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**SIMILE:
 COGNITIVE AND SEMIOTIC PERSPECTIVE
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Ya.N. Prosyannikova. Simile: cognitive and semiotic perspective. The article reveals linguistic, cognitive and semiotic characteristics of simile in English poetic texts of Canadian poetry. Cognitive peculiarities of simile are defined via cognitive and semiotic operation of comparison and reconstruction of concepts and conceptual metaphors which underlie it, while semiotic peculiarities are clarified via identification of cultural codes and word-symbols which are represented in subjective and objective parts of similes. Thus, I view simile as a multifunctional linguistic and semiotic construal representing verbal patterns of form and semantic function. Linguistic and semiotic analysis of similes enables their classification into iconic, indexical and symbolic ones. The semiotic classification of similes is premised on the type of semiotic relation that exists between a “sign vehicle” and its meaning. Iconic similes are based on similarity between a sign and its referent, while indexical similes show relations of contiguity. Symbolic similes are differentiated on the basis of conventional pairing of a signified and a signifier within a simile.

Key words: cognitive and semiotic operation of comparison, simile, iconic simile, indexical simile, symbolic simile.

Я.М. Присяннікова. Художнє порівняння: когнітивно-семіотичний аспект. У статті встановлено лінгвокогнітивні та лінгвoseміотичні особливості художнього порівняння в англomовних віршованих текстах канадської поезії. Художнє порівняння визначається як поліфункціональний лінгвoseміотичний конструкт, що інкорпорує концептуальний зміст та вербальне вираження. Когнітивні властивості художнього порівняння встановлені через ідентифікацію його когнітивного підґрунтя, яким є когнітивно-семіотична операція порівняння, та реконструкцію концептів та концептуальних метафор. Лінгвoseміотичні особливості художнього порівняння окреслені через аналіз культурних кодів та знаків-символів, що актуалізуються в суб'єктній та об'єктній частинах художнього порівняння. Лінгвoseміотичний аналіз художніх порівнянь уможливив їх семіотичну типологізацію відповідно до домінантного типу семіотичного зв'язку між планом змісту і планом вираження. В основу виокремлення іконічних художніх порівнянь покладено відношення подібності, у свою чергу індексальні художні порівняння побудовані на відношенні суміжності між позначуванним і позначувальним, натомість символічні художні порівняння диференціюються відношенням конвенціональності.

Ключові слова: когнітивно-семіотична операція порівняння, іконічні, індексальні, символічні художні порівняння, художнє порівняння.

Я.Н. Присянникова. Художественное сравнение: когнитивно-семиотический аспект. В статье выявлены лингвокогнитивные и лингвoseмиотические свойства художественного сравнения в англоязычных стихотворных текстах канадской поэзии. Художественное сравнение представляет собой полифункциональный лингвoseмиотический конструкт, в котором инкорпорируется концептуальное содержание и его вербальная манифестация. Когнитивная природа художественного сравнения установлена путем идентификации его когнитивной основы – когнитивно-семиотической операции сравнения – и реконструкции концептов и концептуальных метафор, сокрытых в семантике художественного сравнения. Определены семиотические особенности художественного сравнения путем анализа культурных кодов и знаков-символов, которые актуализируются в субъектной и объектной частях художественного сравнения. Лингвoseмиотический анализ художественных сравнений позволил разработать и предложить их семиотическую классификацию на основе

доминирующего типа семиотической связи между планом содержания и планом выражения, которая включает следующие типы: иконические художественные сравнения, индексальные художественные сравнения и символические художественные сравнения.

Ключевые слова: иконические, индексальные, символические художественные сравнения, когнитивно-семиотическая операция сравнения, художественное сравнение.

1. Introduction

Comparison is a fundamental cognitive operation of almost all mental processes in human mind [Gentner 2012, 130]. Comparison as a multiple-aspect phenomenon has drawn much attention of philosophers (Aristotle, C. Helvetius, H. de Saint-Simon, G. W. Hegel, K. Ushynskii, I. Barton, I. Kodukhov) and psychologists (L. S. Vygotskii, S. L. Rubinshtein, A. R. Luriya).

Its verbal representation has been studied in multiple research papers on historical poetics (S. S. Averitsev, A. N. Veselovskii, P. A. Grintser, A. B. Kudelin, D. S. Likhachov, Ye. M. Meletiskii), theoretical poetics (A. A. Potebnya), formal poetics (B. V. Tomashevskii, V. B. Shklovskii), structural and semiotic linguistics (D. U. Ashurova, Yu. M. Lotman, S. M. Mezenin), linguopoetics (M. L. Gasparov, S. K. Gasparyan, Ye. A. Nekrasova, T. I. Nikolashyna, Ye. N. Ushakova, Ye. O. Filatova), cognitive linguistics and cognitive poetics (G. L. Denisova, L. F. Prisyazhnyuk, N. V. Yarovaya).

Modern linguistic studies are focused on defining the character of interconnection between the language and human mind. This tendency requires studying simile as a cognitive and semiotic construct which has two planes – cognitive and semiotic (verbal). Comparison as a cognitive mechanism of coding and structuring knowledge underlies the cognitive plane of simile.

The fusion of linguocognitive and linguosemiotic approaches enables comprehensive analysis of simile according to three semiotic branches – semantics, syntactics and pragmatics – in order to establish cognitive and semiotic peculiarities of its formation and functioning in English poetic texts of Canadian poetry. Consequently, a complex cognitive and semiotic approach allows exploring simile as a multifunctional linguosemiotic construal so as to comprehend and interpret it from a new perspective. Aforesaid explains the **topicality** of the present study.

The **object** of the analysis is similes in Canadian English poetic texts. The **subject matter** of the article is cognitive and semiotic peculiarities of similes functioning in poetic texts of Canadian poetry. The article is **aimed** at identifying features of comparison as a cognitive-semiotic operation and the ways and means of its representation in English poetic texts of Canadian poetry.

2. Discussion and Results

2.1. Comparison as a fundamental cognitive operation

Comparison as a cognitive operation occurs in accordance with a number of consecutive stages of cognitive processing of information despite uncontrolled and non-purposeful nature of this action. The result of the cognitive operation of comparison is not just a formal inventory of common and distinctive features of two or more subjects, but an acquisition of new knowledge, i.e. inferences [Holyoak & Thagard 1995: 15]. The cognitive operation of comparison as the basic mental action [Gentner & Smith 2012: 131] is the basis for linguocognitive operations of analogical and narrative mapping that are verbalized in poetic texts by means of similes.

Linguocognitive operations of analogical and narrative mapping allow projecting a partial structure or features of a source domain (which is the objective part or the object of simile) onto partial structure or features of a target domain (which is the subjective part or the subject of simile). [Fauconnier 1997: 9; Fauconnier & Turner 1998: 135]. This projection can be motivated by real or imaginary similarity of the things being compared which is the result of parabolic [Belekhova 2002: 234] and analogical reasoning of the external world [Gentner & Smith 2012: 131; Freeman 2002: 467; Belekhova 2002: 181].

Analogical mapping includes three cognitive subprocesses such as attribute mapping, relational and systems mapping [Freeman 2002: 467], whereas narrative mapping is realized through the procedure of intertextualization [Belekhova 2002: 235]. The aforementioned cognitive subskills are aimed at specifying of similarities of the subject and the object of similes.

Attribute mapping is aimed to create similarity between the subject and the object of simile on the basis of an attribute of the object:

- (1) “...*patience*
Is longer than the lives of glaciers”
(A. Milton “The natural history of elephants”);
- (2) “*perfect love is like a fair green plant*”
(A. Lampman “The Growth of Love XI”);
- (3) “*The mystic river ...*
Untamable and changeable as flame”
(Ch. Roberts “Ave! (An Ode for the Shelley Centenary, 1892)) [CPO].

This type of the mappings is “an analogy of the very simplest form” [Holyoak & Thagard 1995: 26] as it allows singling out a particular attribute which is common both to the subject and the object of simile, moreover, the basis of the comparison is shown explicitly (*longer than, fair green, untamable and changeable*). Therefore the process of interpretation is relatively simple and straightforward. It does not require any additional mental effort of the recipient/addressee. Successful interpretation lies in the matching attributes.

Here, we need to capture the fact that many statements of similarity (i.e. similes) depend on some structural or relational isomorphism between knowledge associated with the two concepts rather than on a match of simple attributes. So, relational mapping “plays an important role in structuring our knowledge base and provides means of identifying elements of one domain via their counterparts in the other.” [Fauconnier 1997: 11]. According to L. I. Belekhova [Belekhova 2002: 222] relational mapping should be understood as a projection of similar functions from the object onto the subject of simile, so that both show or evoke similar actions, states and emotions.

- (4) “... *and the day fades out like smoke*”
(Ch. Roberts “The Potato Harvest”) [CPO].

The given example of the simile “*day like smoke*” is relatively difficult to interpret. The generation of an interpretation cannot be readily achieved as the subject and the object of simile have no dominant attributes in common, but there is a key verb *fades out* that shows how this statement of similarity should be interpreted. Smoke disappears melting in the air, just the same as a day quietly flows and comes to its end. A gripping feeling of fear when a person perceives the irreversible and fugacious nature of human life, the inevitability of the end of his/her life is relevant for an adequate decoding of the message that is conveyed by the simile.

Systems mappings or schema mappings (in terms of G. Fauconnier) “operate when a general schema, frame or model is used to structure a situation in context” [Fauconnier 1997: 11], in other words, some situations or events are projected from the source domain/the object of the simile onto the target domain/the subject.

- (5) “*The bushes themselves ramble like a grandmother’s sentences*
giving birth to their own sharpness. Picking the berries
must be a tactful conversation
of gloved hands”

(S. Bolster “Many have written poems about blackberries”) [CPO].

This simile “*bushes – a grandmother’s sentences*” based on systems mapping is open to multiple interpretations. The process of interpretation is forced by metaphor *ramble* and metonymy *a grandmother’s sentences*.

There is an analogy between a process of picking up berries and the way elderly people communicate with others. When picking up berries a person goes from one bush to other ones

which are usually alike in size and colour, so sometimes it seems that they “wander” around you. To pick up a full basket of berries you need to concentrate and find every ripe fruit. Similarly, while communicating with strangers or even relatives, elderly people have to sort out their thoughts and memories which are not often related to the topic of their communication. Sometimes these people cannot accurately express their thoughts or wishes due to physical disabilities which are caused by their age. These two situations are interconnected with the interpretation “*something that is difficult to collect*”.

On the other hand, thorns of blackberry bushes and grandmother’s words are compared according to the degree of their “sharpness”. Most often grandmothers notwithstanding their long life experience say everything they think directly even if it is “bitter” truth. They do not spend much time on persuasion.

2.2. Simile as a semiotic phenomenon.

The semiotic nature of simile is realized concurrently in the semantic, syntactic and pragmatic aspects of semiosis (Yu. S. Stepanov). From the standpoint of the *semantic aspect*, simile is a verbal sign within which a signifier and a signified are united by a certain type of semiotic connection. The type of semiotic connection is determined by the type of relationship that is established between a linguistic sign and its referent. Three types of semiotic connection are discriminated, they are as follows: the relation of similarity (iconic connection), the relation of contiguity (indexical connection) and the relation of conventionality (symbolic connection). The iconic connection between the surface and the inner (conceptual) structure of simile is determined by the relation of similarity. Whereas, the relation of contiguity underlies indexical connection between a verbal sign and its denotatum and symbolic semiotic connection is characterized by the relation of conventionality (by Ch. S. Peirce) which is established between the content of a linguistic sign and its verbal representation.

Simile as a multifunctional linguosemiotic construal may display iconic, indexical and symbolic characteristics based on the relations between a linguistic sign and an object of the conceptualized real world. But the degree of their actualization is varying. According to Ch. S. Peirce’s theory of the sign “icon, index, and symbol mark the scalar movement of the sign from concrete to abstract. ... All three forms participate and interact in the language sign.” [Freeman 2007: 426]. Hence the dominant type of semiotic connection enables to distinguish three types of similes functioning in poetic texts of Canadian poetry: iconic similes, indexical similes and symbolic similes.

The *syntactic aspect* of semiosis involves the study of simile in terms of the valency of linguistic signs in its surface structure and their interaction with other constructive elements of the poetic text, as this interaction serves as the background for creating textual worlds. A system of heterogeneous textual elements of different levels is described and structured with the help of functional-semantic field model.

The *pragmatic aspect* of semiosis presupposes analysis of the influence of simile on the interpretation adequacy of an addressee, as similes and the whole poetic text are interpreted by an interpreter with his/her individual background (psychological, cultural, social, etc.).

2.3. Iconic similes

In the given study, I will give a detailed description of semiotic classification of similes in accordance with the semantic aspect of semiosis. Iconic similes are similes in the structure of which a signifier and a signified correlate on the basis of their material, structural or visual similarities [Liszka 1996: 2]. The data analyzed are English poetic texts of Canadian poetry.

Poetry is said to be inherently iconic [Freeman 2007: 433; Higara 2000: 147], that is, there is an immediate and close relationship based on similarity between the linguistic structure of a poetic text, and simile in particular, and its meaning. The relation of similarity is crucial in poetry as “in

poetry, similarity relations in form are used as cues to the meaning of the poem through poetic devices such as rhyme, semi-rhyme, alliteration, assonance, meter; general repetitions of sounds, syllables, words Far from being subordinated to meaning (as is usually the case in ordinary use of language), in poetry a sound *plays a leading role, operates in full partnership with meaning, and even helps to create meaning*" (Italics mine) [Waugh & Newfield 1986: 32].

Peculiarities of manifestation of iconic similes depend on the level on which they occur [Cuypere 2008: 2]. At the phonetic level iconic similes are discussed in terms of either onomatopoeia or sound symbolism [Prosyannikova 2012], and the iconic sign is taken "to represent its object by imagic similarity to it" [Tabakowska 2003: 361]. Thus, by inspecting the sign we may gain knowledge of the object.

In the following example the interplay of two abovementioned stylistic means may be observed:

(6) *By late August, beetles fell
from somewhere in the sky,
the click of their bodies
on cement like seconds ticking.*

(L. Crosier "The swimming pool") [CPO].

The invasion of small beetles is compared with a ticking clock. The sound of a ticking clock is reproduced by the rhythmic repetition of consonant sounds [t, k], whereas a sound form of the onomatopoeic word *click* imitates the sound of the beetles falling down from the sky onto the solid surface. The results of psycholinguistic studies prove that alliteration of some particular sounds may cause subconscious associations in the mind of the addressee. Thus, such consonant sounds as [b, d, g, k, r] evoke subconscious association with something big [Levitskii 1975: 57], in the given example it is the size of the beetles. The iconic correspondence between the subjective and the objective parts of simile is created by means of paronymic attraction of onomatopoeic verbs *click* and *tick* which are primary motivated by the sound.

Phonetic iconicity can be either motivated by a sound or by a non-sound. Here it is claimed that there are definite correlations between "certain types of sounds and certain categories of meaning, such as size, movement, feelings and distances" [Lapolla 1994: 130]. Phonetic iconicity "then, provides a means for expressing the world of the senses before the conceptualizing mind moves us toward abstraction" [Freeman 2007: 426].

As L.P. Prokof'yeva [2006: 95] claims that not only a particular sound is associated with some physical parameter, but even a grapheme has a certain match in the world of colors (*chromaesthetic iconicity* by Jakobson [1979: 188]). Hence this theory enables an interpreter to picture a poetic text in colors.

A poem "November" by Ch. Dewdney [CPO] allows us to analyze the way iconicity of color is manifested in the text. November symbolizes a place and time of an occasional meeting of two giants – winter and summer. The blue color as a symbol of winter dominates in the first stanza and is expressed in the poetic text by graphemes *b, u, m, w* (*November, month, mysterious, empty, under, illuminates, dreaming, blue, autumnal*). The blue color is associated with people's spiritual life therefore it induces to reflect on the universal laws of life and a place of every person in a complex system of human relationships. The central part of the text demonstrates an equal proportion of "winter blue" and "summer green" graphemes. Whereas the green color predominates with multiple "green" graphemes *e, f, g, n, t* in the final stanzas:

(7) *Moss thrives in November
Its greenness deepens
in a vernal expansion
/ ... /
Green apples adorn
leafless branches like*

forgotten ornaments.

In the imagination of the recipient the final green accent activates an association with a variety of lifeforms and spring freshness that is to come after cold winter. An opposition of blue winter and green summer iconically depicts cyclicity of life. The victory of life over winter “sleep” is not accidental. It is predictable as it is coded in the title of the poem “November” where there are three “green” (*n,e,e*) and only two “blue” (*m,b*) graphemes.

The second type of iconicity – *diagrammatic* – is actualized at the morphological level [Harm 2003]. According to Peirce, a diagram is a complex sign, representing a complex concept. The essence of a diagram is that the relationship between the parts of a complex sign resembles the relationship between the parts of the concept which it represents [Tabakowska 2003: 362]. Consequently diagrammatic iconicity consists in a correspondence between morphological and semantic markedness. According to Haiman, “categories that are marked morphologically ... are also marked semantically” [Haiman 1980: 528]. Thus diagrammatic iconicity results from the general “more-form-more-meaning” principle [Tabakowska 2003: 362].

Diagrammatic iconicity is considered to be a gradual matter, so W. Mayerthaler [Sigal 1997: 107] distinguishes five types or “degrees” as he puts it, of diagrammatic iconicity: 1) a maximum degree of iconic coding; 2) a medium degree of iconic coding; 3) a minimum degree of iconic coding; 4) anti-iconic coding; 5) counter-iconic coding.

I should show the way how four of five diagrammatic iconic principles may be manifested in the poetic text within a simile:

- (8) *It was forty or forty-one when*
 / ... /
and the war kissed them,
 / ... /
laid them down like children and spread
an eternity of white crosses
like corn seed
in longer and longer rows and the birds
flew north, whole flocks of them,
and never stopped,
not even for crumbs.
 (G. Ellenbogen “Homecoming”) [CPO].

According to a maximum degree of iconic coding all grammatical categories are expressed explicitly in the surface structure of linguistic signs by adding inflexions. In example (8) the comparative degree of a qualitative adjective *long* is marked by the inflexion *-er* (*longer*) and means “a higher degree of a quality”. An increasing number of graphemes in the past tense forms of the verbs *kiss-ed*, *stop-ed* corresponds to the remoteness of events in time expressed by the given verbs. The category of number is displayed in the morphemic structure of nouns by adding the ending *-s* (*crosses*, *rows*, *birds*, *flocks*, *crumbs*). A medium degree of iconic coding appears both in the modulation of a root vowel and in the inflexions that verbalize grammatical categories. Here degree of iconic coding is embodied in the plural form of the noun *children* and the past tense form of the verb *laid* in comparison with their unmarked forms *child* and *lay*. The modulation of the root vowel with its corresponding diagrammatic explication in the past tense form of the verb *flew* (compare: *flow* – *flew*) implements a minimal degree of iconic coding in the structure of a simile. An example of anti-iconic coding is the past tense form of the verb *spread*, which does not undergo any changes compared to its unmarked present tense form.

Syntactical iconicity is defined according to three principles recognized by T. Givon [1995] and many others [Rohdenburg 2003; Belexhova 2002; Jakobson 1983; Dirven & Verspoor 2004]: (1) the quantity principle, (2) the distance principle and (3) the principle of linear order.

The **quantity principle** states that “A larger chunk of information will be given a larger chunk of code” [Givon 1995: 49]. Less predictable and more important information is given more coding material. Thus a long obligatory life to-do list iconically corresponds to a long syntagmatic sequence of the objective part in the following simile:

(9) *I line up all
those Shoulds like an endless freight train highballing it
across the prairies.*

(B. Howell “Across the street from the tree of life”) [CPO].

“Entities that are closer together functionally, conceptually or cognitively are placed closer together at the code level, i.e. temporally or spatially” [Givon 1995: 53] according to the **proximity principle**. In the following example (10) linguistic sings *thunderclouds, dangers, death, earthquake, war* are placed at a minimal distance as they are interrelated conceptually. *Thunderclouds, earthquake* and *war* constitute a menace for people, as well as they may cause a single or multiple deaths:

(10) *and we pass as thunderclouds or,
dangers like death, earthquake, and war,
ignored because it's no use worrying.*

(M. Acorn “Hummingbird”) [CPO].

According to the **linear order principle** the temporal sequence of depicted events corresponds to the linear arrangement of linguistic signs within the simile [Givon 1995]. Additionally the most important information is actualized in the initial position of the simile.

As for the principle of initial position for the most important information we should say that sometimes authors intentionally change the direct word order of the simile (that is a subject-ground-object order):

(11) **High** *as the firmament she flies
and hides the sun.*

(M. Jenoff “The Orphan and the Stranger”) [CPO].

The statement of the linear order principle concerning iconic correlation between the chronology of the depicted events and the syntagmatic sequence of the simile may be illustrated with the following example (11) from the poem “Immigrants: the second generation” written by K. Irie [CPO]:

(12) *his first
language fell away like milk teeth.
Only his mother,
stranded by his side
still speaks in the old tongue alone.*

As time goes by children of immigrants treat their mother tongue as something rudimentary. Their mother tongue loses its cultural and social significance. Older generations try to preserve their kindred ties with their ancestors, their cultural heritage via the mother tongue. On the contrary, present and forthcoming generations repudiate their native languages in order to “join” a new life and be a part of the country that has absorbed them. A process of repudiation is displayed diachronically from past (*fell away*) to present (*still speaks*).

2.4. Indexical similes

Alluding to Peirce an *index* can only indicate its object but it cannot convey any information about its qualities since it “forces the attention to the particular object intended without describing it” [Peirce: CP 1.369]. A distinctive feature of the index is its ability to establish a relation of contiguity between an object and a linguistic sign that point to it.

Indexical simile is defined as a construal with an index/indices functioning in its structure. To decode indexical similes both linguistic and extralinguistic contexts are required as indices are

context sensitive linguistic units whose meaning stable while their reference shifts from utterance to utterance [Braun 2001]. Their indexical (indicative) function is to regulate correlation of a poetic text including similes with the external world [Lefebvre 2007: 2].

D. Kaplan states that pure indices (or indexicals as he puts it) and true demonstratives should be singled out. Pure indexicals are linguistic units with temporal or spatial meaning. Demonstrative and personal pronouns are defined as true demonstratives [Kaplan 1989: 490].

In the present study we differentiate *pronominal*, *temporal* and *spatial* indexical similes. Pronouns in pronominal indexical similes draw attention of the addressee towards the communicants of the indirect communicative situation, i.e. the poetic text while temporal and spatial indexical similes inform the recipient about time and place parameters of communication.

In the fragment from the poem “Early Morning” by L. Dudek a lyrical hero observes a situation that is happening in his visual field:

(13) *the salesman who made a deal,*
the young woman who paid him,
the red-lipped college girls, bold, a bit shy,
the counter girls on a coffee break,
the macho men
 / ... /
And I observe, and I am like them
only for a day [CPO].

The opposition of two worlds “my world” vs “an alien world” is manifested by indexical units *I* and *them*. The world of the lyrical hero is considered as “his own personal world”, while all the other characters are attributed to the alien one.

It is perhaps significant in this connection to admit that the definite article (*the salesman, the young woman, etc.*) functions as a pointer. The lyrical hero is understood as a central figure and the others are remote from him. The remote distance between the characters is lexicalized in the tense forms of the verbs. “The alien world” belongs to the past (*they – paid, made*) and the world of the lyrical hero is in the present (*I – observe, am*). The similarity existing between the lyrical hero and the other people is temporary and fleeting as it may be observed from a broader linguistic context (*Something that never was, / that now is / and that again will not be / of which I am the observer*).

2.5. Symbolic similes

The third type of signs presented in Peirce’s trichotomy is symbol which is claimed as “the general name or description which signifies its object by means of an association of ideas or habitual connection between the name and the character signified” [Peirce: CP 1.369]. It means that the principle of symbolicity refers to the conventional pairing of form and meaning.

In the present study we define symbolic similes as verbal complex signs that incorporate three semiotic characteristics – iconicity, indexicality and symbolicity (conventionality) where symbolicity predominates. Symbolic similes should be treated as linguosemiotic construals which contain symbol signs in their structure and cultural codes are found out in their subjective or objective parts.

The analysis of the corpus allowed distinguishing ten cultural codes that are manifested both in the subjective and the objective parts of similes: anthropomorphic, somatic, spiritual, biomorphic, subject (physical), temporal, spatial, astral, color (chromatic) and mythological. The identification of cultural codes makes it possible to study the worldview of the English-speaking Canadian community, which is reflected in the poetic texts by means of similes.

In the simile (14) “*He turned, like a hunted lion*” from P. Johnson’s poem “The Cattle Thief” [CPO] we may observe an interaction of anthropomorphic and biomorphic cultural codes. A starving enslaved but undefeated leader of the Indian tribe is compared to a “noble” animal – lion. The symbolic component of the simile is activated by the symbol sign *lion*. Dignity, courage,

audacity, determination, devotion to the pride (i.e. family, tribe) are inherent features of the lion's character, consequently these features also characterize the leader of the tribe. Once surrounded by armed coward enemies he, who is full of untamable inner strength, resist them without any fear. His proud posture and highly-raised head, his strong Indian spirit, his will to fight fiercely to the end, to withstand numerous enemies, to struggle for his holy land is a symbol of the spiritual superiority of the Indians over the weak-hearted Europeans.

As a result of linguosemiotic analysis we arrive at the conclusion that the dominant cultural codes of the subjective part of symbolic similes are biomorphic, anthropomorphic, spiritual, subject (physical) and somatic. Whereas biomorphic, subject (physical), spiritual and anthropomorphic are the most frequently used cultural codes in the objective part of the similes.

3. Conclusion

In the study, the cognitive operation of comparison is determined as the basic and the one that forms the basis of other cognitive operations and mechanisms of perception and processing of information. The cognitive operation of comparison is aimed at obtaining new knowledge as a result of matching homogeneous or heterogeneous comparable entities. Linguocognitive operations of analogical and narrative mapping are derived from the basic cognitive operation of comparison. Linguocognitive operations of attributive, relational, systems mapping and the procedure of intertextualization are aimed at clarifying the basis of comparison, which establishes the similarity between subject and object of the simile.

Simile as a multifunctional lingosemiotic construal is studied in accordance with three aspects of semiosis – semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic. The semantic aspect of the semiosis involves identifying the features of the interaction between the content side and the expression side within a simile. This interaction may be based on the iconic, indexical or symbolic connection. The study of the syntactics of the simile aims at studying the valency of verbal signs in its surface structure and its horizontal compatibility with other elements of the poetic text, which ultimately serves as the basis for the creation of text worlds. The pragmatic potential of simile can be described due to its ability to influence the interpretation adequacy of the addressee.

The three-dimensional classification of similes suggested in the study is based on the dominant type of the semiotic connection (iconic, index, symbolic). Thus, iconic, indexical and symbolic similes are singled out.

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