

The concept WHITE SILENCE in the "Northern stories" by Jack London

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Abstract. The article focuses on a specific extension of the concept WHITE SILENCE in the "Northern stories" by Jack London. The concept WHITE SILENCE is one of the most interesting concepts not only in the literary works of J. London, but also in American culture. Applying the statements of the concept layers structure, we discover that the figurative layer of the concept WHITE SILENCE consists of the ten conceptual features as 'territorial area', 'ice', 'cold', 'snow', 'frost', 'silence', 'mental illnesses', 'famine', 'pain', 'physical death'. It also includes three microconcepts LANDSCAPE, NOTHERN NATURE, NOTHERN LIFE CONDITIONS. The most vivid means such as epithet, metaphor, intensification and personification in the "Northern stories" are used.

1 Introduction

For the last few decades cognitive linguistics started to be one of the most popular areas in linguistics. Various aspects of different concepts attract more and more attention of scholars. Researchers show great interest in the basic concepts of the world's language picture. Space itself is one of these basic concepts. Concepts are often explored in the writer's literary picture of the world and will be described in this article. According to Evans, concepts are intermediaries between the words and extralinguistic reality [1].

The concepts of space and time are one of the main categories of human thinking. The study of how spatial relationships are conceptualized and described in different languages is of particular interest in both cognitive and linguistic terms. The process of modeling various relations in spatial terms goes back to ancient times [2]. Space was especially important for the archaic model of the world [3]. Ideas about space begin to form on the basis of simple sensations and innate (subconscious) reactions of the human brain to the environment and are reflected in the language.

We assume that the process of human ideas formation about the surrounding space is a process of creating a "cognitive map". In cognitive science, the "cognitive map" refers to mental representations of a person about the spatial organization of his environment [4]. There are, of course, representations of these ideas in various research papers of different years (for example, Talmy 1983, Jackendoff 1992, Landau 1993, and others) [5-7]. Furthermore, the linguistic conceptualization of space is a problem so complex and multifaceted that the existing works affect only some of its aspects, leaving a wide field for further research.

Jack London (real name - John Griffith, 1876-1916) is an American writer, whose works reflect the most important trends in literature of the turn of XIX-XX centuries. His novels, stories, essays and letters still arouse interest not only among ordinary readers of fiction, but also among scholars in linguistics [8-10].

Among the first and one of the most famous J. London's literary works are "Northern stories" collections. The "Northern stories" includes collections of short stories, for example, "Son of the Wolf" (1900), "The God of His Fathers and Other Stories" (1901), "Children of frost" (1902), "The Faith of the Men and Other Stories" (1904), "Lost face" (1910). In particular, the binding elements in the "Northern stories" are not only the compositional components (common themes, problems, motives, space, time, the system of characters, the author's image, the subject-real world), but also the common symbol that conceptually turns all J. London's works into one. The literary image of the North is a common symbol in the case of the "Northern stories".

Literary space, as well as time, is the organizational center of the main plot events in the J. London's works. The study of the spatial image allows researchers to determine the functions of the dominant spatial reference points in the text.

Indeed, the opposition of nature, man and civilization is the main theme of J. London's works. The human, his problems, the ways of how he survived in a new environment, the transformation of his worldview are the central objects in "Northern stories". Through this struggle J. London was able to literary reflect the topical issues of contemporary reality, focusing on the collision of two different races and cultures.

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In the case of analysis, the projection of the North in J. London's "Northern stories" is a concept WHITE SILENCE.

2 Materials and methods

The present study is based mainly on the theory that concept has the multicomponent structure. It seems clear to many researchers that concept has a layer structure, the most common layers are etymological, conceptual, figurative-evaluate, and emotional-evaluative (for example, Karasik, Slyshkin 2001, Maslova 2004, and Stepanov 2007) [11-13]. Nevertheless, different scholars can be modified or enhanced number of layers.

Indeed, in the language, the concept can be verbalized by both individual words and phrases, which determine the concept itself [14]. We began our analysis of the concept WHITE SILENCE by determining the cognitive components of the conceptual layer, using definitional and component analysis of cognitive features. Further, we selected concept representatives and marked vocabulary in the literary texts using quantitative calculations and researched the figurative-evaluative characteristics of the concept WHITE SILENCE, highlighting microconcepts. After that we analyzed microconcepts based on their means of expression (textual, lexical and grammatical).

We analyzed the texts of the "Northern stories collections" ("The Son of the Wolf", "The God of His Father", "Children of the Frost", "Lost Face") by Jack London. The literary works we study are written in the genre of romantic realism. The texts are in the public domain and were retrieved from Project Gutenberg website [15-18]. The total number of literary contexts is 1603. We focused on selecting the cognitive features of the figurative layer of the concept WHITE SILENCE.

3 Results and discussion

Jack London gives a special description of the North, where we can find not only cognitive components of WHITE SILENCE enshrined in the dictionaries, but also a special individual author's interpretation of the concept. On the one hand, White Silence is a deserted vast space, and on the other – it is inspired by nature, animals and birds. It is interesting that White Silence is a metaphoric expression denoting the North and shows the equality of all living things before the laws of nature. Getting into the White Silence, a person becomes either stronger or dies.

The analysis shows that in context of White silence such lexical items as *north*, *North*, *Northland*, *Arctic*, *pole* (*Pole*), as well as their derivatives *polar*, *northern*, *Northland* are used. For example, *A weary journey beyond the last scrub timber and straggling copses, into the heart of the Barrens where the niggard North is supposed to deny the Earth, are to be found great sweeps of forests and stretches of smiling land* (In the Forests of the North) [17].

The concept WHITE SILENCE is resented both within the texts of the works and in the title of the story

"The White Silence". There are 5 representatives in total, on the basis of which 213 literary contexts were selected.

According to three dictionary (Collins English Language Dictionary, Macmillan English Dictionary for advanced learners, Merriam-Webster Dictionary and Thesaurus) definitions [19-21], the conceptual layer is represented by the following cognitive features: *'direction'*, *'left'*, *'northern part'*, *'compass point'*, *'towards the North Pole'*, *'opposite to south'*, *'more economically developed country'*, *'extremely cold'*, *'area around the North Pole'*, *'the most northern point on the Earth'*, *area with absolute absence of sounds'*, *'area covered with snow'*.

The identified conceptual features are combined into several microconcepts that make up the cognitive volume of the conceptual layer. The most significant microconcepts are FAR NORTH, ARTIC REGION, DIRECTION, MOVEMENT, NOTHERN PART OF AN AREA.

Thus, the figurative layer generates the following microconcepts in itself: LANDSCAPE, NORTHERN NATURE, NOTHERN LIFE CONDITIONS (1390 literary contexts).

Microconcept LANDSCAPE. This microconcept includes the following conceptual feature *'territorial area'* (241 literary contexts).

I. The textual means used for expressing the microconcept LANDSCAPE can be found in the titles of the "Northern stories", for example, "White Silence", "The Men of Forty-Mile", "In a Far Country", "To the Man on the Trail", "The Wisdom of the Trail", "An Odyssey of the North", "Where the Trail Forks", "At the Rainbow's End", "In the Forests of the North". The listed stories' headings contain semantically close lexical items of the analyzed concept, below we list them: *mile*, *country*, *trail*, *Odyssey*, *north*.

II. Lexical means used for conceptualization of the microconcept LANDSCAPE, analyzed in the literary contexts, can be combined into groups where all the cognitive features of the microconcept LANDSCAPE are fixed:

a) lexical item meaning *'an extensive area of land regarded as being visually distinct'*, implicating the space of the North: *world*, *Universe*, *space*, *wilderness*, and others. For example, *It was the time to lie snug in a hole in the snow and wait for a curtain of cloud to be drawn across the face of outer space whence this cold came* (To Build the Fire) [18], and others.

To create an image of the WHITE SILENCE as infinite space, the following examples as *world* (*world*) and *Universe* (*universe*) are used. *Universe* (*universe*) is introduced in the literary texts through its description (*dead and cold and dark*), mentioning of the traveler (*and he is only citizen*) enhances the feeling of traveler's loneliness and the impending doom of all life in this icy desert: *This was the Universe, dead and cold and dark, and he is only citizen* (In a Far Country) [15], and others.

In the following example, the universe brings fear to the man (*the fear of the universe*) when the man continued his journey alone (*man walks alone with God*): *And the fear of death, of God, of the universe, comes over him, - the hope of the Resurrection and the Life, the*

yearning for immortality, the vain striving of the imprisoned essence, - it is then, if ever, man walks alone with God (The White Silence) [15], and others.

Also, *the Universe* can act as the motif for living when a person realizes that he wants to live (the dominant note of the whole living universe): *At times their eyes took on the patient stoicism of dumb suffering; and again the ego seemed almost bursting forth with its wild cry, "I, I, I want to exist!" - the dominant note of the whole living universe* (Wisdom of the Trail) [15], and others.

b) Cognitive features *the Pole Star, Aura, Aurora Borealis*, meaning 'luminous phenomenon'. For example: *Now Dave was as true as the Pole Star, and she was as false as a magnetic needle in a cargo of loadstone* (Flush of Gold) [18]. *The aurora borealis had passed out of the sky, and the camp was an oasis of light in the midst of deep darkness* (Where the Trail Forks) [16], and others.

The analysis shows that in the studied literary texts the Aurora Borealis is represented metaphorically. For example, *The Kid had a good eye for the trick of a step, and ear for the lilt of a voice, and his private choice was a marvelous creature who scintillated as the 'Aurora Borealis'* (The Wife of the King) [15].

III. The microconcept LANDSCAPE is a part of the concept WHITE SILENCE, morphologically it is revealed by groups of words:

a) verbs with the semantics of movement in the space of the White Silence. These verbs that can be combined into lexical-semantic groups: 1) movement (*to journey, to go through, to come over, to pull on, to reign in over, to churn away into, to follow, to sit*, and others). For example, *Then one day we met two ghosts journeying through the Silence* (Grit of Women) [16]. *And they went away, like drunken men, through the Silence toward Pelly* (Grit of Women) [16], and others; 2) sense perception (*to see, to listen*, etc.), for example, *After that, as we went on into the east, we saw no men; only the sleeping river, the moveless forest, and the White Silence of the North* (An Odyssey of the North) [15]. *For a while he listened to the silence* (The Law Of Life) [17], and others; 3) destruction (*to break; to crack*, etc.), for example, *If Gabriel ever broke the silence of the North, they would stand together, hand in hand, before the great White Throne* (In a Far Country) [15].

Thus, we dominantly found actional verbs in the past simple or past continuous in the analyzed J. London's works.

b) adjectives that convey lexical items of the northern boundless space: *snow-covered, frozen, bitter*, and others. For example, *Everything partook of the superlative save himself-the perfect cessation of wind and motion, the immensity of the snow-covered wildness, the height of the sky and the depth of the silence* (In a Far Country) [15]. *It was bitter cold the night of my return, and I had been away months, and the dogs were limping sore when I came to the fort* (The God Of His Fathers) [16], and others.

c) space prepositions: *in, through, over, away, on, to, across*, etc. The position of the action direction is replaced by substantive combinations with specific space prepositions *in, through, over, away, on, to*. The

characters have to move for different reasons a lot (searching for gold, post delivery, hunger, run from captivity chase, hunting, etc.) in the literary texts of Jack London. They do all these movements in the harsh conditions of the North and the White Silence. For example, *When I wandered in the deep snow, she led me back to the trail* (Grit of Women) [16]. *So the man went away in the Silence toward Pelly* (Grit of Women) [16], and others.

Conceptualizing the space of J London's literary works, we identified particular important syntactic means:

a) homogeneous parts of the sentence that contribute to the Northern space dynamics. For example, *Terrible weather, snowstorms and high winds, but he pulled through where a thousand other men would have died, missing St. Michael's and making the land st. Pastilik* (An Odyssey of the North) [15]. *And we traveled a weary trail, even to the Salt Water, the cold was bitter, the snow deep, the hunger great* (Grit of Women) [16]. *The darkness and the cold drew down upon us, and with them the famine* (Grit of Women) [16], and others.

b) two-member sentences having predicate that convey the peculiarities of a person's stay in the North: to go, to pass, to travel, to take, to journey, and others. For example, *The rout had passed beyond earshot when they took the trail, and it was not till they had travelled the ten miles or so down to Bonanza that they came upon it, speeding along in single file, but well bunched* (A Daughter Of The Aurora) [16]. *Joe, the white man, had passed beyond the stage of suffering* (The Wisdom of the Trail) [15], and others.

Microconcept NOTHERN NATURE. J. London assign great importance to nature and the weather conditions in which his characters live, move or die, in his literary works. Northern nature can be varied: *brutal, wild, magnificent*. The named microconcept comprises the following conceptual features: 'ice', 'cold', 'snow', 'frost', 'silence' (849 literary contexts).

Conceptual feature 'ice'. This conceptual feature is not fixed lexicographically and is not present in the titles of literary works. However, it is one of often present in the studied J. London's works (254 literary contexts).

In the "Northern stories" ice is described using the lexical item 'ice' and different intensifying epithets such as *mushy, glare, smooth, rotten, griding, lashing, ghostly*, and others. For example, *An' have ye niver drifted along, the water clear as glaspops, whin suddin, belike a cloud over the sun, the mushy ice comes bubblin' up <...>* (The Men of Forty-Mile) [15]. *And I have it in mind of the Whale People, who are likewise Sunlanders, and who lost their ship in the ice* (The Sunlanders) [17], and others.

Natural phenomena are described using complex words, one of whose components is the lexical item 'ice': *ice-jam, ice-packed, ice-run, ice-sheet, ice-bound, ice-crust*. For example, *This they exacted in many ways, - death in the bad water, through the treacherous ice-crust, by the grip of the grizzly, <...>* (Where the Trail Forks) [16], and others.

Conceptual feature 'cold'. As a conceptual feature, 'ice' is not fixed by the dictionary and is not presented in

the titles of literary works of J. London. This conceptual layer is often recreated in the author's literary works (153 literary contexts).

Lexical means of the author's idea of cold representation include, first of all, the word cold, as well as such lexical items as *coldness, chill, frigidity, ice*. For example, *As I say, he was a great man, and my heart spoke for softness; but I read back in my life, and remembered the cold and hunger of the endless forest by the Russian seas* (An Odyssey of the North) [15]. *True, the new territory was mostly barren; but its several hundred thousand square miles of frigidity at least gave breathing space to those who else would have suffocated at home* (At The Rainbow's End) [16], and others.

The lexical items associated with low temperature are broadened the semantic field of the lexical item 'cold'. For example, *And there was no heat, no sound, only the bitter cold and the Silence* (Grit of Women) [16]. *And it knew that it was not good to walk abroad in such fearful cold* (To Build a Fire) [18], and others.

The analysis revealed the stylistic tools used by author, for example, *This Fear was the joint child of the Great Cold and the Great Silence* (The White Silence) [15]. *But the tremendous cold had already driven the life out of his fingers* (To Build a Fire) [18].

Conceptual feature 'snow'. This feature was often found as lexical representations in the literary texts (239 literary contexts).

Lexical items of snow include the word snow and its derivations: *snow, snow-blind, snow-capped, snow-covered, snow-flake, dust*. For example, *<...> all the air flashed and sparkled, and the snow was diamond dust* (Grit of Women) [16]. *Son, your words are true; but it were evil mating, like the water with the sand, like the snow-flake with the sun* (The Son of the Wolf) [15]. *I went snow-blind for a time, this spring, and since then my eyes have been playing tricks with me* (The Great Interrogation) [16], and others.

The adjectives referring to the lexical item 'snow' intensify the semantic field: *deep, naked, soft, new-fallen, virgin, unbroken*. The author shows that snow can be different. For example, *He forgot his swollen muscles, plunging through the deep snow in an ecstasy of anticipation* (In far country) [15]. *Between the skin and naked snow was a six-inch layer of pine boughs* (Where the Trail Forks) [16]. *On either side lay the deep, soft snow* (The Men of Forty-Mile) [15], and others.

Describing snow in the White Silence, Jack London shows how the characters of his literary works are buried in the *snow knee-deep, drowning in it, the thickness of the snow* is huge, and the whiteness of the *snow blinds*. For example, *At every step the great webbed shoe sinks till the snow is level with the knee* (The White Silence) [15]. *When I wandered in the deep snow, she led me back to the trail* (Grit of Women) [16], and others.

Thus, the author shows that the snow gives physical suffering to travelers, and allows them a negative evaluation.

Conceptual feature 'frost'. Another important nature force in the concept WHITE SILENCE is frost. The conceptual feature 'frost' is often used in the J. London's literary works (96 literary contexts). This feature is

expressed using stylistic tools by the word 'frost'. We can find it in the title of the northern collections of stories "Children of the Frost".

For the representation of the frost's intense lexical items are used. The analysis of the Northern stories reveals the following examples of metaphor, figurative comparison and personification, for example, *The sky drew still closer, sending down a crystal flight of frost – little geometric designs, perfect, evanescent as a breath, yet designed to exist till the returning sun had covered half its northern* (The Men of Forty-Mile) [15]. *A light breath of air blew from the south, nipping the exposed portions of their bodies and driving the frost, in needles of fire, through fur and flesh to the bones* (The Wisdom of the Trail) [15], and others.

Other figurative means is personification, for example, *Into the warm room rushed the frost, and on the threshold, garbed in trail-worn furs, knee – deep in the swirling vapor, against a background of flaming borealis, a woman hesitated* (The Scorn of Women) [16]. *Tender and soft! He knew her feet had been born to easy paths and sunny lands, strangers to the moccasined pain of the North, unknissed by the chill lips of the frost, and he watched and marveled at them twinkling ever through the weary day* (The Wisdom of the Trail) [15], and others.

In the following example *the Frost* is described by the author as a ruthless animal that bites, and these bites leave marks on the body of the travelers: *Frost after frost had bitten deeply, each depositing its stratum of scab upon the half-healed scar that went before* (An Odyssey of the North) [15]. The frost is a cause of not only bites, but the scabs (*their cheekbones were massed with hideous scabs which had cracked and frozen alternately under the intense frost*) (The Wisdom of the Trail) [15]).

The frost can be 'glittering' and 'scintillating'. The analysis highlights following examples of the epithets: *a half-inch of dry, white, crystal-encrusted frost*, and others. The analysis of the Northern stories allows singling out great amount of epithets that gives the frost tactile characteristic. However, the frost still remains unbearable, for example: *the frost was inexorable* (In a Far Country) [15].

J. London shows even the frost's face, for example, *It be known that they go away before the face of the frost to unknown places* (In the Forests of the North) [17].

In the author's literary works *the frost* can *stand, cover smth., bite, bite sharp, grow, be, gather strength, arrive, touch*, etc. The man could resist frost in the White Silence conditions, for example, *battle, fight with, strangle*, and others. The man could survive, but most often die in the frost. The lexical items of the concept WHITE SILENCE, the following predicates are used, for example: *bite, grow, gain strength*, which indicated that: 1) the frost is dangerous for travelers and locals; 2) it is an uncontrollable phenomenon of nature and less predictable; 3) the frost is a frequent phenomenon in the Northern territories of Canada and the United States.

The conceptual feature 'silence' is not fixed in the dictionaries, but it is one of the main features of the literary world of J. London (107 literary contexts).

Using stylistic tools, the conceptual feature 'silence' is embodied in the "Northern stories". We found this feature in the title of the story "The White Silence".

The author uses several lexical tools to convey this feature of the North:

1) representing of the concept WHITE SILENCE the word silence is used frequently. For example, *At last the howl of a wolf-dog cracked the silence from the direction of Forty-Mile* (The Men of Forty-Mile) [15]. *A pause and a silence came over the men of Forty-Mile* (The Men of Forty-Mile) [15]. *The afternoon wore on, and with the awe, born of the White Silence, the voiceless travelers bent to their work* (The White Silence) [15]. *This Fear was the joint child of the Great Cold and the Great Silence, and was born in the darkness of December, when the sun dipped below the southern horizon for good* (In a Far Country) [15], and others.

Even the snow can be silent in J. London's literary works, for example, *Snatches and scraps of old-world philosophies and new-world ethics floated through his mind, and things wonderfully concrete and woefully incongruous--hunting scenes, stretches of sombre forest, vastnesses of silent snow, the glittering of ballroom lights <...>* (In the Forests of the North) [17].

At the same time, *silence can be plural, can stretch and increase, control, attack, surround*, for example, *The very presence of either became a personal affront to the other, and they lapsed into sullen silences which increased in length and strength as the days went by* (In a Far Country) [15]. *Silence reigned in the place* (In the Forests of the North) [17]. *A great silence fell upon the assemblage* (The Sunlanders) [17]. *But no, nothing moved; the Silence crowded in, and the Fear of the North laid icy fingers on his heart* (In a Far Country) [15], and others.

Thus, silence takes additional uncharacteristic features in the North.

2) contextual synonyms of the lexical item 'silence': *stillness, calm, voiceless, silent*. For example, *The stillness was weird <...>* (The White Silence) [15]. *The stillness of death was about them* (In a Far Country) [15]. *But the air frightened him with its unearthly calm, <...>* (In a Far Country) [15]. *This unearthly calm had always been, - the tranquil silence of eternity* (In a Far Country) [15], and others.

The space and sea can be also silent in the "Northern stories", for example, *And in that silent sea we saw no man till we were ready to come away* (An Odyssey of the North) [15], and others.

3) adjectives meaning 'the absence of life and motion'. The phenomenon of the White silence is described by the author using the lexical items, which include an implicit or explicit indication of the life absence, and also the light absence: *the absence of life and motion, darkness, the infinite peace, silence, solemn forest, desolation, lifeless, without movement*. For example, *Everything in the Northland had that crushing effect, - the absence of life and motion; the darkness; the infinite peace of the brooding land; the ghostly silence, which made the echo of each heart-beat a sacrilege; the solemn forest which seemed to guard an awful, inexpressible something, which neither word nor thought*

could compass (In a Far Country) [15]. *They 'll be all alone in that cabin all winter, - a mighty long, dark winter* (In a Far Country) [15], and others.

To intensive life absence in the North condition such figurative means as opposition is used by the author. The opposition life-death, for example, *Sole speck of life journeying across the ghostly wastes of a dead world, he trembles at his audacity, realizes that his is a maggot's life, nothing more* (The White Silence) [15]. *And Death is kind. It is only Life, and the things of Life that hurt. Yet we love Life, and we hate Death* (The White Silence) [15]. *<...>, but that it was a matter of life and death with the chances against him* (To Build A Fire) [19], and others.

The White Silence constantly reminds the man that he is mortal, unlike the endless North, waiting for his 'finiteness'. The opposition of a mortal man and eternal, boundless nature is reflected in the use of antonyms (finiteness – ceaseless flow), for example, *Nature has many tricks wherewith she convinces man of his finiteness, - the ceaseless flow of the tides, <...> - but the most tremendous, the most stupefying of all, is the passive phase of the White Silence* (The White Silence) [15], and others.

II. The grammatical means of the microconcept NOTHERN NATURE conceptualization are:

a) lexical items of different speech parts (nouns, adjectives): *ice, cold, icy, frost, snow, snowing, freeze, freezing, etc.* For example, *And the cold came, with much snow on the ground, and no man knew the way* (An Odyssey of the North) [15]. *The only way was ahead, across the dark and icy sea of Bering to Alaska* (Lost Face) [18]. *Even now is it snowing* (The Law of Life) [17], and others;

b) compound words: *snowstorms, mushy-ice, half-frozen, etc.* For example, *An' have ye niver drifted along, the water clear as glass, whin suddin, belike a cloud over the sun, the mushy-ice comes bubblin' up an' up till from bank to bank <...>* (The Men of Forty Mile) [15]. *So they said nothing, these two men who had taken the half-frozen woman into their tent three days back, and who had warmed her, and fed her, and rescued her goods from the Indian packers* (Siwash) [16];

c) words with a negative suffix -less: *endless, breathless, and others*. For example, *I read back in my life, and remembered the cold and hunger of the endless forest by the Russian seas* (An Odyssey of the North) [15]. *A struggle in the forest, - a bald-face grizzly, broken-legged, terrible; the snarling of the dogs and the shrill cries of Winapie as she urged them to the attack; himself in the midst of the crush, breathless, panting, striving to hold off red death* (The Great Interrogation) [16], and others;

d) complex sentences. For example, *The frost was everywhere, and they lay in the open, ever and anon stretching their trail - stiffened muscles and lifting the long wolf-howl* (The Scorn of Women) [16]. *In other climes, when nature falls into such moods, there is a subdued air of expectancy, a waiting for some small voice to take up the broken strain* (In a Far Country) [15], and others;

e) the sentences with homogeneous parts. For example, *A struggle in the forest, - a bald-face grizzly, broken-legged, terrible; the snarling of the dogs and the shrill cries of Winapie as she urged them to the attack; himself in the midst of the crush, breathless, panting, striving to hold off red death* (The Great Interrogation) [16]. *They'll be all alone in that cabin all winter, - a mighty long, dark winter* (In a Far Country) [15], and others.

Microconcept NORTHERN LIFE CONDITIONS.

The North in J. London's literary works is a harsh place to stay. Living conditions in the North are sometimes extreme for locals and travelers. Analysis of contexts (300 literary contexts) shows that the microconcept NORTHERN LIFE CONDITIONS includes the following conceptual features: 'mental illness', 'famine', 'pain', 'physical death'.

Conceptual feature 'mental illness'. This feature is not found in the dictionaries and in the headlines, but it is foregrounded in the author's literary works (7 literary contexts).

There were deprivation of amenities, lack of food and difficult climatic conditions for man's living who came to the North. The author describes cases when the man lost the true appearance and became similar to an animal when he was tormented by hallucinations. For example, *What with the Fear of the North, the mental strain, and the ravages of the disease, they lost all semblance of humanity, taking on the appearance of wild beasts, hunted and desperate* (In a Far Country) [15], and others.

Conceptual feature 'famine'. The named conceptual feature is not found in the dictionaries and the headings of studied stories, but enshrines in the works of Jack London (76 literary contexts).

The famine is represented in J. London's literary work by using:

1) lexical means of the author's idea of lexical item 'hunger' include the word hunger and its synonyms: *hunger, famine, starving, starvation, to starve, to hunger*, etc. For example, *But Passuk and I were trail-sore and tired, and weak with hunger* (Grit of women) [16]. *All they had to do was to wait till he wandered back to the tent, as he inevitably must, when the frost and hunger laid hold of him* (Jan, The Unrepentant) [16], and others.

2) adjectives such as *weak, flat, deep-lined*, and others, which show lack of food. The man feels body weakness, and also could be seen in the visible appearance. For example, *He was only trail-sore and tired, and weak with hunger* (Grit of women) [16]. *And, the dogs howled always, and there were flat bellies and deep-lined faces, and strong men became weak, and weak men died* (Grit of women) [16]. *I'd sooner be flat bellied of hunger and be your woman* (Siwash) [16].

Conceptual feature 'pain'. Physical and emotional pain is a constant companion of travelers in the North. The conceptual feature 'pain' is not fixed in the stories' headings or in the dictionary. However, the lexical items 'pain' is reflected in J. London's literary works (101 literary context).

Lexical tools for representing pain are different parts of speech meaning 'pain': *suffering, suffer, hurt*, and others. For example, *"Ay!" rang out eight voices, - voices destined to string a trail of oaths along many a hundred miles of pain* (In a Far Country) [15]. *He knew her feet had been born to easy paths and sunny lands, strangers to the moccasined pain of the North* (The Wisdom of the Trail) [15], and others.

Conceptual feature 'physical death'. The North and especially the White Silence are territories where people can die in the harsh natural conditions, where people can die suddenly or prematurely.

The specified feature is not fixed in the vocabularies. In J. London's literary works this feature occurs frequently (116 literary contexts). The conceptual feature of physical death is realized by title of the story "The Death of Ligoun".

The author uses different parts of speech for expressing the idea of death: *die, murder, killing, loss*, and others. For example, *In fact, the blood of so many was upon his hands that the killings attributed to him did not permit of precise enumeration* (The League of Old Men) [17].

Describing death the author uses the following lexical items: *quick, sudden*. For example, *They could face the pinch of famine, the grip of scurvy, or the quick death by field or flood* (To the Man on the Trail) [15]. *Each man pictured the scene according to his nature - the sleeping men, the plunge of the knives, and the sudden death in the dark* (The Sunlanders) [17], and others.

The figurative mean is a personification. Personifying death, the author shows death as a living creature of the North. In the "Northern stories", the Death could be also kind, for example, *And Death is kind. It is only Life, and the things of Life that hurt* (Grit of women) [16]. *The Death could lie in, open arms, meet, come, wait, sit upon*. For example, *The Salt Water is afar off, and Death lies in wait* (Grit of women) [16]. *<...> yet he goes down to the open arms of Death, stumbling, falling, with head turned backward, fighting to the last* (Grit of women) [16]. *It was in my mind to stay there and meet Death hand-in-hand with Passuk* (Grit of women) [16], and others.

II. The grammatical means of the microconcept NORTHERN LIFE CONDITIONS conceptualization are:

a) different parts of speech: *nouns - death, life, famine, starving, pain; adjectives - weak, flat, great; verbs - to die, to starve, to suffer*, and others. For example, *Their bales are heavy, and their bellies flat with lack of feasting* (The Law Of Life) [17]. *They were weak and paused often, catching themselves, in the act of stooping, with giddy motions North* (The Wisdom of the Trail) [15]. *And we traveled a weary trail, even to the Salt Water, and the cold was bitter, the snow deep, the hunger great* (Grit of women) [16], and others;

b) complex sentences with different structures. For example, *All possible care had been taken of him, but in the last extremity the weak and unfortunate must perish, and Sitka Charley deemed his days to be few* [North (The Wisdom of the Trail) [15]. *But Sitka Charley, rigid as*

was his wont, concealing pain and pleasure impartially beneath an iron exterior, asked them the welfare of the rest, told the distance to the fire, and continued on the back-North (The Wisdom of the Trail) [15]. The complex sentences were used to help readers to feel the presence effect in the literary works of Jack London.

4 Conclusion

Thus, the analysis of the "Northern stories" allowed singling out ten conceptual features in the figurative layer: 'territorial area', 'ice', 'cold', 'snow', 'frost', 'silence', 'mental illnesses', 'famine', 'pain', 'physical death'.

These conceptual features are forming following microconcepts: LANDSCAPE, NOTHERN NATURE, NOTHERN LIFE CONDITIONS. They are structured a cognitive volume of the conceptual layer. The significant volume of the figurative layer indicates the individual author's character of the concept WHITE SILENCE.

The analysis identified the microconcepts and their conceptual features. We came to the conclusion that getting over physical and moral problems are central themes of J. London's literary works. Most of the "Northern stories" related to the description of natural conditions, living conditions in the harsh latitudes of the North. The revealed data are consistent with the previous research papers of J. London's literary works.

The study revealed some specific character and broad scope of perception of the concept WHITE SILENCE. The analysis presented the specificity of the figurative layer explications of the concept WHITE SILENCE by stylistic means on the material of J. London's "Northern stories".

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