

IMAGERY SPACE OF RUSSIAN POETRY: A COGNITIVE PERSPECTIVE

This paper focuses on revealing the nature of verbal poetic images from a cognitive perspective and aims at building an original typology of images in contemporary Russian poetry. It highlights cognitive mechanisms that lead to the emergence of novel poetic images which cause a possible breakthrough in the conceptualization of the world. In the framework of cognitive linguistics a poetic image is viewed as a textual construal and a cognitive structure which has two planes – conceptual and verbal. It is hypothesised that a verse represents a *poetic imagery space* that can be regarded as the medium where everyday concepts undergo modifications and become poetic images. The image landscapes of poetic texts differ from each other in the way poetic images are interwoven in them.

Conceptual analysis of the corpus data obtained from contemporary Russian poetry suggested figuring out two groups of verbal poetic images: the old (**archetypes** and **stereotypes**) and novel ones (**idiotypes** and **kainotypes**). *Archetypes* descend to archetypal image-schemas: “Господи, ты светишь таким светом /Что я не вижу тебя” (Аранzon) – GOD IS LIGHT. A poetic image acquires a status of *stereotype* due to the frequency of its use in a cultural community and the well-established identity of its authorship: *река жизни, море бед, очи ясные, лес дремучий, красна девица*. The cognitive operation of specification leads to deviation from the stereotype, to emergence of a new poetic image – *idiotype*. It is a complex image which reflects idiolect and idiosyncrasy of the author, his/her peculiarities of world perception. *Kainotypes* like: “Иго – благо, Бремя – рай” (Королев), – are formed as a result of clashing the frames of knowledge entrenched in human’s conscience and those verbalized in a poetic expression. Such poetic images challenge or change our understanding or views of things, events, or phenomena of life.

Similar to the types of conceptual metaphors [Lakoff, Johnson 1980] the paper suggests classification of conceptual oxymora. It is proved that the degree of novelty of verbal poetic images is predetermined by the type of conceptual oxymoron that underlies their verbal form. The type of conceptual oxymoron is defined according to the kind of modality: aletic, deontic, epistemic, axiological [Dolezel 1998, p.113-128] – embodied in the verbal structure of a poetic image. *Ontological* conceptual oxymora POSSIBLE VS. IMPOSSIBLE, ALLOWANCE VS. NON-ALLOWANCE related to aletic and deontic modality underlie archetypal and stereotyped verbal poetic images like “*sinful pleasures*”, “*awfully beautiful*”, formed on the basis of cognitive operation of overlaying an entity of the source domain onto the opposite entity of target domain. *Structural* conceptual oxymora KNOWLEDGE VS. IGNORANCE reflecting epistemic modality and *orientational* oxymora: HERE VS. THERE, HERE/THERE VS. NOWHERE, PAST VS. FUTURE, FUTURE VS. PRESENT which show spatial and time relations, underlie idiotypes and kainotypes: “*Ты – моё будущее прошедшего*” (Коцюба), “*вверх по лестнице, ведущей вниз*” (Горюхин); “*Совершенство – скучно, совершенство – зло*” (Королев), – formed as a result of clashing or overlapping entities of source and target domains. They may be compared with similar verbal images from American poetry “*Progress is a comfortable disease*” (Cummings), “*The imperfect is our paradise*” (Stevens).

References

Doležel L. Heterocosmica: Fiction and Possible Worlds. – Bloomington; L.: The John Hopkins University Press, 1998. – 321 p.

Lakoff G., Johnson M. Metaphors We Live By. – Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 1980. – P. 123 – 150.