

811.14'06'373.7

811.163.41'373.7

<https://doi.org/10.18485/sj.2022.27.1.17>

IVANA S. MILOJEVIĆ*

ΜΑΡΘΑ Π. ΛΑΜΠΡΟΠΟΥΛΟΥ

University of Belgrade – Faculty of Philology

Оригинални научни рад

Примљен: 15.10.2021.

Прихваћен: 22.12.2021.

THE FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE OF DEATH
IN GREEK AND IN SERBIAN**

The present study explores the figurative language of death employed by two linguistic communities, the Greek and the Serbian. Both communities share a common religion and the people have similar mentalities, thus, the question is whether they conceptualize and express death in the same or in a different way. The main focus will be the investigation of death as a transition to a different state, where death is usually aligned to the metaphorical mappings of DEATH IS DEPARTURE, DEATH IS A JOURNEY, DEATH IS A FINAL DESTINATION and DEATH IS A CROSSING BOUNDARY. The empirical part involves the exemplification of terms that describe death and the compilation of a corpus of figurative expressions for death in both languages in an attempt to point out any cultural diversity.

Keywords: the domain of death, metaphors, Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), Greek, Serbian

* ivana.milojevic@fil.bg.ac.rs

** Part of the present work was presented (oral online presentation) at the Conference *Figurative Thought and Language 5*, which took place on 29–30 October 2020, Sofia University „Saint Kliment Ohridski“.

OBJECTIVES

The concept of death constitutes the focus of this study in an attempt to identify its cognitive base and to distinguish accordingly: idioms¹ being conceptually motivated, expressions based on conceptual metaphors, etc. Death has always been hard to apprehend and has become the subject of philosophical inquiries, while at the same time individuals tend to avoid death in their thoughts and even adopt euphemisms to address to it (Janakis 1996), softening the emotional load that a human loss may cause. Since death is a rich domain of experience (Halam et al 1999), the empirical part will be restricted a) to the investigation of dictionary definitions provided for the words: *θάνατος*, *smrt*, ‘death’; *πεθαίνω*, *umreti*, ‘die’ and *Ἄδης*, *Had*, ‘Ades’ and b) to the analysis of idiomatic and metaphorical expressions² showing the transition to death, recorded in Serbian (RSANU; RMS; Matešić 1982; Marković 2001; Balać/Stojanović 2002; RSJ) and Greek dictionaries (Kriaras 1995; Vlahopoulos 2007; Babinjotis 2011). For instance, death and life are seen as two different states separated by boundaries i.e. *εἶναι μεταξύ ζωῆς και θανάτου*, *između života i smrti*, ‘between life and death’, or they are conceived as different distant places, for instance, the departure scenario is common i.e. *έφυγε, οτιśhao je* (*Bogu na istinu, pod crnu zemlju*), ‘he is gone’ (Theodoropulu 2008). Those euphemized expressions will be grouped based on their meaning and various pragmatic factors will be examined which underlie their usage (Kanakis 2003). The recorded material will be analyzed adopting the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) within the Cognitive Linguistics framework (Lejkof 1987; Lejkof/Džonson 1980; Kevečes 2000).

INTRODUCTION: CULTURAL ASPECTS OF DEATH

The concept of death is something that has troubled people since the beginning of their existence. In most dictionaries, death is medically defined as the permanent cessation of all biological functions of a living organism and its decomposition shortly after (Kriaras 1995; RSJ; Babinjotis 2011). However, the possibility of an afterlife still remains a mystery. One of the challenges is the fact that we are aware of the loss of our life on earth but unaware of what happens with our spiritual essence. Moreover, the death of the body is hard to define since it is not often

¹ We use the term idiom to denote semi-transparent and non-transparent metaphorical expressions, more precisely, „several types of syntactically related lexemes” with connotative meanings (Vulović, 2015: 20–21).

² According to Lakoff (1993: 203) metaphor is „a cross-domain mapping in the conceptual system” and a „metaphorical expression (a word, phrase, or sentence) is used to refer to an individual linguistic expression or a surface realization of such a cross-domain mapping”. As Lakoff explains in his work, metaphor involves two domains, namely, a source domain and a target domain, the one being conceptualized through the other.

simultaneous across the different organs. Thus, our biological instinctive reaction to the mysterious nature of death is usually fear and discomfort. As Becker (Beker 1973: 17) notes, people tend to be active and fill their days with various occupations in order to avoid considering the concept of death or to dispel the fear of death. In this way, as Leondari (2015) notes, many of our everyday activities, which form culture, function as a convention which liberates us or elevates the anxiety of death, making us think of the material world.

In Kriaras (1995) and in RSJ (2007), apart from the meaning of one's end of life, one can come across metaphorical meanings, such as „a hopeless situation” i.e. *θάνατος της οικονομίας* ‘death of economics’, or *smrt sindikalnog pokreta* ‘death of the trade union movement’. The same applies for the verb *πεθαίνω* ‘to die’, which metaphorically denotes the action of striving for something, i.e. *πεθαίνω στη δουλειά* ‘work oneself to death’, meaning that one works too much, or *πεθαίνω για ταξίδια*, ‘dying for travels’, meaning that one loves traveling, also *umreti od želje za nečim*, ‘dying for something’ meaning that one loves something.

Since ancient times, people have been wondering about death, trying to explain it. In ancient Greek times, one of the first descriptions of the afterlife is found in Homer where the Homeric dead lack *menos*, in other words, ‘strength’ and only two attributes seem to define their status, that is, *the soul* (*ψυχή*) and *the image* (*εἶδωλον*) (Gerland 1985: 1). The dead are also described as „witless”, as Agamemnon refers to them probably due to the fact that they do not know what takes place on earth and they are also depicted as „disagreeable” and „irritable, rather than malevolent” (Gerland 1985: 2). Moreover, in Greek mythology (Grevs 1960) there were two different places where the souls ended up, based on their prior life. The ones who led a decent life and were deemed distinguished members of society ensured the transition of their soul to Elysium. However, those who defied the laws and deviated from the rules of life were doomed to Hades, or else to Tartarus, a part of the underworld. For the Ancient Greek man death was a journey to these places. The souls that entered the underworld carried a coin to pay Charon to take them across the river, where the judges would determine the last destination, be it Elysium or Tartarus.

Over the years, this belief about the afterlife was mainly replaced by the Greek Orthodox Christian belief which coincides with the Serbian Christian religion, according to which death is conceptualized as a passing to a different state of existence. In particular, the souls of those who have done well in life will go to Heaven, whereas the souls of those who have done evil will be condemned and sent to Hell. Hence, the afterlife is connected with a transition to a different place and a future resurrection which will distinguish the souls depending on their deeds on earth. However, in the folklore tradition, the mythological figure of Hades or Charos, which resembles the figure of the Grim Reaper, has remained in the Greek

folk narratives, songs and idiomatic expressions such as *μαύρος καβαλάρης* ‘black rider’ and it is even found in dictionaries³. In contrast, in Serbian culture, death is like a living entity *gledati smrti u oči* ‘I look at the death in the eyes’.

Similarly in Serbian culture, death is not seen as the end of existence but it is related to the transfer of the soul to Heaven or Hell (Opašić/Gregorović 2010: 55). Death is treated as something that is rather unknown and unfamiliar to living beings, but not so distant since it is expected (Lejkof/Džonson 1999: 205–206; Opašić/Gregorović 2010: 55); it is also interpreted as the immortality of the soul (Drobnjak/Gudurić 2011: 237); or as Theodoropoulou (2008: 18) says: „as releasing some burden of life”. These boundaries between death and life also show the desire to transcend the limits of the ‘body’, that is, to achieve the immortal life, something that according to Kovačević and Sinani (2014: 1055–1056) is the basis of the religious worldview.

Both cultures possess an animistic worldview, which is presented as a synergy of the material – the body and the immaterial – of the soul during life, while after death the body and the soul are separated and the soul becomes immortal and eternal (Drobnjak/Gudurić 2011: 239–240).

THEORETICAL APPROACH

In terms of cognitive linguistics, the most contemporary approaches to the notion of death point to basic principles, that of embodied language and figuration. As supported by Lakoff and Johnson (1980), certain conceptual links are based on human experience: we all tend to construct identical frames when we describe experiences we all share. In this process, the various cultural models play an important role in the abstract domain of science (Dirven et al 2012). In every speaker „the same parts of the brain are activated (though not identically activated) in imagining or describing a situation as would be involved in perceiving and experiencing such a situation” (Densiger/Svicer 2014: 20). In our case, the conceptualization of death seems to favor the claim that there is a bidirectional relationship between thought and language rather than a unidirectional one, which also assumes mutual correspondences between culture and language (Vilhelm 1936). Hence, in order to talk about death we resort to conceptual metaphors. Conceptual metaphors presuppose the use of two domains, the one being understood through the other. The one functions as the „target domain” and the other functions as the „source domain”, or else, the „target domain” is conceptualized by means of the „source domain”

³ According to Greek mythology, Hades was the son of Cronus and Rhea, brother of Zeus and Poseidon and master of the Underworld. In the dictionary, we also come across the meanings of *σκότος* ‘darkness’ and *κόλαση* ‘Hell’ (Kriaras 1995).

(Lejkof/Džonson 1980). Moreover, conceptual metaphor allows us „to map experiential structure from the ‘imagistic’ realms of sensory-motor experience to non-imagistic (‘abstract’) ones, image schemas [...] provide one of the ‘embodied’ anchors of the entire conceptual system” (Hampe 2008: 2).

The main focus of the study is to find out the conceptual domains that we draw from metaphorical expressions, and in turn, to detect the metaphorical expressions which we can list underneath them (Kevečeš 2002: 4). The metaphorical mappings of death which will be explored are the following: DEATH IS DEPARTURE, DEATH IS A JOURNEY, DEATH IS A FINAL DESTINATION and DEATH IS CROSSING A BOUNDARY⁴ because they exhibit systematicity both in Greek and in Serbian. In particular, the source domains of departure, journey and final destination seem to function as a soothing and euphemizing manner of depicting death (Damaris et al 2012). Theodoropoulou (2008) treating the concept of death as the target domain supports that the conceptualization of death lies in experiences and situations of life, most of them being universal in nature, such as DEATH IS WINTER, DEATH IS SLEEP, DEATH IS LIBERATION, DEATH IS THE FINAL DESTINATION. Other studies give prominence to additional conceptual mappings such as DEATH IS THE END; DEATH IS A REST and DEATH IS A SUMMONS (Gatambuki et al 2018). Even though a variety of conceptual metaphors are observed, still, Gatambuki et al (2018) underline the fact that, after analyzing the material of six languages, they found out that the most common metaphor of death is DEATH IS A JOURNEY.

EMPIRICAL PART

In this section, four metaphorical conceptualizations in relation to death will be explored in an attempt to identify any cultural variations between Greek and Serbian metaphors. Among them, we will attempt to identify the most common conceptualizations of death which pertain to Greek and Serbian cultures.

An online search was realized between the 25th and 28th of February 2020. A considerable number of metaphoric expressions related to the domain of death were recorded in Greek along with their equivalents in Serbian, as well as expressions which do not appear in both languages and a corpus was compiled. In our corpus, we distinguished a number of 200 metaphoric expressions approximately which pertain to four mappings: DEATH IS DEPARTURE, DEATH IS A JOURNEY, DEATH IS A FINAL DESTINATION and DEATH IS CROSSING A BOUNDARY. Based on our corpus, only a number of 87 metaphoric expressions are presented indicatively in this paper. These 87 metaphoric expressions were categorized based on their content into these four metaphoric mappings, which appear to be

⁴According to Özçalışkan (Uzçalışkan 2003), all these mappings involve metaphorical motion.

frequent in both language communities⁵: DEATH IS DEPARTURE, DEATH IS A JOURNEY, DEATH IS A FINAL DESTINATION and DEATH IS CROSSING A BOUNDARY. In the analysis, an attempt is made to express them accurately in English. We will show that most of these metaphoric expressions are common and only few differences were noted in the two languages.

According to Lakoff and Turner (Lejkof/Tarner 1989: 12), death is understood on the basis of other metaphors as well: DEATH IS WINTER, SLEEP, LOSS OF A LIQUID, RELEASE among others, yet the ones we will examine concentrate on a transition or movement between two worlds. In other words, they involve the crossing of a path and/or the arrival to a destination. Initially, we will focus on DEATH IS DEPARTURE metaphor and the concept of transition to a different state; the state of the afterlife. In folk wisdom, Greek and Serbian people view death metaphorically as a passage.

Death is Departure

In this kind of metaphors, where the verbs usually denote movement or transition, their equivalent in English can be found in the phrase ‘s/he is gone’: *έφυγε, οtišao je*.

In both languages, we can attest the use of the verb *gone: otišao / otišla je*, which in neither case can be taken literally. As it can be seen, death is associated with the transfer of the soul to a different otherworldly place. The above metaphor can be interpreted as the act of the soul’s departure from this world or as the individual’s farewell to mortal life. Both cultures project the animistic understanding of man, meaning that the soul is expected to abandon its earthly habitat and go to the unknown (Drobnjak/Guduric 2011: 239–240). The place of the departure is known, it is the delimited place of this world in this life, but the place of the final destination is not determined as in these expressions: *φεύγω, φεύγω από τον κόσμο*, ‘he abandoned this world’; *αφήνω τον κόσμο*, ‘he left this world’; *εγκαταλείπω / αποχαιρετώ τον μάταιο τούτο κόσμο*, ‘farewell to the world’; *αναχωρώ από τη ζωή / τον κόσμο*, ‘depart from the world’; *αποχαιρετώ τη ζωή*, ‘farewell to life’; *μας άφησε χρόνους*, ‘he left us’; *αφήνω γειά⁶, αφήνω (κάποιον) σέκο⁷*; *ostaviti ovaj svet*, ‘he left this world’; *napustiti ovaj svet / oprostiti se sa ovim svetom*, ‘to leave / to abandon this world’; *rastaviti se sa (ovim) svetom (od ovoga sveta)*, ‘depart from the (this) world’; *oprostiti se sa životom / s ovim svetom*, ‘farewell to the world’, *otići sa ovog sveta*, ‘he abandoned this world’.

⁵ Only a selected number of indicative metaphoric expressions are presented in our study.

⁶ There is no equivalent translation. It carries the sense of ‘passed away’.

⁷ The same as in footnote 5.

Moreover, the way we experience death changes based on the viewpoint of the speaker. For instance, according to Theodoropoulou (2008: 15), we come across expressions which imply that it is the speaker who functions as the main locus who experiences the loss, something which is apparent in expressions such as *μας άφησε*, *ostavio nas je*, ‘he left us’, which clearly indicates the speaker’s negative emotional state; a state of loneliness; the speaker is the point of reference. In contrast, the phrase *πάει*, *ide*, ‘he is gone’ stresses the passage of the dead, or else the course-the movement towards a destination, and not the speaker who talks about the loss (ibid.).

Death is Journey

Similarly, speakers of both languages conceptualize death as a journey. More specifically, the course towards an unknown destination leads to the conceptual metaphor DEATH IS A JOURNEY.

The Christian Orthodox belief in the afterlife, that is, the belief that the soul is an indestructible element of human existence, gave birth to the hope that death is only a stage of the spiritual journey and not the end (Giel, 2013: 92): *πάω καλειά μου*, ‘I am gone’; *πάει*, ‘He is gone’; *πάει ο καημένος*, ‘the poor man is gone’; *πήγε στον αγύριστο*, ‘go to „good riddance”’; *otiči u večni mir*, ‘he leaves for the eternal peace’; *iči / otiči na večni počinak / iči na večno počivalište*, ‘he leaves to the eternal rest’; *putovati, preseliti se u večnost*, ‘he travels to eternity’. In such metaphoric expressions, we see that the body comes forth as the vessel of the soul; this vessel remains ‘empty’ after death⁸. The use of the conceptual metaphor DEATH IS A JOURNEY is an indication that both cultures view the end of life as a stage which is followed by a spiritual journey (Giel 2013: 92). Moreover, the conceptualization of a spiritual journey functions as a euphemism for the mysterious phenomenon of death. According to Brown (Braun 2000: 84), life is seen as a preparation for death because it implies man’s responsibility for his existence during earthly life and his effort to achieve salvation after the end of life. The notion of journey is also evident in the following expressions: *αγύριστο / μακρινό / μεγάλο / αιώνιο / στερνό ταξίδι*, ‘journey of no return / long / big / eternal / last journey’; *ταξίδι χωρίς επιστροφή / γυρισμό / ταξίδι δίχως επιστροφή*, ‘journey of no return’; *μεταναστεύω στον άλλο κόσμο*, ‘migrate to the other world’; *ταξιδεύω στον άλλο κόσμο*, ‘travel to the other world’; *večni put / daleki put*, ‘long journey’; *otiči na put bez povratka / putovati, preseliti se u večnost*, ‘journey of no return’, ‘journey’; *otiči na onaj svet / otiči na drugi svet*, ‘to leave to the other world’; *poslati na onaj (drugi) svijet koga*, ‘to send to the other world’; *poslednji put*, ‘last journey’.

⁸Based on Canakis (Canakis 2003), the body plays a central role in the conceptualization of death. According to Canakis (2003: 13), death brings forth the medium of the body, along with a variety of body metaphors. Initially, Canakis (ibid.) refers to the body as a *trajectory* which moves along a *trajectory* (the life-span) between two points – landmarks: birth and death, birth being a landmark which is visible since it is witnessed taking place.

The belief in the existence of the soul is also pervaded with the belief in the existence of divine beings into whose abode the soul journeys after death, while death is manifested as a journey and the confrontation of man's immortal soul and God. That is also supported by author Mršević-Radović, quoting Jung and claiming that the soul is the only entity capable of seeing God, as the soul is God's image within man, the inner light which God kindled in our hearts (2008: 185). Hence the stereotypical expressions *αποδημώ εις Κύριον / εις τόπον χλοερόν / εκδημώ εις Κύριον*, 'migrate to the Lord/ to a green place'; *οτιçi Bogu na istinu*, 'go to God to the Truth' lexicalize „contact with the other world”, i.e. „experience of death”, which is intensified by the observation that the journey is in fact the beginning of death and the revelation of the truth, that is, the secret of God, whereas man's soul, immortal according to the Christian belief, is responsible for earthly life when it meets the Maker (Mršević Radović, 2008: 185). The expressions *Gospod je pozvao (prizvao) koga k sebi*, 'God called somebody to come to him'; *bog je uzeo / pozvao / primio koga k sebi*, 'God took / called / accepted somebody with him'; *τον πήρε ο Θεός*, 'God took him'; *τον πήρε ο Χάρος*, 'Charos took him' foreground a religious deliverance of the fear of death with the use of euphemistic phrases (Giel 2013: 93).

Death is a Final Destination

Taking into consideration the previous metaphoric mappings, we could claim that since we refer to a departure or to a journey, at the same time we imply a destination. Hence, we encounter many metaphors which depict death as the final destination. Mršević-Radović (2008: 28–29) concludes that phraseological analysis in terms of space is based on sensory perception – on the visualization method, on the one hand, as a result of the rationalization of human experience, and on the other hand, as a fruit of metaphysical interpretations where the visualization center is the Earth, whereas the „divine things” are expressed as the „principles” of the natural world. Drawing on Jung (1984), Bošković (1974) and Pavlović (1978), the author emphasizes that Aristotle's categories of space and time are in fact the most general elements of every definition (Mršević Radović, 2008: 28).

At this point, it is important to underline that in the Serbian language the metaphors that describe death as the final destination outweigh the equivalent metaphors in Greek.

Indicatively, we can see a number of similar metaphors, where death is interpreted as our return to the land, where we become dust. Death is also connected to darkness. It is a striking fact that both in Serbian and Greek the land is illustrated with bleak colors (black earth), (Opašić/Gregorović, 2010: 65): *τον έφαγε το μαύρο χόμα*, 'the black soil devoured him'; *χόμα είμαστε και χόμα θα γίνουμε / χόμα είμαστε και στο χόμα καταλήγουμε*, 'we become dust'; *θα γυρίσουμε / επιστρέφω στη μητέρα γη*, 'we become dust'; *biti pod crnom zemljom / otiçi pod crnu zemlju*

/pokrila crna zemlja koga / zemlja crna ga krije, ‘to be under black earth, to go under black earth, covered by black earth, black earth hides him’; *sastaviti (koga) sa crnom zemljom*, ‘associate (somebody) with black land⁹’; *pojeo ga mrak / crna zemlja*, ‘he was devored by darkness, by black earth’.

A difference between the two languages resides in the fact that in Greek special emphasis is given to the vegetation associated with cemeteries and the soil that covers the dead (the buried reside under thyme, cypresses and radishes): *βρίσκεται στα θυμαράκια*, ‘being under thyme’; *βρίσκεται στα κυπαρίσσια*, ‘being under cypresses’; *κοιτάζω τα ραδίκια ανάποδα*, ‘facing the roots of radishes’. The given examples in Greek resemble the English idiomatic phrase *pushing up daisies*, *pushing up daisy roots*, or *being under the daisies*. Here, the orientational conceptual metaphor of UP AND DOWN is indicative of the way we perceive the ‘rest’ of the body. The metaphor depicts the body at ‘rest’ and the buried body facing the roots of plants. This illustration of a deceased is the closest concrete perception of death. In fact, being dead is an experience we cannot actually specify with our consciousness since death is a kind of metaphor of the non-existent, an experience that we lack (Jovanović 1992). As Mršević-Radović (2008: 28) claims, the reference to space (the grave) is based on our sensory perception; it is an act of visualizing an event, on the one hand, and of trying to rationalize the circle of life on the other. We could also assume that the metaphoric phrases draw out a sarcastic or ironic tone since a buried body has no conscience of being under the ground facing the roots of plants.

Lastly, as mentioned earlier, the fear of death brings man closer to religion and to the religious worldviews of the transcendence of the limits of the physical world (Kovačević/Sinani 2014: 1055–1056), treating death as a final destination. In both Greek and Serbian, we come across metaphoric expressions where the word *end* is dominant and signals the final stage of the course of life: *πλησιάζει το τέλος του / μοιραίο τέλος / επήλθε το μοιραίο / τέλος / ήρθε / έφτασε το τέλος / είναι εν όψει του τέλους / μοιραίου*, ‘the end is coming’, ‘the end is near’; *επίκειται / πλησιάζει / είναι εγγύς ο θάνατός του / το τέλος του*, ‘his death/his end approaches’; *doći / približiti se kraj*, ‘the end is coming, the end is near’; *kucnuo je čiji poslednji (zadnji) čas*, ‘the last hour came’; *dokončati svoje dane*, ‘I am spending my last days’; *raskinuti sa životom*, ‘I am breaking up with life’.

The belief in a final destination can be tracked diachronically in both cultures as well. As mentioned before, in ancient Greece, the final destination was considered to be the kingdom of Hades or the Elysian Fields, whereas according to the Orthodox religion the destination was either Heaven or Hell.

Accepting the possibility of a final destination, additional metaphors were created which point out a path towards the divine destination, or provide more

⁹Or else, ‘wipe the floor with somebody’.

details for this special place. Likewise, in the Serbian language, we observe that this destination is characterized as peacefulness (*mir*) or as diverse. In fact, it is characterized as another world (*drugi svet*); a world that is up (or down), green and peaceful, a place of angels. Moreover, the stage of the buried body in the grave / gravestone (*grob, raka*) functions metaphorically as the final destination, death. This is the final place of the body, and in turn of the bones. In the following examples, we can see that the grave actually delimits the body's final destination: *έχει το ένα πόδι στον τάφο / στον λάκκο / είναι με το ένα πόδι στον λάκκο / jednom nogom je u grobu*, 'he has one foot in the grave'; *κατέβηκε στον τάφο / sići u grob*, 'he went to the grave'; *leći u grob*, 'he lies in the grave'; *βρίσκεται στο χείλος του τάφου / biti blizu (na rubu) groba*, 'he is on the edge of the grave'; *gledati u grob*, 'I look at the grave'. In contrast, the soul ends up in the sky: *η γειτονιά των αγγέλων*, 'the neighborhood of angels'; *popeti se na nebo*, 'I go up to the sky'; *počivati u miru (božjem)*, 'rest in divine peace'.

Another metaphor for the afterlife in Serbian reads is the following: *otići (preseliti se) u Abrahamovo / Avramovo krilo*, 'to sleep to Abraham's lap'. In this example the belief in the afterlife as stated in the Bible and the religious texts is prominent (Giel 2013: 96). No equivalent phrase is recorded in the Greek language. Comparing the total of phraseological units, the main difference in the two languages seems to be the lack of metaphors concerning the figure of Hades in the Serbian language. For instance, the phrase *μαύρος καβαλάρης* 'black rider', where Charos is presented as a black rider and carrier of souls to the final destination, personifying darkness, was not recorded in the Serbian phraseological units¹⁰.

Death is Crossing a Boundary

The concept of death that we acquire through the journey metaphor can also be conceptualized through the DEATH IS CROSSING A BOUNDARY metaphor. This metaphor is based on the religious understanding of death as a passage from one life into the other, which are spatially separated from each other as well: *μεταξύ ζωής και θανάτου / između života i smrti / biti (lebdeti sl.) između života i smrti*, 'between life and death'; *otići na onaj svet*, 'leave this world'; *otići na drugi svet*, 'leave to the other world'; *poslati na onaj (drugi) svet koga*, 'send somebody to the other world'; *ostaviti, napustiti ovaj svet*, 'leave, abandon this world'; *oprostiti se sa ovim svetom*, 'bid farewell to this world'; *rastaviti se sa (ovim) svetom (od ovoga sveta)*, 'get separated from this world'. The opposition with the up-down spatial meaning is also related to the creation myth, more precisely to the heavenly and earthly spaces (Mršević Radović, 2008: 38–39).

¹⁰ The term phraseological unit denotes the phraseologism in a narrower sense (Vulović 2015: 21).

Such phraseological units show that the entrance to a heavenly world or an underworld is rooted in the consciousness of Serbian speakers, and we could assume the same for the Greek speakers. Apart from the religious context, we detect the image schema of standing on the doorstep, or passing through the door threshold: *είναι στα πρόθυρα / στο κατώφλι του θανάτου / biti na pragu smrti*, ‘be on the doorstep of death’. Moreover, the image schema of having a passport in order to transcend to the afterlife as if traveling to a foreign country, crossing boundaries is conspicuous in the following examples: *παίρνει διαβατήριο για τον άλλο κόσμο*, ‘he is taking his passport to the other world’, *kartu za let na onaj svet*, ‘he is taking his ticket to the other world’.

Overall, even if living beings have no experience of the afterlife, space is a salient factor in the conceptualization of death in both cultures. The conceptualization of Heaven (GOOD IS UP) and Hell (BAD IS DOWN) as two opposite worlds with strict boundaries seems to be the ground of the four metaphoric mappings: DEATH IS DEPARTURE, DEATH IS A JOURNEY, DEATH IS A FINAL DESTINATION and DEATH IS CROSSING A BOUNDARY.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Summing up, we could assume that the ways of conceptualizing death and expressing oneself in Greek and in Serbian coincide. Within the framework of Cognitive Linguistics this can be justified based on the fact that the reasoning of the people is similar, and in addition to this, to a great degree the folklore is entrenched with a common religion, Orthodox Christianity.

The collected material shows that the abstract concept of death is conceptualized through MOVEMENT, TRAVEL and SPACE (THE OTHER WORLD, EARTH, GRAVE, FLORA), DIVINE BEINGS (GOD, LORD), MYTHOLOGICAL BEINGS (HAROS), COLORS (BLACK) and BOUNDARIES (THIS WORLD / THE OTHER WORLD / THE UNDERWORLD / EARTH / HEAVEN). These source domains indicate the fact that the conceptualization of death as movement and realization of a different state takes place mainly through the cognitive mechanism of metaphor. The conceptual metaphors that are dominant in both languages are DEATH IS A FINAL DESTINATION and DEATH IS A JOURNEY, followed by the conceptual metaphor DEATH IS CROSSING A BOUNDARY where a small discrepancy is found in the number of the recorded Greek and Serbian expressions (the Serbian outweigh the Greek ones).

Based on these results, we confirm the initial hypothesis that the notion of death is understood as course through space; a course that begins from a known place, more precisely, from this earthly world. On the other hand, the location of

the final destination is not specified since it is unknown. Movement is motivated by the conceptual metaphor DEATH IS DEPARTURE. The understanding of death as traveling through space (even towards a specific destination according to religion – Heaven or Hell) is structured through the conceptual metaphor DEATH IS A JOURNEY. Hence, we see that the belief that the soul continues to exist after death is imbued with the belief in divine beings to which the soul travels to; death is manifested as the confrontation of man's immortal soul with God.

It is also important to note that a considerable number of Serbian phraseological units in relation to the Greek ones was lexicalized using the lexeme *earth*, as well as the lexeme *grave* which is seen as a resting place (DEATH IS A FINAL DESTINATION). This depiction also shows the dual way of conceiving the world: life and death, rendering the conceptual metaphor DEATH IS CROSSING A BOUNDARY catalytic. In relation to this, it is observed that in order to talk about death in Serbian the binary syntagmatic pair of *this* and *the other world* is used, while in the Greek the pair *up and down* (world) is employed.

Additionally, in our search we came across a variety of other metaphoric expressions, which reflect different mappings such as DEATH IS SLEEP (*Κοιμήθηκε* 'he slept'), DEATH IS LIBERATION (*Συγχωρήθηκε / συγχωρέθηκε* 'he was forgiven') (Theodoropulu 2008), THE BODY IS A CONTAINER (*αφήνω τα κόκαλά μου / τα κοκαλάκια μου*, 'I left my bones', *uspela se duša na nebo* 'his soul flew towards the sky', THE BODY IS A CONDUIT (Kanakis 2003). This shows that the domain of death triggers metaphorical thought and provides room for further research.

As far as the stimulus of metaphorical thinking is concerned, religion plays a major role. However, Graves (1960) underline that Greek culture was significantly influenced not only by the Christian religion, but by mythology as well.

The four metaphorical mappings enclose old folk beliefs and principles of Orthodox Christianity, which contribute to the formation of the identity of the specific communities. The four mappings project more similarities than discrepancies in the phraseological units presented. Moreover, many phrases function as euphemisms both in the Serbian and the Greek-speaking communities respectively. All of the above suggests the universality of the way these two Balkan languages describe death. The minor differences complete the ethnographic identities of both communities, which most of all embrace death with hope and dignity and attribute to it a divine power. Overall, the findings show that death may signal the end, but at the same time it signifies the liberation from the bonds of mortal existence and the path to eternity.

LITERATURE

Dictionaries

- Babinjotis 2011:** Γ. Μπαμπινιώτης, *Ετυμολογικό Λεξικό της Νέας Ελληνικής Γλώσσας, Ιστορία των λέξεων*, Εκδόσεις: Κέντρο Λεξικολογίας.
- Balać/Stojanović 2002:** Α. Балаћ, Μ. Стојановић, *Грчко-српски речник: Ελληνο-σερβικό λεξικό*, Βеоград: Завод за уџбенике и наставна средства.
- Kriaras 1995:** Ε. Κριαράς, *Νέο ελληνικό λεξικό της σύγχρονης δημοτικής γλώσσας, γραπτής και προφορικής*, Αθήνα: Εκδοτική Αθηνών.
- Marković 2001:** Α. Marković, *Srpsko-grčki rečnik: Σερβο-ελληνικό λεξικό*, Αθήνα: Εκδόσεις Μιχάλη Σιδέρη.
- Matešić 1982:** J. Matešić, *Frazeološki rječnik hrvatskoga ili srpskoga jezika*, Zagreb: Iro Školska knjiga.
- RMS 1967–1976:** *Речник српскохрватског књижевног језика I–VI*, Нови Сад-Загреб: Матица српска, Матица хрватска.
- RSANU 1959–:** *Речник српскохрватског књижевног и народног језика, I–XX*, Βеоград: Институт за српски језик САНУ.
- RSJ 2007:** *Речник српског језика*, Нови Сад: Матица српска.
- Vlahopoulos 2007:** Σ. Βλαχόπουλος, *Λεξικό των ιδιωτισμών της νέας ελληνικής*, Αθήνα: Κλειδάριθμος.

References

- Beker 1973:** E. Becker, *The Denial of Death*, New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Bošković 1974:** R. Bošković, *Teorija prirodne filozofije, Dopune I-II, O prostoru i vremenu*, Zagreb, Liber.
- Damaris et al 2012:** G. Damaris Nyakoe, P. M. Matu, and D. O. Ongarora, Conceptualization of „Death is a Journey“ and „Death as Rest“ in EkeGusii Euphemism, *Theory and Practice in Language Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 7, 1452–1457.
- Densiger/Svicer 2014:** B. Dancygier, E. Sweetser, *Figurative Language*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dirven et al 2012:** R. Dirven, F. Polzenhagen, H. G. Wolf, Cognitive Linguistics, Ideology, and Critical Discourse Analysis, *The Oxford Handbook of Cognitive Linguistics*, 1222–1240.

- Drobnjak/Gudurić 2011:** Д. Дробњак, С. Гудурић, Фраземи из семантичког поља „смрт” у француском и српском језику, *Зборник Матице српске за филологију и лингвистику*, LIV/2, 237–246.
- Gatambuki et al 2018:** M. Gatambuki Gathigia, R. Wang, M. Shen, C. Tirado, O. Tsaregorodtseva, O. Khatin-Zadeh, R. Minervino, F. Marmolejo-Ramos, A Cross-Linguistic Study of Metaphors of Death, *Cognitive Linguistic Studies*, Volume 5, Issue 2, 359–375.
- Gerland 1985:** R. Garland, *The Greek Way of Death*, Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press.
- Giel 2013:** K. Giel, Eufemistični frazemi kao izraz jezičkog tabua (na primjeru frazema značenjskog polja 'smrt' u hrvatskom jeziku), *Strani jezici*, 42, 85–116.
- Grevs 1960:** R. Grevs, *Grčki mitovi*, Beograd: Familet.
- Halam et al 1999:** E. Hallam, J. Hockey, G. Howarth, *Beyond the Body: Death and Social Identity*, London: Routledge.
- Hampe 2008:** B. Hampe, Image schemas in Cognitive Linguistics: Introduction, in: B. Hampe (ed.), *From Perception to Meaning*, Berlin, New York: De Gruyter Mouton, 1–14.
- Janakis 1996:** Γ. Γιαννάκης, Μερικές μεταφορικές εκφράσεις και ευφημισμοί για το θάνατο στην αρχαία ελληνική και την Ινδοευρωπαϊκή, *Δωδώνη – Φιλολογία*, 25, 139–158.
- Jovanović 1992:** Б. Јовановић, *Српска књига мртвих*, Ниш: Градина.
- Jung 1984:** C. G. Jung, *Psihologija i alkemija*, Zagreb.
- Kanakis 2003:** C. Canakis, Metaphors of a Body Meant to Die, *Gramma: Journal of Theory and Criticism*, 11, 13–29.
- Kevečič 2000:** Z. Kövecses, *Metaphor and Emotion: Language, Culture, and Body in Human Feeling*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kevečič 2002:** Z. Kövecses, *Metaphor: A Practical Introduction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kovačević/Sinani 2014:** I. Kovačević, D. Sinani, Antropologija smrti ili nova antropogija i religijski kompleks vezan za smrt, *Etnoantropološki problemi*, 9 (4), 1055–1072.
- Lejkof 1987:** G. Lakoff, *Women, Fire, and Dangerous Things: What Categories Reveal About the Mind*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Lejkof 1993:** G. Lakoff, The contemporary theory of metaphor, in: A. Ortony (ed.), *Metaphor and Thought*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 202–252.

- Lejkof/Džonson 1980:** G. Lakoff, M. Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Lejkof/Džonson 1999:** G. Lakoff, M. Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and its Challenge to Western Thought*, New York: Basic Books.
- Lejkof/Tarner 1989:** G. Lakoff, M. Turner, *More Than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Leondari 2015:** Α. Λεονταρή, *Παιδιά και έφηβοι σε έναν κόσμο που αλλάζει*, Αθήνα: ΕΣΤΙΑ.
- Mršević Radović 2008:** Д. Мршевић-Радовић, *Фразеологија и национална култура*, Београд: Друштво за српски језик и књижевност Србије.
- Opašić/Gregorović 2010:** M. Opašić, M. Gregorović, *Smrt u hrvatskoj frazeologiji, Croatica et Slavica Iadertina*, VI, 55–72.
- Pavlović 1978:** B. Pavlović, *Filozofija prirode*, Zagreb.
- Teodoropulu 2008:** Μ. Θεοδοροπούλου, *Έφυγε...: Η μεταφορά ενός αμετάκλητου (;) αποχωρισμού, σε: Μ. Θεοδοροπούλου (επιμ.), Θέρμη και φως, Θεσσαλονίκη: Κέντρο Ελληνικής Γλώσσας*, 169–182.
- Uzčališkan 2003:** Ş. Özçalışkan, *In a Caravanserai with Two Doors I am Walking Day and Night: Metaphors of Death and Life in Turkish*, *Cognitive Linguistics*, 14 (4), 281–320.
- Vilhelm 1936:** *Wilhelm von Humboldts Weg zur Sprachforschung 1785–1801*, Berlin and Rostock: Junker & Dünnhaupt.
- Vulović 2015:** Н. Вуловић, *Српска фразеологија и религија: Лингвокултуролошка истраживања*, Београд: Институт за српски језик САНУ.

ФИГУРАТИВНИ ЈЕЗИК СМРТИ У ГРЧКОМ И СРПСКОМ ЈЕЗИКУ

Резиме

Наша студија бавила се испитивањем фигуративног језика из домена смрти у грчком и српском језику, с циљем да расветли феномен смрти, као и различите начине концептуализације смрти у контрастираним језицима. Страх од смрти и жеља да се превазиђу границе телесног условили су употребу разних метафора, читавих метафоричних израза, како би се о појму смрти говорило на један еуфемизиран начин. Свака култура је на својствен начин појам смрти учинила друштвено прихватљивијим, колико је то унутар одређене културе било могуће. У фокусу рада нашло се „вечно

путовање”, „путовање без повратка”, а корпус смо ограничили на метафоричне, идиоматичне и еуфемистичне изразе који су мотивисани појмовним метафорама СМРТ ЈЕ ОДЛАЗАК, СМРТ ЈЕ ПУТОВАЊЕ, СМРТ ЈЕ КРАЈЊЕ ОДРЕДИШТЕ И СМРТ ЈЕ ПРЕЛАЗАК ГРАНИЦЕ. Емпиријски део истраживања обухватио је: а) испитивање речничких дефиниција лексема *θάνατος*, *смрт*, ‘death’; *πεθαίνω*, *умрети*, ‘die’ и *Αδης*, *Хад*, ‘Ades’; као и б) ексцерпирање метафоричних израза у чијој позадинској слици се јавља искључиво кретање. Грађу за корпус смо ексцерпирани из монолингвалних речника опште намене и монолингвалних фразеолошких речника грчког (Kriaras 1995; Vlahopoulos 2007; Babinjotis 2011) и српског језика (RSJ; RMS; RSANU; Matešić 1982; Marković 2001; Balać/Stojanović 2002). Такође смо га употпунили изразима који нису документовани у лексикографској грађи, али су веома чести у свакодневној употреби, и могу се наћи у интернет изворима. Како је посебан акценат стављен на проналажење сличности и наглашавање разлика приликом концептуализације појма смрти у оквиру грчке и српске језичке заједнице, одредили смо се за концептуалну анализу као најпогоднију. Будући да су хришћански погледи на свет недвосмислено утицали на обликовање заједничких погледа на свет, тј. заједничке слике света, потврђена је употреба готово истог метафоричног језика за лексикализовање апстрактног процеса умирања. Како се сложеност народне религије огледа у синкретичком споју хришћанства и паганства, не чуди то што је старогрчка митологија нашла своје уточиште у разним народним обичајима и веровањима, што се одразило и на језичком плану (*τον πήρε ο Χάρος*, ‘Charos took him’, *Τον βρήκε ο Χάρος*, ‘Charos found him’, *μαύρος καβαλάρης*, ‘black rider’). Међутим, у оквиру српске народне религије сачувани су само бледи трагови старих словенских божанстава након примања хришћанства, док су веровања у одређене натприродне силе постала битан чинилац религијског идентитета заједнице (*Господ је позвао / призвао кога к себи*, ‘God called somebody to come to him’; *Бог је узео / позвао / примио кога к себи*, ‘God took / called / accepted somebody with him’; *отићи Богу на истину*, ‘go to God to the Truth’). Стога смо констатовали универзалност метафоричног мапирања у оба балканска језика с основном разликом која је, како смо истакли, узрокована особеностима грчке и српске културе.

Кључне речи: домен смрти, метафоре, теорија концептуалне метафоре, грчки, српски.

Ивана С. Милојевић
Μάρθα Π. Λαζλοπούλου