

## THE YIDDISH SELF OF THE NORTH AMERICAN POET RICHARD

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### Abstract

In this study, I aim to analyze two poems by the North American poet Richard Fein that he collected in his book entitled “At the Turkish bath.” In my analyses, I intend to follow a cognitive poetic point of view, as the theory of “Cognitive Poetics” (1992) of the Israeli linguist and cognitive scientist Reuven Tsur, which is based on cognitive processes through which one solves the semantic ambiguities, such as metaphors, and the cognitive obligations, which lead to the correct interpretation of the poetry. Concisely, I am going to talk about the North American Jewish culture, discovering the poet’s Yiddish and North American identities via the cognitive poetic analyses of the two poems, entitled “My World of Yiddish” and “The Yiddish Poet Yankev Glatshiteyn Visits Me in the Coffee Shop.”

**Keywords:** Yiddish, cognition, poetics, Judaism, America

## KUZEY AMERİKALI ŞAİR RICHARD FEIN’İN YİDİŞ BENLİĞİ

### Öz

Bu çalışmada, Kuzey Amerikalı şair Richard Fein’in “At the Turkish bath” (Türk hamamında) adlı eserindeki iki şiirini incelemeyi amaçlıyorum. Analizlerimde, bilişsel şiirbilimsel bir bakış açısı izlemeyi amaçlıyorum, çünkü İsraili dilbilimci ve bilişsel bilimci Reuven Tsur’un “Bilişsel Şiirbilim” kuramı (1992), metaforlar gibi anlam karmaşalarının çözüldüğü ve şiirlerin doğru anlaşılmasını sağlayan bilişsel işlev zorunluluklarına bağlı olan bilişsel süreçlere dayanır. Tam olarak, Richard Fein’in Yidiş ve Kuzey Amerikalı kimliklerini şairin “My World of Yiddish” (Benim Yidiş Dünyam) ve “The Yiddish Poet Yankev Glatshiteyn Visits Me in the Coffee Shop” (Bir Kahvecide Yidiş Şair Yankev Glatshiteyn Beni Ziyaret Eder) başlıklı iki şiirinin bilişsel şiirbilimsel analizleri ile keşfederek, Kuzey Amerika Yahudi kültürü hakkında konuşacağım.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Yidiş, biliş, şiirbilim, Yahudilik, Amerika

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### **Introduction**

The Israeli philologist Reuven Tsur coined the theory of cognitive poetics by writing a book entitled “Toward a theory of cognitive poetics,” published in 1992. According to this theory, literal utterances depend on the SCRIPT or COGNITIVE SCHEMA that they instantiate (Tsur, 1992, p. 232). Schank proposed that SCRIPTS or SCHEMATA were serving as supplements to conceptual word analyses, and in 1979, Rumelhart alluded to the importance of the selection of the correct SCRIPT or SCHEMA for interpreting a sentence or a phrase in accordance with the writers’ cultural backgrounds (as cited in Tsur, 1992, p. 225). Therefore, each metaphorical description of an object is based on a script or a cognitive schema. Thus a representation is formulated in the human brain, remembering the peculiarities of the object, depicted through cancellations and multiplications, as suggested firstly by Cohen (1979) who said that the meanings of words might be formulated by cancelling their semantic features, or by multiplying lexical entries to one’s mental dictionary (as cited in Tsur, 1992, p. 209). Besides, according to Tsur (1992), a theory of metaphor must satisfy the following four “requirements of adequacy”: (a) structural definitions of metaphors are necessary for deciphering them, (b) several methods for deciphering metaphors must be identified, (c) the relationship between cognitive understanding processes and literal discourse production processes must be explained, and (d) the relationship between all of the above-mentioned processes and the effects of metaphors must be explained (p. 207).

### **Method**

The semantic information processing model which is a hierarchical one of “meaning components,” “features,” or “semantic primitives” (Tsur, 1992, p. 207) will be used for interpreting two poems by Richard Fein in this study. In his book, “Toward a theory of cognitive poetics” (1992), Tsur argues that these components can be examined via the mental processes of cancellation, indicated by a minus, multiplication, indicated by a plus, symbolization, abstraction, allusion, spatio-temporal continuity, richness of conceptual categories, and the existences of a spiritual space. This study focuses on the interpretation of two poems by Richard Fein, in which Yiddish words are used, and the importance that native Ashkenazic Jews who are native Yiddish speakers give to the English language is implied. These poems are “My World of Yiddish” and ‘The Yiddish Poet Yankev Glatshteyn Visits Me in the Coffee Shop,” both of which are in his collection of poems entitled *At the Turkish Bath* that appeared in 1994. The poems’ analyses will decipher the real world events that took place in the life of the poet through the iconic word, sentence, and rhyme choices within the

cognitive poetic framework constructed by Tsur (1992). In fact, according to Freeman (2009), “poetic iconicity creates in language sensations, emotions, and images that enable the mind to encounter them as phenomenally real.” Accordingly, poems reflect the real-life situations through metaphors and emotional syntactic structures that are based on the “motivation” of the poets for connecting abstract emotions and knowledge expressed in the poetry pieces with the concrete real world via “isomorphisms,” i.e., humans build links between “objects, ideas, and images” for expressing themselves (see Freeman, 2007). Freeman (2009), says, “...the study of literary texts can help illuminate the way in which human language is motivated by and expresses the forms of the mind feeling. The mechanism by which these forms of feeling are symbolized in language is iconicity” which can be hidden in “the morphological, phonological, and syntactical forms of language,” or literary word arts, including “repetition, alliteration, rhyme, meter, and so on.” Thus, as Freeman (2011) posits, the literary language has “aesthetic patterns” for revealing the peculiarities of “the external world.” Concerning the analyses of Fein’s poems (published in 1994), rhymes can be regarded as aesthetic structures, motivated to transform the abstract emotions of the poet into certain concrete icons of places full of cultural and historical objects. Besides, cognitive literary analyses concern mental processes involved in the interpretation of a text in accordance with its persuasive aesthetic values (Van den Bossche, 2017). Therefore, poems involve the traces of the culture, history, and folklore of the places depicted by the poets through their aesthetic skills via word plays, which persuade others that they lived the experiences they explain in their poetry pieces. Polvinen (2013) argues that literary works are products of “parallel processes...between the interior and exterior of imagined worlds.” Today various literary text forms alongside poetry are analyzed from a cognitive scientific point of view; for instance, Cave (2016) deals with various literary works of different periods. In this study, Tsur’s (1992) theory is preferred, since this study consists of only cultural poetry analyses from a cognitive literary perspective, and the number of cognitive poetry analyses is not sufficient.

### **Results**

Here is a short biography of the poet Richard Fein before the poetry analyses in this section of results. Fein has been living in Cambridge, Massachusetts. His book, entitled “I think of our lives: new and selected poems” was published in 2002. His collections include “Kafka’s ear,” “At the Turkish bath,” “To move into the house,” and “Ice like morsels.” Besides, he published a memoir, entitled “The dance of Leah,” a book of translations entitled “The selected poems of Yankev Glatshteyn” as well as a critical study on the work of Robert

Lowell (Asheville poetry review, n.d.). Two poems by Fein will be analyzed in this study: (a) “My World of Yiddish” and (b) “The Yiddish Poet Yankev Glatshiteyn Visits Me in the Coffee Shop.”

### Analysis of “My World of Yiddish”

The poem “My World of Yiddish” is given below after the classification of the rhymes in the poem.

My World of Yiddish

(in memory of M.H.T.)

(Brooklyn, 1948)

My Uncle Chaim used to shout at his American nephews a  
and nieces, “Me darf redn yidish, me darf redn yidish,” b

“Speak Yiddish, speak Yiddish.” b

When he was gone we flapped around the room, “redn yidish, b  
redn yidish, look, I’m a bird redn yidish.” Two years c

on this soil, blown here by chance winds, he never knew d

where he was. He had never heard of Frank Sinatra, Duke e

Ellington and the lindy. He was for me “the other side.” f

Deliberately, he left us Yiddish newspapers c

And journals as if we might discover them g

cluttering a corner and become so engrossed we’d emerge h

from their sprawl jabbering Yiddish, gesticulating Yiddish. b

The family thought him harmless and just crazy – meshugah mit yidish, b

though I wondered what Yiddish had to do with his mouth, i

his mouth with the two gold teeth. I thought it was exotic j

and gross to have gold teeth, like money in the mouth. Their k

brassy glare stood out among sallow rows and dented gums. l

He was my mother’s cousin though we called him unclm

and she half laughed at him, “But this is America, Hymie,” n

then he growled something back in Yiddish, or maybe o

it was Polish or Russian, with throaty grunts. p

He hung around the house on Sunday afternoons when my q

American uncles played poker and pinochle and their wives r

perched behind their mah-jongg racks. I loved s  
to run my fingers over lacquered sallow tiles, with bamboo t  
sticks, a sparrow on a branch, frail trees, seven u  
checkers shaped like a dipper, the sprig that flowered s  
into a Chinese letter. My aunts' majolica nails matched s  
the gleam of those dominoes. It was Chinese intrigue to me. v  
I got used to seeing women throw dice, and gold dragons y  
decorated the backs of the chairs around the card table. z  
I was drawn to those Chinese images that fell over me v  
like a cape laid across my shoulders, clasped under my q  
Adam's apple. z

The poem is on the childhood memories of the poet, whose uncle was a Yiddish speaker, who came from an Ashkenazi family from Poland and Russia, as we can understand from these words: the poet's uncle immigrated to the United States of America. His uncle wanted his nephews and nieces, who are citizens of the United States, to speak Yiddish for protecting their cultural background. His uncle did not know anything about the American famous singer, Frank Sinatra, the finest male American popular song vocalist of the 20th century (Frank Sinatra: Timeline, 2019), Duke Ellington, an American Jazz singer (The Estates of Mercer K. Ellington and Edward K. "Duke" Ellington, 2008), and some other American cultural elements. On Sunday afternoons, his American uncles who became accustomed to the American culture were playing poker and pinochle, and his aunts dominoes. Meanwhile, the poet was attracted by an object of another culture: he was attracted by the Chinese images at the back of the chairs.

#### **Feature cancellations and multiplications.**

In this poem, we encounter the metaphorical expressions that are analyzed in this section and for the creation of which several features of the source concepts (the metaphorical words) are cancelled and/or multiplied in order to describe the qualities of the target concept (what is meant by the metaphors and/or metaphorical expressions).

The metaphorical expression, "I'm a bird" defines the uncle with the following additions to the characteristics of a human being: [+HUMAN +ANIMATE +CONCRETE +WITH WINGS +ABLE TO FLY +FEIN'S MOTHER'S COUSIN (#Fein's uncle)]. The metaphor of bird is used to refer to a Jew who immigrated to a different country like the birds

do when autumn comes due to the Holocaust. Besides, “this soil” is a metonymy standing for the country of a human being; it receives the following qualities: [-HUMAN –ANIMATE +CONCRETE +MASS +PORTABLE BY A GREAT FORCE (#soil)], and the metaphorical expression of “chance winds” refers to the concept of destiny. Therefore, the concept of chance is characterized as [-HUMAN –ANIMATE +ABSTRACT +AS FORCEFUL AND DRAGGING AS THE WIND (#chance)].

Additionally, regarding the sentence, “I wondered what Yiddish had to do with his mouth, his mouth with the two gold teeth,” the words of “Yiddish” and “his mouth” are personified, and the following feature cancellations and multiplications occur in them respectively: [-HUMAN +ANIMATE +CONCRETE +LANGUAGE (#Yiddish)] and [+HUMAN +ANIMATE +CONCRETE +SPEECH ORGAN(#mouth)]. The poet thinks in a childish manner, and he does not understand that his uncle’s two teeth serve the musician to eat some food. The poet regards the exterior aspect of his uncle as strange in a childish manner. As a metonymy, the mouth stands for the uncle who is speaking and uttering Yiddish words in this phrase.

The poet depicts that his American uncles play poker and pinochle and waste their time, whereas his Ashkenazi uncle orders them to speak Yiddish and protect the Ashkenazi culture. Successively, the poet depicts how he gets bored: the poet sits and plays on the floor - “lacquered sallow tiles” with “bamboo sticks”-; he observes the garden: “a sparrow on a branch,” “frail trees,” then his aunts: “seven checkers shaped liked a dipper,” and then he gets bored, and depicts his boredom as a Chinese intrigue for which “the sprig that flowered into a Chinese letter” stands as a metonymy. Moreover, the poet depicts the nails of his aunts with the following features: [-HUMAN –ANIMATE +CONCRETE +SHINY LIKE MAJOLICA (#Fein’s aunts’ nails)]. A Chinese intrigue, thus a torturous act is described via these feature cancellations and multiplications: [-HUMAN –ANIMATE +ABSTRACT +PAINFUL +ACT (#Chinese intrigue)].

Furthermore, the poet depicts what he sees and gets bored: the gold dragons that decorated the backs of the chairs around the card table. He refers to a simile for explaining how these images represent his boredom: “those Chinese images that fell over me like a cape laid across my shoulders, clasped under my Adam’s apple.” This simile implies that the images attracted the attention of the poet, belonging to a different culture, and they represent the concept of a Chinese intrigue metonymically. The following features describe the concept of dragon: [-HUMAN – ANIMATE +CONCRETE +DECORATION +GOLD #dragon], and

these describe the two diverse concepts of gold both of which show the value of the dragon, whose color is that of gold: [-HUMAN –ANIMATE +CONCRETE +VALUABLE +ATTRACTIVE / PERCEIVABLE (#gold)] or [-HUMAN –ANIMATE -CONCRETE +COLOR +ATTRACTIVE / PERCEIVABLE (#gold)].

### **Frame and spiritual space of the poem.**

Within the frame of the poem, we see that the poet remembers his past childhood memories. He remembers his Ashkenazi uncle, who orders him and his other nephews and nieces to speak Yiddish and has left them diverse Yiddish journals and newspapers. In fact, he was his mother's cousin. He was different from the poet's American uncles: he was respecting the Yiddish culture more than the American ones. He was not joining them on Sunday afternoons. However, his other uncles who were raised in the United States were playing poker and pinochle, and his aunts were playing dominoes, like the way some Americans do on holidays.

Besides, the poet's annoyance appears in the spiritual space of the poem. He is only attracted by the cultural concepts, belonging to the Chinese culture: golden dragons. The respect for one's past appears in the spiritual space of the poem. Besides, his uncle is regarded as harmless and crazy. He used to say, "one has to speak Yiddish" ("me darf redn yidish") or "speak Yiddish" ("redn yidish") all the time. According to the relatives of the poet, he was regarded as mad: "meshugah mit yidish." ("mad with Yiddish"). All of these imply that one must protect her / his language and culture and respect other cultures at the same time.

### **Spatio-temporal continuity.**

In the poem, generally, the past tense is used, as the poet expresses his memories. Only the Ashkenazi uncle's Yiddish words within the quotations are in the present tense: "one has to speak Yiddish" ("me darf redn yidish") and the imperative "speak Yiddish" ("redn yidish"). This implies that Yiddish was spoken in the past, and his mother's words "But this is America, Hymie" demonstrate that Yiddish is not spoken much in the United States of America.

### **Rhymes.**

The rhyming words are few in the poem. "Yiddish" and "yidish" rhyme in b at the ends of the second, third, fourth, twelfth, and thirteenth verses, demonstrating cognitively that the poet thinks that the language must survive. The rhyming words "years" and "newspapers" in c at the ends of the fifth and ninth verses show that Yiddish was spoken in the past. The word "my" appears in q at the ends of the twenty-second and thirty-third verses implying that

both the uncles and the Adam's apple are important for the poet as his possessions: the first as his dearest ones, and the second as his body part. Words such as "loved," "flowered," and "matched" are rhyming in s at the ends of the twenty-fourth, twenty-seventh, and twenty-eighth verses, indicating how the author feels, touching objects representing diverse cultures. The repetition of "me" at the end of the twenty-ninth verse at the end of the thirty-second verse implies that the poet was joining neither his Yiddish uncle nor his American uncles and aunts.

Finally, the words "table" and "apple" rhyme in z at the ends of the thirty-first and thirty-fourth verses: a table is necessary to play with cards and Adam's apple for the straight posture of the human body. These two rhyming objects imply that a human being must be tolerant versus other cultures, while protecting his own since a world where the people share only one religion, speak only one language, and share the same culture, would be extremely boring. Different beliefs, cultures and languages enrich civilizations via works of art, as implied through the uses of the Chinese dragon images and Yiddish words. These cognitive games guide us to the conclusion that one must protect his own culture while respecting the other cultures.

### **Analysis of "The Yiddish Poet Yankev Glatshiteyn Visits Me in The Coffee Shop"**

In this section, another poem: "The Yiddish Poet Yankev Glatshiteyn Visits Me in the Coffee Shop" is analyzed from a cognitive poetic perspective.

The Yiddish Poet Yankev Glatshiteyn Visits Me in the Coffee Shop

I was facing the back a  
and didn't see him come in. b  
He shimmied into the booth c  
and I knew him right away. d  
He looked at me. He pursed his lips. e  
"I deliberately speak to you in English f  
because I want you to understand me perfectly. g  
Since I died, by the way, my English is better. h  
I have long conversations with Marianne Moore i  
about prose in poetry j  
and I exchange tales with Yeats – k  
he's not the snob he used to be. l

He tells me a Celtic tale and I m  
tell him one about Chelm. n  
It's more literary the life there, but o  
we don't write anymore. i  
But that's not what I want to talk about. p  
But that's not what I want to talk about. p  
  
It's all well and good you translate me. q  
You need it more than I do. r  
I'm in Yiddish for all time. s  
Not that I mind, mind you. t  
Be my guest. But you, t  
you have to translate yourself into English. f  
Stop fretting about starting late. u  
Be like Yiddish literature – grow v  
into the gift that finally came. y  
Don't brood over your unmetrical ear. h  
Listening to the truth-rattles in you, z  
your ear will catch on. A2  
Rhythm's self-pursuit, and the way d  
you take in the world. B2  
Yiddish immersion, A2  
retrospections of middle-age, C2  
and new shedding D2  
prompt your lines. I'm curious E2  
how it goes. By the way, d  
I never mourn Yiddish anymore. i  
We gather in Peretz's salon-cloud – F2  
our Yiddish will last forever there – G2  
though no one blows in from a shtetl, H2  
manuscript in hand. Oh yes, I2  
unbind yourself from what you've missed. J2

Joy's in the moving on. A2  
Well, zay gezond." K2  
Absent-mindedly, he unclamped the sugar pourer h  
From the laminated menu, his fingers L2  
Played in the glass fluting; as he M2  
Moved out he jarred the table N2  
And my coffee shook. O2

In this poem, the poet sits in a coffee shop and encounters the soul of the dead Yiddish poet Yankev Glatshteyn there. Yankev Glatshteyn (1896–1971) was an American Yiddish poet and journalist originally from Lublin, Poland, who moved to New York at the age of eighteen; he was among the founders of the “Introspectivist school of Yiddish poetry that prized aesthetic innovation over political or social concerns” (Words without Borders, n.d.).

The Yiddish poet talks in English, as his English is better than his Yiddish after he had passed away, as he became a friend of Moore and Yeats. The poet talks to the ghost of the Yiddish poet. He proposes that the Yiddish poet is a friend of Marianne Moore (1887-1972) who was an American poet, who depicted animals (Poetry foundation, 2019), and William Butler Yeats (1865-1939), who was a Nobel Prize owner Irish dramatist, author, and poet (Jalic Inc, the literature network, 2000-2019). The ghost of the Yiddish poet says that one always writes in Yiddish, and speaks Yiddish at Peretz Institute, i.e., probably the Peretz Jewish Cultural Institute in Vancouver. He finishes his speech with a Yiddish sentence, “zay gezond” (“be well / be healthy!”). He invites the poet to make the Yiddish literature survive and disappears, jarring the table and shaking the coffee of the author, as he is a ghost, belonging to a person who lived in the past.

### **Feature cancellations and multiplications.**

This section deals with analyzes of the metaphorical expressions that are present as cognitive cultural tools formed by cancellations and multiplications related to the features of the objects one by one. Let us begin with the first metaphorical expression of ‘literary life.’ Chelm is a Polish city; it used to have a population of more than 15,000 Jews in 1939 (Remember Jewish Chelm - genealogy group, n.d.). Life was like a novel there for the Jews. Thus, the following features are cancelled or added to the concept of life in order to create the metaphor of “literary life”: [-HUMAN –ANIMATE +ABSTRACT +IN CHELM +LITERARY (#life)]. In the sentence, “I’m in Yiddish for all time,” the poet stands for his works metonymically with these features: [+HUMAN +ANIMATE +CONCRETE +IN

YIDDISH (#Yiddish poet)]. Besides, the sentence, “you have to translate yourself into English” means that “you have to express yourself in English.” After his death, the poet begins to use English rather than Yiddish. This alludes to the universality of the English language and the possible death of Yiddish within a few years. Another metaphorical expression is the following: “Be like Yiddish literature – grow into the gift that finally came” which is a simile, assigning the following features to the Yiddish literature and the poet respectively: [-HUMAN -ANIMATE -CONCRETE +PRECIOUS +LONG-LASTING (#Yiddish literature)] and [+HUMAN +ANIMATE +CONCRETE +PRECIOUS +FAMOUS FOREVER (#poet)]. The Yiddish poet praises the Yiddish literature and proposes the poet to write poems that will lead to his eternal fame as works of art. Additionally, the ghost deletes and adds the following features to the ears of Fein: [-HUMAN - ANIMATE +CONCRETE - METRICAL (#Fein’s ear)], and metonymically, it stands for an audition. Furthermore, mourning Yiddish means explaining one’s pains through poems in Yiddish. In addition, “Peretz’s salon-cloud” is the hall of Peretz Institute where people smoke, drink, and chat; it can be depicted with these features: [-HUMAN -ANIMATE +CONCRETE +RUMOROUS +SMOKY (#salon-cloud)].

On the other hand, in Yiddish, “shtetl” means a small town. It is depicted metaphorically with these features: [+HUMAN +ANIMATE +CONCRETE -BLOWING (#shtetl=small town)]. In the town, nobody writes literary works in Yiddish. However, in the small Peretz Institute in Canada, Yiddish is still spoken. The Yiddish language is endangered, as few people speak it. In the end, “joy’s in the moving on” means that the real joy is the life that is going on, assigning the following features to the concept of life: [-HUMAN - ANIMATE -CONCRETE +CONTINUOUS +JOY (#life)]

#### **Frame and spiritual space of the poem.**

The poet meets a Yiddish colleague in a coffee shop. The coffee shop frame includes tables, chairs, a door, and different species of coffee, glasses, cups, sugar and its pourer, menus, aromas, etc. People stop at and sit in the coffee shops in order to drink some coffee, read something, and chat with friends. Also, in the poem, the poet sits in the coffee shop; first, he does not see the Yiddish poet who was entering the coffee shop. However, the Yiddish poet looks at him and speaks to the poet: this is the frame of the poem. Besides, the last verses of the poem demonstrate that the poet was in a coffee shop by depicting objects like the coffee pourer, laminated menu, glass, table, and coffee.

In the spiritual space of the poem, the Yiddish poet defends his language and culture,

giving importance to writing and speaking in Yiddish, as he says, “I’m in Yiddish all the time,” and “Be like Yiddish literature.” However, he prefers to speak English to be understood universally.

### **Spatio-temporal continuity.**

In the poem, the past tense is used in all the sentences except for the sentences of the Yiddish poet, within the quotation marks where the Yiddish poet uses the present tense. This alludes to the fact that the poet went to the coffee shop and talked to the Yiddish poet in the past; however, the thought and ideas of the Yiddish poet are still valid today, as his words were put in quotation marks.

### **Rhymes.**

The rhyming words are few in the poem. The words “away” and “way” rhyme in d at the ends of the fourth, thirtieth, and thirty-sixth verses, and they allude to the fact that the poet and Yiddish poet follow the same directions in life: both are colleagues.

Besides, the word “English” in the sixth verse is repeated in twenty-third verse in f, demonstrating that both poets speak English. The words “better” in the eighth, “ear” in the twenty-seventh, and “pouurer” in the forty-fifth verses rhyme in h, and show that for writing better pieces of poetry, a poet must take care of the use of the melodic words, and distribute this sweet poetry among people like the sugar in the pouurer that everybody uses. “Moore” in the ninth and “anymore” in the sixteenth, and the thirty-seventh verses rhyme in i, proving that the Yiddish poet’s English is better after he had managed contacts with dead English poets, such as Moore. The word “you” appears in the twenty-first and twenty-second verses successively in t, referring to a successive advice addressed to Fein by the Yiddish poet. Moreover, the words “on” in the twenty-ninth and the forty-third verses and the word “immersion” in the thirty-second verse rhyme in A2, showing that concentration is required in composing pieces of poetry. However, the Yiddish words “gezund” (‘good’ / ‘healthy’) and “shtetl” (small town) do not rhyme with any English words, implying that Yiddish was used by the Yiddish poet in the past before his death.

### **Discussion**

The metaphors and the sentence structures in both poems revealed the Jewish identity of the poet; he also talked about the family games played at home, the famous singers, and the importance of the Yiddish language in that period. As Yiddish is an endangered language, these poems give an idea about the importance of linguistic and cultural preservation.

### Conclusion

To conclude, as a branch of the interdisciplinary field of Cognitive Sciences, cognitive poetics is a useful method for understanding the mental reasons that lead the poet to write the poem. It helps us interpret the poem correctly following the exact thoughts of the poet expressed via feature cancellations and multiplications, different frames, spiritual spaces, tenses, which contribute to the spatio-temporal continuity, and rhymes. Richard Fein demonstrates his Yiddish self by referring to the description of his Yiddish ancestors and the places where Yiddish has been spoken. In the beginnings, Fein's poetry focuses on the contemporary condition that the language is facing in the United States: it is in the danger of dying. In "My World of Yiddish," the poet begins with his uncle's warnings; he always tells them to speak Yiddish, and the language may survive, as he left the family Yiddish journals and newspapers. In the United States, the language is in danger.

In "The Yiddish poet Yankev Glatsteyn Visits Me in the Coffee Shop," the Yiddish poet implies that he was assimilated to the American world, and lost his Yiddish identity in the beginnings of the poem. However, he says that he writes in Yiddish all the time, and in the hall of Peretz Institute, the language is still spoken and tells the poet to immerse in the Yiddish language and culture, thus to diffuse them via works of art. Yiddish is a language spoken by Ashkenazi Jews at home and taught in some universities in the United States of America and England. The poems of Richard Fein show that native Yiddish speakers are inclined to put some Yiddish words into English sentences, as they speak English; they also refer to code-switching between the two languages in order not to lose their Ashkenazi selves.

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