, which arrive in multi-channeled formats and require the skill to interpret simultaneously both direct and transferred, verbal and polycode meanings. Such research-oriented assignments should also be included in the process. Activities may be done in a large group, especially when just explaining certain steps with the students not being that active. However, to achieve more

tangible results, we would recommend opting for small group, tandem activities or individual projects. The instructor should spare no effort in correcting the procedure steps, being taken by the students, explaining their own findings and going beyond, thus showing or sometimes pretending a little bit how important the student's results are. A bit of "white" lie in estimating the value of results would not harm anyone. On the contrary, it should create for the students the situation of success and let them think that next time they could achieve even more. If deplorable results sometimes may occur, they should not be criticised but rather patiently and tactfully corrected *together* with the student or in the group. It may also assist in demonstrating certain procedures unknown to the students, thus, making them aware of structural, axiological and pragmatic potential of the text under analysis. Each next step would allow them to do more on their own. It would be also be better to choose such polycode texts, which are built on the same principles, include the same or very similar images, tropes, cognitive models and metaphors. These would soon become easily recognisable, and you can introduce another type of semiotic interconnections.

As such texts are semiotic blends, they often require blending of research and analytical procedures. It should become the next goal as your students become more aware of more simple steps. It may also produce a good subject for discussion and practicing. At this stage the instructors may also take their time and let the students go at their own pace, taking wrong turns arriving nowhere. It would further allow showing potential risks of the analytical and research algorithms not being properly designed or followed.

Another big group of assignments may include prediction of possible practical spheres for the results. While doing this, the instructor should consider the environment of the day, the character of possible or real threats and challenges. Among them are those connected with the implementation of new manipulation strategies and techniques, ideological coding on the basis of AI and polycode systems.

Conclusion

By and large, we would like to emphasise that our research illustrates the ways how we may assist in forming the culture of interpretation and design for the new text formats. Such texts need to be given their due attention because they often become not only the source of entertainment. They easily turn into a powerful tool for marketing techniques, social engineering, manipulation, formation and imposing of stereotypes, eradication of existing axiological norms and values. It justifies the necessity for the students to be more frequently exposed to special educational techniques, which would result in the formation of new professional competences, polycode competence and awareness being part of them. In their turn, these educational techniques should be designed on the solid ground of other professional techniques, including those of linguistics, social and political studies. This would bring together on a wider scope the results of various scientific knowledge and make the process of linguistic training more profound and science-oriented.

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Данные об авторах
Шустрова Елизавета Владимировна – доктор филологических наук, профессор кафедры германской филологии, Уральский федеральный университет имени первого Президента России Б. Н. Ельцина (Екатеринбург, Россия).
Адрес: 620087, Россия, г. Екатеринбург, ул. Мира, 51.
E-mail: shustovaev2@bk.ru.

Чудинов Анатолий Прокопьевич – доктор филологических наук, профессор, заведующий кафедрой межкультурной коммуникации, риторики и русского языка как иностранного, Уральский государственный педагогический университет (Екатеринбург, Россия).
Адрес: 620091, Россия, г. Екатеринбург, пр-т Космонавтов, 26.
E-mail: ap_chudinov@mail.ru.

Authors' information
Shustrova Elizaveta Vladimirovna – Doctor of Philology, Professor of Department of German Philology, Ural Federal University named after the first President of Russia B. N. Yeltsin (Ekaterinburg, Russia).

Chudinov Anatoly Prokopyevich – Doctor of Philology, Professor, Head of Department of Intercultural Communication, Rhetoric and Russian as a Foreign Language, Ural State Pedagogical University (Ekaterinburg, Russia).