

# THE *HOME* CONCEPT AS THE SET OF MEANINGS IN POETIC TEXT

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*ABSTRACT: The article advances a new comprehensive complex approach to the investigation of the concept content against cognitive and cultural background. The new research framework based on the conception of the semantic space modelling of the HOME concept as objectified in the form of verbal poetic images of home in American poetry of the 20<sup>th</sup> century has been worked out and applied. The semantic space of the HOME concept is represented as structured by eight axes. Each axis is described via two opposed poles: “material – spiritual”, “real – ideal”, “concrete – general”, “one’s own – alien”, “inside – outside”, “natural – artificial”, “past – future”, “culturally-universal – nationally-specific”. The linguistic means employed to verbalize the HOME concept in American poetry of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is revealed. Linguocognitive mechanisms of formation of verbal poetic images of home are exposed.*

*KEYWORDS: the HOME concept; model; semantic space; poetic text; verbal poetic image.*

## **1. The *HOME* concept: cultural and cognitive perspectives**

The article focuses on the semantic space of the HOME concept in American Poetry of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Home is one of the most significant cultural and civilization phenomena. It has always been an interesting and central topic in the study of humans. In the ancient times home was a temple where people could ‘converse with God’ which resulted in rescue from evil spirits and diseases. Many people of the world believed in home spirits. Nowadays home provides security, comfort, privacy, expresses the individuality of the owner, the values he/she holds dear. Basically, home mirrors deep changes in the cultural heritage of mankind and reflects the peculiarities of a people’s relation to/with the world.

For many years home has been the matter of research in archaeology, architecture, ethnography, theology, philosophy, etc. In philosophy home is regarded as a kind of a link between universal and human, a reflection of the space on the whole. In theology home is associated with a stature, a vertical

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since it means an initial point in a person's search of the transcendental. Moreover, many prominent scholars, among them Humboldt, used the HOME concept in their studies to describe the other fundamental concepts, e.g. LANGUAGE, MIND, EXISTENCE. It is certainly true that the HOME concept has a long and complex history in the humanities. Thus, the HOME concept occupies a special place among the other fundamental concepts since it allows to conceive political, economic, social, and cultural life of any community.

In modern language sciences concepts are studied in the framework of cognitive linguistics. Concepts tend to be defined in a variety of ways and studied from various perspectives since the fact that people organize their knowledge into concepts to deal efficiently with the world became widely accepted. It resulted into the cognitive and cultural perspectives becoming the newest orientation in the linguistic science at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries.

Cognitive linguistics grew out of the work of a number of researchers who were interested in the relation of language and mind. It is an approach to language that is based on our experience of the world and the way we perceive and conceptualize it (Ungerer, Schmid, 2006). The most prominent cognitive linguists, among them G.Fauconnier, Ch.Fillmore, G.Lakoff, R.Langacker, agreed that meaning is so central to language that it must be a primary focus of study.

The current research integrates two branches of cognitive sciences – cognitive poetics and conceptology.

Cognitive poetics is viewed as a new way of thinking about literature, involving the application of cognitive linguistics and psychology to literary texts. Meaning is also central for cognitive poetics. The key to understanding issues of literary value and status and meaning lies in being able to have a clear view of text and context, circumstances and uses, knowledge and beliefs (Stockwell, 2002: 4). The well-known linguists working along these lines are M. Freeman, P. Stockwell, R. Tsur, M. Turner, P. Werth, etc.

### **1.1. Concept content as the set of meanings**

Conceptology is understood as the branch of cognitive linguistics that focuses on the study of concepts. Initially 'concept' was used synonymously or associated with 'notion', 'element of the meaning', 'consciousness', 'perception', and 'mind'; it was emphasized that concepts contain culturally-specific information.

The complexity of the concept as the object of research and its dual nature – mental and verbal – led to many definitions of the notion. On the one hand, scholars view a concept as the set of some elements, units while, on the other hand, many scientists underlie unity, integrity of a concept. Some of the mostly cited definitions of concepts provided by the Russian linguists are the following: 'operational units of human mind' (E.Kubryakova), 'fixed meaning in human mind' (N.Boldyrev), 'discrete substantial essence of consciousness' (N.Nikitin). From the linguocultural perspective concepts are

viewed as the main pillars of culture in human mental world (Yu.Stepanov). According to J.Searle “the frame for any word concept is going to be infinitely complex” (Searle, 1979: 127). R.Langacker makes a similar observation that “a concept must be characterized as an integrated system” (Langacker, 1999: 20). These definitions call for three remarks. Firstly, concepts and meanings are interrelated. Secondly, concepts contain culturally-specific information. Thirdly, concepts are understood as complex systems.

With these points in mind, we turn to our definition of the HOME concept. The present paper utilizes the notion of ‘concept’ as the set of meanings since in a number of recent works by linguists concepts are defined as packets of meaning (Turner, 1996: 57) and meaning is equated with conceptualization (Langacker 2002). Lastly, we agree with W.Croft and D.A.Cruse that we have to call our encyclopaedic knowledge in order to properly understand a concept (Croft, Cruse 2004: 30) and that concepts are unstable to the extent that different information is incorporated into the representation of a concept in different situations (Eysenck, Keane, 2004: 285). Thus, having taken into account integrated cognitive and cultural approach, the HOME concept is understood in the study as the set of general human and culture-specific meanings that reflect home as a certain objective, social, and cultural phenomenon.

Before turning to the central claims that will be made, it is necessary to specify what exactly is meant by the meaning. In the article the meaning is viewed as a particular quantum of information. Let us provide the theoretical grounds for this definition. It has been argued in various studies that meanings are cognitive structures, embedded in patterns of knowledge and belief. As an illustration of the notion of meaning, we should reconsider J.Taylor’s standpoint to regard the relevant background information for the characterization of word meanings as a network of shared, conventionalized, to some extent perhaps idealized knowledge, embedded in a pattern of cultural beliefs and practices (Taylor, 1995: 83). M.Turner moved quite a distance with his view stating that “meaning is not a deposit in a concept-container since it is alive and active, dynamic and distributed, constructed for local purposes of knowing and acting. Meanings are not mental objects bounded in conceptual places but rather complex operations of projection, binding, linking, blending, and integration over multiple spaces. Meaning is parabolic and literary” (Turner 1996).

As opposed to meaning, word plays significant role serving as the information unit that conveys knowledge about objects, processes, actions; this knowledge helps to locate the information unit in a certain place among other similar units of the language system so that this information unit has its fixed position and can be identified as concept. P. Stockwell puts it quite eloquently: “the meanings of concepts do not lie wholly in the words that are used to express those concepts, but in cognitive models which are cued up by words and which add rich and complex understanding in a communicative situation. And ultimately the context plays central role in understanding this process since a word automatically activates the stored representations of all

the words related to it due to massive previous learning". It is quite clear from all those approaches that a word meaning is a perspective on our knowledge of the world, as seen through the concept profiled by the word (Croft, Cruse, 2004, p. 30).

For our purposes, it is sufficient to state that 1) semantics of "home" is its potential meaning taken from dictionaries and its realization in poetic texts; 2) the content of the HOME concept is the organized set of all those meanings taken from dictionaries and poetic texts together; and 3) the content of the HOME concept is viewed as the model of its semantic space.

### **1.2. Model of the concept content**

It is necessary, before proceeding, to place the cognitive approach in its proper context. Consequently, it should be noted that in the framework of cognitive semantics modeling of conceptual structures is becoming a very topical issue. The researchers also focus on the modeling of concepts, such as modeling of the types of concepts, modeling of the structures of concepts, modeling of the interaction of concepts.

It is important to mention that model is a logical structure which reproduces some features of the object under investigation on the condition that these features are in the focus of the research and correspond to the real object. Hence, having analyzed the meanings of home in dictionaries and poetic texts, we introduced the model of the concept content which is presented in this paper as its semantic space.

The semantic space of the HOME concept is viewed as the set of meanings arranged in one multilevel structure based on two principles: 1) semantic similarity which results in the formation of a particular semantic axis, and 2) semantic differences which determine the opposite ends of the axis and the arrangement of each component in the certain place between the two ends of the axis.

This study suggests that in the Modern English language and American poetic texts of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the semantic space of the HOME concept is formed by eight axes: axis "material – spiritual"; axis "real – ideal"; axis "concrete – general"; axis "inside – outside"; axis "one's own – alien"; axis "natural – artificial"; axis "past – future"; axis "culturally-universal – nationally-specific".

The key notion of the semantic space model is the notion of dimension. The dimension is a certain semantic characteristic based on which the meanings are compared and contrasted, e.g. material – spiritual; concrete – general; inside – outside. The dimension may be represented graphically in the form of the axis. The model of the concept content is presented on Figure 1.

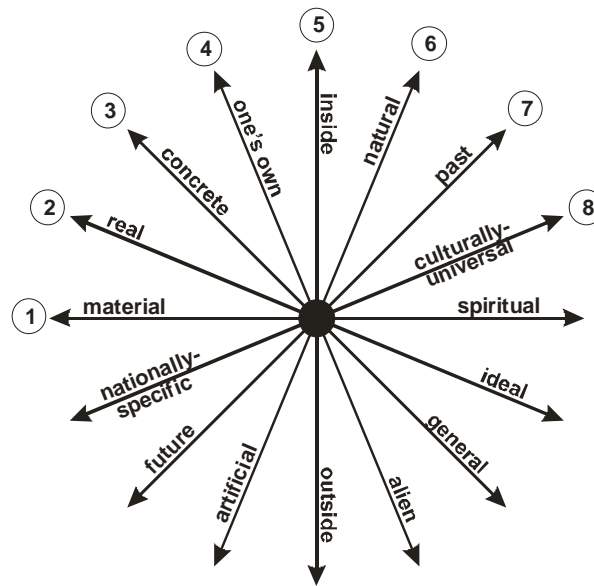


Figure 1. The Eight Axes Forming the Semantic Space of the HOME concept

## 2. Verbal poetic image of home in American poetry of the 20<sup>th</sup> century

This section attempts to show how the eight axes of the verbal poetic image of home are verbalized in American poetic texts of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

We would like to mention that the semantic analysis precedes the conceptual analysis. The semantic analysis is an investigation of the meaning of each linguistic unit. The conceptual analysis reveals the way the HOME concept is actualized and shows on which axes the components of the concept find their places.

The current research is based on the corpus of ten thousand pages of poetic texts written in a time span of one hundred years. On the one hand, the evolution of poetic language is closely connected with that of culture and poetic texts reflect the reality of a rapidly changing modern world addressing social, historical, and cultural issues of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the range of which has expanded in comparison with the previous centuries (Beach, 2003); on the other hand, poetry has no special subject matter of its own and it is considered to be the soul of a nation since it expresses imaginative insight, subtle thought, and profound feeling (Widdowson, 1992).

### 2.1. Relationships between the eight semantic axes of the HOME concept

The HOME concept is multidimensional since one of the peculiarities of its verbalization lies in that its components are located, in most cases, on two or three axes and/or on the two opposed poles of the same axis depending on the context. Moreover, this fact proves the existence of dialectical

essence in perception and understanding of home in verses. For example, in the fragment from M. Sartron's poem "Humpty Dumpty" both poles of two axes "material – spiritual" and "concrete – general" are represented: "*At the time, the slight increase of gloom, / Daily attrition loosening the fist, / The empty mailbox in the afternoon, / The loss of memory, the gradual weakening / Of fiery will, defiant to exist, / That slowly undermines the solid walls, / Until the building that withstood an earthquake / Falls clumsily among the usual days. / Our last courage has been subtly shaken: / When the cat dies, we are overtaken" (M. Sartron).*

Lexemes *building*, *solid walls* actualize the material building and the elements of the construction of this building (walls), verbalizing the schema "*home as a certain material / physical structure*", thus objectifying the pole "material" of the axis "material – spiritual". Personal pronoun *we* and possessive pronoun *our* actualize the representation of family's residence – script "*family life*". In the verse the ideas on the spiritual life of the family are also objectified (the pole "spiritual" of the axis "material – spiritual") since the aspects of mental and spiritual human life are described, e.g.: memory, will – verbalized by nominative units *memory* and *will*, and courage as the trait of human character – verbalized by the word *courage*. The feeling of affection towards a domestic animal is represented in the sentence *When the cat dies, we are overtaken*, where the psychological state of the family after the loss of the cat is described. So, both poles of the axis "material – spiritual" are verbalized.

Schematic representation of home as the material building is objectified by the lexemes *building*, *solid walls*, and the description of home is provided in detail in the text with the help of the word *mailbox*, making it "concrete". Linguistic unit *cat* contributes to the actualization of the scenario knowledge on having domestic animals. The construction *the building that withstood an earthquake* verbalizes the script knowledge on house destruction during an earthquake. So, the pole "concrete" of the axis "concrete – general" is verbalized.

In this poem the image of life fading away is actualized by the LIFE concept and the DEATH concept since those components are located on the pole "general" of the axis "concrete – general". The verbal poetic image of light going out at home – *the slight increase of gloom* – metaphorically represents the approaching death due to the conceptual metaphor LIFE is LIGHT. The phrases *The loss of memory*, *Daily attrition loosening the fist*, *the gradual weakening / Of fiery will* verbalize the knowledge on the loss by human of his/her vital force due to the usage of the words *attrition*, *weakening*, the semantic structures of which contain the same 'loss'. The phrase *slowly undermines the solid walls* objectifies the knowledge on the destruction of the material building, and the phrase *The empty mailbox in the afternoon* – on not very active social life that is conceptualized as part of human life in general. The mentioned verbal units actualize the DEATH concept. In this fragment the verbal poetic image of home as the place of human life and death is created. Finally, both poles of two axes "material – spiritual" and

“concrete – general” are represented, and not all axes of the semantic space of the HOME concept are verbalized, e.g. “one’s own – alien”, “past – present”, which is, in our view, appropriate since the actualization of all the axes would lead to the information overloading of the poetic image of home. We find it natural since this overloading could result in complicating of text interpretation by the reader.

It would be safe to conclude that in American poetry of the 20<sup>th</sup> century various types of knowledge, ideas, notions, beliefs of Americans on home are represented, and all the eight axes of the semantic space are verbalized while the generalized poetic image of home is multidimensional. Following the analysis, we consider the axes “material – spiritual”, “real – ideal”, and “concrete – general” to be more prototypical.

## 2.2. Verbalization of the eight axes forming the content of the HOME concept

The pole “material” of the axis “material – spiritual” of the semantic space of the HOME concept in the verses is represented by the verbalized knowledge on the material building and everyday family activities. In poetry the materialism of Americans is objectified: “*How good it was at home again at night / To prepare for bed, in the frame of the house, and / move / Round the rooms, which do not ever seem to change*” (W.Stevens), as well as the routine home work: “*You’re paranoid she says / and I might as well be / I can’t get any work done / ... / I got myself / into trouble / playing the game of love / ... / and I’ve misplaced my smokes / or the cup of tea / ... / I’m not complaining / I’m just saying / the baby cries and crawls / ... / through the wall / the sound of the dishes / being done*” (P. Nolan).

Purchase of interior stuff is considered to be one of the top priorities and gives much pleasure to an average American: “it is possible to know just enough, and this is all we / were supposed to know, toward which we have been straining all our lives. / We are to read this in outward things: the spoons and greasy tables in this / room, the wooden shelves, the flyspecked ceiling merging into gloom – / good and happy things, nevertheless, that tell us little of themselves and / more about ourselves than we had ever imagined it was possible to know. / They have become the fabric of life (J.Ashbery). Enumeration (the spoons and greasy tables in this / room, the wooden shelves, the flyspecked ceiling merging into gloom) serves to create the effect that there are many material things in the house which are characterized as good and are associated with positive emotions such as happiness (happy). Those material trifles are metaphorically represented as the fabric of life. The general melancholic tone of the poem makes us think about the search for balance between the material and the spiritual. In the ideal American home the material and the spiritual are closely interrelated: “a porch cantilevered on faith” (R.Dove) since porch of the house is perceived metaphorically as supported by the belief in God (cantilevered on faith).

In poetic texts family is conceptualized as spiritual value, and love at home – as the state that makes people happy, not lonely: “*They bow shyly as*

wet swans. *They love each other. / There is no loneliness like theirs / At home once more*" (J.Wright), the absence or lack of love – as disaster: *Lonely little question mark / on a bench in the park: // See the people passing by? / See the airplanes in the sky? / See the birds / flying home / before / dark? // Home's just around / the corner / there – / but no really / anywhere* (L.Hughes). The kid (*Lonely*) is trying to find the answer to the question about his/her home, and realizes that home as the building is not far (*Home's just around / the corner*), but there is no home for him/her where he/she could experience happy family life (*but no really / anywhere*).

Verbal poetic images of ideal home are semantically connected with "American dream": "Let America be America again. / Let it be the dream it used to be. / Let it be the pioneer on the plain / Seeking a home where he himself is free" (L.Hughes). The country is called homeland and it is not nominated as motherland or fatherland – "the country of mother or father". The semantic content of the lexeme homeland is revealed in the following lines of the verse: "I am the poor white, fooled and pushed apart, / I am the Negro bearing slavery's scars. / I am the red man driven from the land, / I am the immigrant clutching the hope I seek" (L.Hughes). Thus, the country is actualized as the land, where the immigrants from different continents strive to build the new house, the new country – both eventually becoming their common dream.

The material aspect of *ideal home* is represented schematically, the poet describes the houses made from brick and stone, he depicts the turned up land: "Who dreamt a dream so strong, so brave, so true, / That even yet its mighty daring sings / In every brick and stone, in every furrow turned / That's made America the land it has become. / O, I'm the man who sailed those early seas / In search of what I meant to be my home" (L.Hughes). The importance of the component "solidity of material building" for ideal home is reconfirmed by the fact that it is verbalized twice – with the help of the lexemes *brick* and *stone*.

Spiritually, ideal home of "American home" should be built on the following values: love – "Let America be the dream the dreamers dreamt – / Let it be that great strong land of love" (L.Hughes), freedom – "O, let my land be a land where Liberty / Is crowned with no false patriotic wreath" (L.Hughes), equal opportunities for all – "But opportunity is real, and life is free, / Equality is in the air we breathe" (L.Hughes), "homeland of the free" (L.Hughes), absence of enslavement – "Where never kings connive nor tyrants scheme / That any man be crushed by one above" (L.Hughes). The dreams about the mentioned values as the spiritual foundation of ideal home are nominated as the basic ones – "Yet I'm the one who dreamt our basic dream" (L.Hughes).

In this very fragment the image of *real home* is created. It is the home where there is no love, freedom, equality, and the frankness of the author is proved by the sentence in brackets (*America never was America to me*), in which the first word *America* actualizes the representation about the ideal country, and the second – *America* – about the real country. The feeling of



pain is created with the help of irony in the following lines: “*There’s never been equality for me, / Nor freedom in this “homeland of the free”* (L.Hughes). The absence of freedom in real life (*Nor freedom*) is contrasted with the declared freedom. The phrase “*homeland of the free*” is put in inverted commas as the evidence for something that does not correspond to reality. In the first part of the poem the images of ideal and real homes are contrasted: the sentence about the real state of things is in parenthesis while at the end of the text the ideal and real images merge into one: there are no brackets and the author optimistically convinces the reader that it is possible to attain the ideal: “*I say it plain, / America never was America to me, / And yet I swear this oath – / America will be!*” (L.Hughes).

The pole “**concrete**” is objectified by the concrete knowledge and/or representation of Americans about their homes. For example, knowledge on the location of buildings in the particular places: “*The little old house was out with a little new shed / In front at the edge of the road*” (R.Frost), in the village: “*Whose woods these are I think I know / His house is in the village, though*” (R.Frost), in the city: “*The soiled city oblongs stand sprawling. / The blocks and house numbers go miles / ... “Show me the way to go home.” / Soldiers and sailors look for street corners, house numbers*” (C.Sandburg), in large city where the houses are situated close to each other: “*side by side / like New York apartment buildings*” (J.Ashbery); knowledge about the interior: “*The house ... // it has stairways, corridors, cellars, / a tower perhaps*” (D.Levertov); about the types of rooms: “*For every room a house has – parlor, bedroom, / And dining-room – thrown pell-mell in the kitchen*” (R.Frost), “*The nursery, The dining-room, The hall, Father’s office, Kitchen, A bedroom, Another bedroom, A drawing-room*” (C.Aiken); about the acquisition of a house: “*And there might be a house we could buy / For only a dollar down*” (R.Frost); about the seizure of a house: “*Not even New Hampshire farms are much for sale. / The farm I made my home on in the mountains / I had to take by force rather than buy.*” (R.Frost); about the sale and further house re-planning by new owners: “*On the day someone sells an old house / And someone else begins to add on to his*” (J.Ashbery), etc.

The pole “**general**” is represented in poetic texts by the concepts LIFE and DEATH. The problem of loneliness of the person being on his/her own at home and in life is raised. This person relies on God only: “*Something sinister in the tone / Told me my secret must be known: / Word I was in the house alone / Somehow must have gotten abroad, / Word I was in my life alone, / Word I had no one left but God*” (R.Frost). The image of death in the house is more frequently created than the image of life. Home sometimes is depicted as the place where a person commits suicide: “*home is where / you / hang yourself*” (P. Lamantia). The image of dialectical unity of life and death is created in literary works: “*This house in one year fallen to decay / Filled me with no less sorrow than the houses / Fallen to ruin in ten thousand years / Where Asia wedges Africa from Europe /.../ It must be I want life to go on living*” (R.Frost), the sight of the deserted, neglected house appeals to the lyrical hero and makes him/her want to live.

Verbal representation of the axis “one’s own – alien”. Being at one’s own home is perceived as creating one’s own special world, separated and different from those of the other people: “*Just us. / In our little house / Far from everybody, / Far from the world*” (K.Rexroth). It contributes to improving one’s own life style and widening outlook which is considered impossible among alien: “*...Or mending fence it all comes back to me / What I was thinking when you interrupted / My life-train logic. And going home / From company means coming to our senses*” (R.Frost). Being among close people also means sharing views with them: “*We thought alike / And that made brothers of us in a home*” (W.Stevens). The formation of one’s own is related to the selection, limitation, and is verbalized with the help of nominative units of restrictive semantics. In American poetry it is conceptualized that the friend and home should be only one: “*I came to but one house, / I made but the one friend*” (R.Frost); *but one* is the key element transferring the sense of selection and it is mentioned twice in the poetic fragment. In ideal home privacy should be provided which is of high priority for most Americans: “*Before going home to the decency of one’s private life / Shut up behind doors, which is nobody’s business. / It does matter a little to the others /.../ No one would dare to intrude*” (J.Ashbery).

The interaction between the image schema “inside – outside” and “container” is relevant for the verbalization of the axis “**inside – outside**” of the verbal poetic image of home: “*I’ll close my eyes / and recall this room and everything in it: / ... The book / on the windowsill, riffled by wind...*” (L.Lee), where the image-schema “inside – outside” is actualized by the lexeme *in*, and the image schema “(filled) container” – with the help of enumeration of things filling the room. Special role is played by the doors and the windows as the elements of the house. For example, things situated behind the doors are perceived as the space “outside”: “*When we locked up the house at night, / We always locked the flowers outside / And cut them off from window light. / The time I dreamed the door was tried / And brushed with buttons upon sleeves, / The flowers were out there with the thieves*” (R.Frost).

Among natural phenomena, essential for keeping life at home, fire plays an important role in American poetic texts: “*Because some friendly hands behind my back / Fumbled the coal and then tended up the fire. / Warmth of the room waved to the window sash*” (J.Wright), since inability to keep it metaphorically means failing to maintain relations with close people and sometimes even failing to keep body and soul together: “*Saying, “The house, the stucco one you built, / We lost. ... / Light we could make, but not enough of warmth...”*” (S.Kunitz). Water, light, and warmth are also verbalized like the essential things for maintaining life at home: “*The house stayed dark all year / though there was instant light and water*” (R.Dove), “*The well was dry beside the door, / And so we went with pail and can / Across the fields behind the house / To seek the brook if still it ran*” (R.Frost), “*This house is frozen brittle, all except / This room you sit in*” (R.Frost).

There are three types of verbal poetic images of interrelation between home and nature. Firstly, the houses are depicted as built in the natural environment being part of it, and their arrangement is viewed as natural state of things: "...*Recalling flimsy Western ranches / The beautiful hills shine outward / Sunrise / the raw fierce fire / Coming up past the sharp edge // And the hoof marks on the mountain / Shines in the white room*"(G.Oppen), "*Here is my house. Under a red rose tree*" (L.Simpson). Secondly, the world of nature may organically become part of the inner world of home: "*This quiet morning light / reflected, how many times / from grass and trees and clouds / enters my north room / touching the walls with / grass and clouds and trees. / Anthony, / trees and grass and clouds*" (W.C.Williams), "*the thunder / Soon filled the apartment*" (J.Ashbery). Thirdly, homes are conceptualized as natural phenomena: boulders ("*And a few houses sprinkled round the foot / Like boulders broken off the upper cliff,*" (R.Frost), rocks ("*From freezing rooms as bare as rock*" (C.Aiken), flowers ("*Now the chimney was all of the house that stood, / Like a pistil after the petals go*" (R.Frost) etc.

The axis "**past – future**" of the semantic space of the HOME concept in poetic texts involves the verbalization of knowledge on the changes taking place in American society and family in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In poetry phonograph is represented as the outdated device: "*His parents would sit alone together / on the blue divan in the small living room / listening to Dvorak's piano quintet. / ... and look straight ahead / at the yellow light of the phonograph...*" (B.H.Fairchild). The knowledge on the invention of radio that appeared in every American home in 1924 is conceptualized: "*Cottages in a row / all radioed and showerbathed?*" (W.C.Williams), as well as many other inventions and innovations, such as central heating: "*But central heat / Hissed back and kept us warm*" (J.Merrill), electricity: "*I think of many comfortable homes stretching for miles, / ... / And warm bathrooms with guest towels, and electric lights*"(R.Bly), video screen and conditioner: "*to arrive in front of large video screen, / in pleasantly air-conditioned home ...*" (A.Hollo). In what follows, the poet describes unregistered couple and the connection between the relations in marriage and the rights for property of each spouse: "*The dear knows my interest / Has been to keep the thing from breaking up. / This is a good home: I don't ask for better. / But when I've said, Why shouldn't they be married? / He'd say, Why should they? – no more words than that. / And after all why should they? / John's been fair / I take it. / What was his was always hers. / There was no quarrel about property.*" (R.Frost).

The peculiarities of American world picture are also verbalized in poetry. Americans are patriots and hang out their national flag near their houses or in front of them: "*My old flame, my wife! / Remember our lists of birds? / One morning last summer, I drove / by our house in Maine. It was still / On top of its hill – // Now a red ear of Indian maize / was splashed on the door. / Old Glory with thirteen stripes / hung on a pole. The clapboard / was old-red schoolhouse red*" (R.Lowell). **Nationally-specific** is also the proximity

of their cars to their homes: “*men take everything little / by little they take the power the dream the hope / the house & the car*” (M.Owen), since in most places it is next to impossible to live without a vehicle: “*But first, a nap, till my mother comes home / from work, with the car*” (T.Berrigan).

We can summarize this part of our discussion as follows. Home as a life phenomenon of American society plays in it a very important role.

### **3. Linguocognitive mechanisms of formation of verbal poetic images of home**

It is necessary to devote a few lines to the complexity of the notion of image.

In the humanities *the image* is widely defined as the reflection of the outside world in the human mind and/or a certain form of life representation. The images are created with the help of ideas, insights, accumulated impressions, memory, and are regarded as the mechanisms for exploration of outer world and life in general. Thus, image might be viewed as a model of reality. Mainly, images are related to art.

*Verbal image* is the image embodied in literature by means of verbal units, and it may consist of just one word, a phrase, a sentence, a paragraph, or even the whole literary work. So, the image is a wider notion in comparison with the verbal image.

In cognitive linguistics the notion of image is referred to as a certain representation of reality and it is connected with the speaker's reconstruction of some scheme, aspects of which are called ‘dimensions of imagery’ (Tabakowska 1999).

Cognitive poetics studies *the verbal poetic image* from the point of view of the interaction between language and mind, knowledge and its embodiment in the text. In our view, it is necessary to differentiate between the notions of image, metaphorical image, and verbal poetic image since the definition of the verbal poetic image as metaphorical, that is given by some researchers, narrows the objects which can be investigated as verbal poetic image.

In the article *the verbal poetic image* is viewed as the complex mental and verbal structure, depicting the individual and typical view on the world of a certain community, which might consist of: 1) just carnal image, 2) just metaphorical image, or 3) their integration.

Following the analysis, we can conclude that in the formation of the verbal poetic images of home the following three linguocognitive processes play significant role: the creation of the carnal image, metaphorical projection, and conceptual integration which result in the creation of carnal images of home, metaphorical images of home, and symbolic images of home respectively.

### 3.1. Carnal images of home

As it has been mentioned, *the carnal image* is the mental entity that is rooted in the human perception of reality and is based on mental pictures produced in the human mind during the person's interaction with the world. Every speaker/poet has a clear idea of his/her home – some mental picture easily visualized. This picture might be formed as a result of a various activities related to home, e.g. opening/closing the doors, cleaning up, repairing the interior, satisfying everyday needs, buying curtains, watering plants, etc. So, in this sense, carnal image might also be called primary since it is very close to the idea of visualization of real or unreal world, it focuses on expressiveness and sensibility.

It is important to note that the verbal means employed in the creation of carnal images are used in their direct nominative function. Let us illustrate the point. In the excerpt from the poetic text "Evening" written by James Wright the verbal poetic image of home consists of two images – carnal image of building and carnal image of mother: "*His mother, still beyond / The bare porch and the door, / His mother sang in the house, / And kept our supper warm*" (J.Wright). The image of the building is carnal since it is based on the mental picture and is embodied with the help of the verbal means used in their direct nominative functions, in this extract those linguistic units are *porch, door, house*. The mentioned lexemes (*porch, door, house*) actualize home as the material structure, verbalizing the pole "material" of the axis "material – spiritual". The image of mother waiting for the kids is depicted with the help of the following verbal units: *mother, supper, warm*. The pole "spiritual" of the axis "material – spiritual" is objectified in the context of mother's singing while trying to keep the kids' food warm. There are no metaphorical images, but the image of home is quite vivid, and two main components of the HOME concept "house / building" and "family" are verbalized in the poetic text.

For the illustration of the verbal poetic image of home comprising carnal and metaphorical images, let us analyze the following lines from "Good Hours" written by Robert Frost: "*I had for my winter evening walk – / No one at all with whom to talk, / But I had the cottages in a row / Up to their shining eyes in snow.*" (R.Frost). There are carnal images: image of the lyrical hero (*I had for my winter evening walk*) and image of cottages, built in a row (*cottages in a row*); and metaphorical – image of cottages as people with shining eyes (*the cottages / Up to their shining eyes*), windows as eyes (*shining eyes*) and cottages as interlocutors (*No one at all with whom to talk, / But I had the cottages in a row*). The contrast between the light in the windows and snow (*Up to their shining eyes in snow*) makes the reader feel the warmth inside and the cold outside. The metaphor HOME is HUMAN BEING is the result of the interaction between the metaphors COTTAGES are INTERLOCUTORS and WINDOWS are SHINING EYES.

Verbalization of *carnal images of home* results from actualization of frames and values related to home in the minds of Americans, as well as with the help of iconic representation of the situation depicted in the poetic

text. A wide variety of types of linguistic units actualizing this or that frame is considered to be one of the peculiarities of frames representation in poetic texts. Let us turn now to some examples. Scenario knowledge about the life of a family at home may be objectified by various lexemes: *mother, father, child* etc.; phrases: *childhood home* (R.Frost); sentences: *my marriage failed* (S.Kunitz), whole text fragments: *My unexpected knocking at the door / Started chairs thundering on the kitchen floor, / Knives and forks ringing on the supper plates, / Voices conflicting like the candidates. / A mighty farmer flung the house door wide, / He and a lot of children came outside, / And there on an equality we stood. / That's the time knocking at a door did good* (R.Frost).

### 3.2. Metaphorical images of home

This section deals with formation and functioning of metaphorical images of home in American poetry.

*Conceptual metaphor* is one of the central terms in cognitive linguistics. Most definitions of metaphor in cognitive linguistics involve an understanding of two or more conceptual domains since metaphor has been seen as the use of an expression characterizing one concept to refer to a different concept. In other words, metaphor is understood as mapping of properties between the two spaces or domains (Lakoff, Johnson, 1980). It is certainly true that metaphor illuminates the cognitive principles of embodied understanding that poets and readers use in composing and reading poetry (Freeman, 2000).

Following G.Lakoff's view that metaphors organize our conceptual system, conceptual metaphors show the interaction between the semantic space of the HOME concept and the semantic spaces of the other universal concepts, e.g. HUMAN BEING, TIME, SPACE, etc.

The research shows that in poetry the HOME concept serves as the target cognitive model for the following concepts: LIVING CREATURE, HUMAN BEING, NATURAL PHENOMENON, CULTURAL ARTIFACT, and ABSTRACT NOTION which are used as the source cognitive models. For example, like a living creature, home may turn: "*The grass shakes, the houses / seem, by the lack of foliage / about them, to turn / their angles forward into / the wind to let it pass*" (W.C.Williams); leap out: "*On All good Road two miles off Georgia 41, you round a / curve / canopied by pine / and the house leaps out of the trees to meet you*" (S.Bingham); stare: "*He never had but the one home / Staring Him in the eye / coldly / and with patience*" (W.C.Williams); watch: "*The house was watching everything we did*" (C.Aiken); sleep: "*While the houses sleep*" (C.Aiken); doze: "*The houses doze and seem to wonder why through the / Pacific haze, and the dreams alternately glow and grow dull*" (J.Ashbery); laugh: "*What opposite? Could it be that yellow patch, the side / Of a house, that makes one think the house is laughing*" (W.Stevens); praise: "*Home and the fields give praise*" (W.Stevens); greet: "*And the haunted houses in those valleys wanted to con-*

*gratulate / You on your immobility*" (J.Ashbery); pause: *"even the houses / Seemed only to pause on earth for a moment"* (C.Aiken), etc.

It follows from our analysis that the space of the HOME concept is used as the source cognitive model to understand the spaces of the other fundamental concepts, among them are the HEART concept: *"shelter in his heart"* (E.Wylie), SOUL: *"I think all this is somewhere in myself / The cold room unlit before dawn / Containing a stillness such as attends death / And from a corner the sounds of a small bird trying / From time to time to fly a few beats in the dark / You would say it was dying it is immortal"* (W.S.Merwin), PSYCHIC ACTIVITY: *"the house of your brain"* (J.Ashbery), *"They are at ease in a shelter of the mind"* (W.Stevens), HAPPINESS: *"shattering the frail décor of your happiness / like a straw house, replunging you and your world into the gray oblivion"* (J.Ashbery), SORROW: *"Sorrow is my own yard"* (W.C. Williams), SONG: *"builds up his chant in progressive stages / Like a skyscraper"* (J.Ashbery), NATURE: *"the door to this forest"* (J.Ashbery), *"The earth rocked me / in a cradle of winds. / The fog and the mud / clung as a wrap and home / of swaddling cloths"* (C.Sandburg), *"Put out the lights, in the houses of lustrous ceilings, / undulous outstretched sky – / Send forth a word, that the world be flooded with silence"* (J.Wheelwright), NIGHT: *"the night, which becomes a house"* (J.Ashbery), NOON: *"In an iron-blue chamber of that afternoon"* (J.Ashbery), etc.

One of the assumptions of cognitive linguists is that we conceptualize our ideas about the world and ourselves through our embodied experience of the world and self. In a sense, ideas, like life, eternity, immortality are understood through the conceptual projection of physical experience. The following fragments vividly illustrate this point: RIGHTEOUS AND TRUTHFUL LIFE: *In my home come to me anxiously at night, asking how it goes. / My door is always open. I never lie, and the great heat warms me* (J.Ashbery), LIFE: *"What if it should turn out eternity / Was but the steeple on our house of life / That made our house of life a house of worship? / We do not go up there to sleep at night. / We do not go up there to live by day. / Nor need we ever go up there to live. / A spire and belfry coming on the roof / Means that a soul is coming on the flesh"* (R.Frost). Metaphysical conceptions related to home find their verbalization in texts since the HOME concept serves as the source cognitive model for the IMMORTALITY concept and the DEATH concept thus proving that in human mind there is a close connection between the two. Some striking examples of this are conceptual metaphors EDEN is HOME: *"A heaven of serenity and unreachable, with all kinds of nice / People and plants waking and stretching, calling / Attention to themselves with every artifice of which the human / Genre is capable. And they called it our home"* (J.Ashbery), *"Still each night I prayed / for the angels over San Giuseppi / to fly closer to my window, / and offer to take me home"* (E.Y.Chang) and GRAVE is HOME: *"Carve the inside / with the image of my death in / little line of figures three fingers high. / Put a lid on it cut with Mut bending over / the earth, for my headpiece, and in the year / to*

*be chosen I shall rouse, the lid / shall be lifted and I will walk about / the temple where they have rested me / and eat the air of the place: // Ah – these walls are high! This / is in keeping”* (W.C.Williams), *“Violets, / Great tufts, spring up from buried houses / Of poor, dishonest people, for whom the steeple, / Long since, rang out farewell, farewell, farewell”* (W.Stevens).

The point is that the components of the conceptual sphere of the HOME concept interact with the components of the conceptual spheres of the other fundamental concepts.

The most salient metaphorical patterns are the following: HOME is HUMAN BEING, HOME is NATURE, HOME is TIME, and HOME is LIFE.

### 3.3. Symbolic images of home

This section attempts to show how symbolic images of home are formed and how they function in American verses.

In poetic texts the conceptual integration of mental spaces serves as the instrument of the formation and analysis of the verbal poetic symbolic images of home which in comparison with metaphorical images produce more complicated conceptual structures.

Let us analyze “The House Was Quiet and the World Was Calm” written by W.Stevens. Input mental spaces are represented by HOUSE OF BEING/EXISTENCE and GENESIS/PART OF BIBLE and the generic space is structured by the scenarios “calm meditation/deep contemplation” and “search for truth”: *“The house was quiet and the world was calm. / The reader became the book; and summer night // Was like the conscious being of the book. / The house was quiet and the world was calm. // The words were spoken as if there was no book, / Except that the reader leaned above the page, // Wanted to lean, wanted much most to be / The scholar to whom his book is true, to whom // The summer night is like a perfection of thought. / The house was quiet because it had to be. // The quiet was part of the meaning, part of the mind. / The access of perfection to the page. // And the world was calm. The truth in a calm world, / In which there is no other meaning, itself // Is calm, itself is summer and night, itself / Is the reader leaning late and reading there”* (W.Stevens). Eventually, in a blended space we observe the symbol of calm reading of a book at home as the right track in search for truth of being.

Finally, it must be noted that the difference between metaphorical images and symbolic images of home is explained by the number of spaces involved in the creation of the verbal poetic image. In other words, metaphorical projection includes the interaction between two spaces – the target and the vehicle, while conceptual integration comprises the generic space, two input spaces, and the blend. In general, symbolic images of home are more complicated structures in comparison with metaphoric images of home. In contrast to metaphorical images which can be characterized as viewing home in terms of some concrete and/or defined phenomena, symbolic images are polysemantic in their nature and interpretation.



## Summary

The research shows that various types of knowledge, ideas, beliefs of Americans on home may be modeled as the semantic space of the HOME concept. The embodiment of the HOME concept in American poetic texts results in the generalized poetic image of home – the complex mental and verbal structure, that can be described as the unity of poetical individual, as well as typical view on the world. The components of the HOME concept (e.g. “building”, “family”) are objectified in the form of verbal poetic images of home structured by images, frames, scripts, image-schemas, concepts, etc.

The analysis suggests that all the eight axes of the semantic space of the HOME concept are objectified, and one of the peculiarities of its verbalization lies in that its components are located, in most cases, on two or three axes and/or on the two opposed poles of the same axis depending on the context. To a remarkable degree, the HOME concept in the poetic world of Americans in the 20<sup>th</sup> century plays a very significant role and occupies high axiological status in the life of an individual and in the life of the community.

Thus, the new research framework based on the conception of the semantic space modelling of the HOME concept has been worked out and applied. It advances a new comprehensive complex approach to the investigation of the concept content against cognitive and cultural background. The investigation is instrumental in stimulating further research into the structure of the concept content.

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