Death Euphemism in English and Arabic: A Conceptual Metaphorization Approach

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Abstract

This study investigates and compares the conceptualization of death euphemism in English and Arabic as embodied in various euphemistic metaphors using the Conceptual Metaphor Theory initiated by Lakoff and Johnson (1980, 2003). It has been found, based on 442 euphemistic expressions in both languages (192 from Arabic, and 250 from English) that both languages use 10 strikingly similar complex conceptual metaphors to mitigate the effect of death, emanating from blending primary metaphors with cultural assumptions. The two languages share the common human experience of avoiding mentioning death by means of using identical euphemistic conceptual metaphors; however, both languages differ as regards the emphasis, details and range of the complex metaphor. Evidence based on data analysis supports the view about the universality of euphemistic conceptual metaphors.

Keywords: Conceptual metaphor theory, Euphemism, Arabic, English

1. Introduction

There is always a feeling of discomfort at mentioning harmful and embarrassing words to which society is often sensitive (Crystal, 2003, p. 173); therefore, language has its own ways of avoiding such taboos. The process of substitution where the offensive or unacceptable words are substituted by more appropriate ones has come to be known as 'euphemism'. In its modern sense, euphemism refers to "the use of a mild or vague or periphrastic expression as a substitute for blunt precision or disagreeable use" (Fowler, 1957, quoted in Holder 1987, p. vii).   In this vein, euphemisms can be seen as "roundabout, toning down expressions" (Algeo and Pyles, 2004, p. 235), a substitution process which causes replacements such as the following: casket (coffin), fall asleep (die), push up the daisies (be dead), the ultimate sacrifice (be killed), under the weather (ill), and many others.

Euphemism is considered a linguistically universal trait. Almost all languages have euphemistic expressions, particularly employed to avoid vulgarisms (Mashak, 2012, p. 202). However, it is a matter of convention which types of words and expressions should be avoided. According to Trudgill (1986, p. 30), English-speaking communities use strongest euphemism to avoid explicit mentioning of sex and excretion, while in Norway the mention of the devil represents the target of euphemism. Compared with Roman Catholic culture in which euphemism   mostly relates to religion, euphemism in traditional Africa, according to Mbaya (2002, p. 224), relates to words for sex, parts of the body, death, marriage, kinship relations, certain birds' and animals' names.

Death and dying are among the most commonly referenced semantic fields in linguistic discussions of euphemism (Hughes, 2000, p. 43-43; Mey, 2001, p. 33-34). There are various reasons why people want to keep away from touching upon the topic of death, probably the most cited one is that of relevance to fear, a deeply seated human instinct; people are afraid for losing their loved ones and its consequences. They are afraid of what would happen after death, mysterious life and hidden destiny, evil spirits, which strikes fear into their hearts (Allan and Burridge, 2006, p. 222).

The most common human strategy to cope with this fear of death is by making no mention of it or replacing it by other expressions. Although some people do not openly express their fear of death, they try to protect themselves by making some gestures such as a finger-cross or a charm or wood knock (Allan and Burridge, 2006, p. 203), and may try to use euphemistic metaphorical expressions to hide the unpleasant things and to heal their wounds (Fan, 2006).

The Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) as set forth by Lakoff and Johnson (1980; 2003) provides a very useful tool for analyzing such a linguistic phenomenon. The main point of the theory is that our conceptual system is based on a group of mental metaphorical images that determine our way of thinking and influence our experience of the world. This section explains the main tenets of the theory and how it relates to euphemism.

First of all, Lakoff and Johnson see metaphor as a central component in our thought and language. While for most people it is merely "a device of the poetic imagination and rhetorical flourish—a matter of extraordinary rather than ordinary language…as

characteristic of language alone, a matter of words rather than thought or action" (2003, p. 4), for Lakoff and Johnson it is prevalent in everyday life and is not merely a linguistic device; it is key to thought and action. Conceptual system plays a key role in defining our everyday realities and our concepts are based on metaphors, hence "what we experience, and what we do every day is very much a matter of metaphor" (p. 4).

Lakoff and Johnson elaborate on what it means for a concept to be metaphorical and they illustrate their point, giving many examples. To mention only one, they tackle the concept ARGUMENT and the conceptual metaphor ARGUMENT IS WAR. The metaphor is demonstrated in daily life in such expressions as: your claims are "*indefensible*"; he *"attacked every weak point" in* my argument; his criticisms were "*right on target*"; I *"demolished"* his argument; I've never *"won"* an argument with him; you disagree? Okay, *"shoot!";* if you use that *"strategy",* he'll *"wipe you out".* He *"shot down"* all *of my* arguments. Those expressions are not merely words of language; they actually represent realities of life that are witnessed in terms of the facts that we 'win or lose arguments', we see the person we are arguing with as "an opponent", we "attack" our challenger's "positions" and we "defend" our own, we "gain" and "lose" ground, etc. (p. 5).

According to this theory there are two domains for conceptual metaphors. The source domain, the one from which we draw the metaphorical expressions; for example, with the expression LOVE IS JOURNEY, JOURNEY is the source domain, (which is one domain of experience), while LOVE is the target domain that we try to unravel. The process of mapping across those conceptual domains puts the two elements together (LOVE and JOURNEY) so that one can see the common ground, similarities, resemblances and parallels that may exist between the source and the target. Metaphor as asserted by Lakoff and Johnson is primarily based on this mapping and language is only secondary. From this standpoint, metaphor is defined as "a cross-domain mapping in the conceptual system" (Lakoff 2003, p. 203).

As Fernandez explains (2006, p. 101-130), the mapping process that occurs with metaphors such as TO DIE IS TO SLEEP involves mapping our perception of sleep onto our perception of death and fulfils a euphemistic role where the source domain mitigates the target domain. To illustrate this point, it can be said that in the euphemistic mechanism, the euphemistic expression (source) replaces (mapped onto) the taboo expressions (target) and, in the process, the positive aspects of the target domain are highlighted while the negative aspects are hidden (Fan, 2006, p. 72). Lakoff and Johnson admit the possibility of highlighting and hiding, suggesting that metaphors provide a coherent structure, highlighting some things and hiding others.

The avoidance of mentioning the negative aspect of death creates multiple conceptual metaphors in both English and Arabic; this study explores such metaphors and compares how death is euphemistically represented in each language. The euphemistic metaphors of treating death in both English and Arabic seem to reflect shared generic metaphors and yet different specifics of emphasis and attributes that belong to each individual language and culture.

The euphemistic similarities and differences between Arabic and English in terms of conceptual metaphors normally take us into discussing what has been referred to in the

cognitive literature as "primary" and "complex" metaphors. Cognitive literature differentiates between two types of conceptual metaphors: primary metaphors and complex metaphors (see Grady, 1997a, 1997b; Gibbs, Lima, & Francozo, 2004; Kovecses, 2005; Lakoff & Johnson, 1999, 2003). While primary metaphors are based on our common bodily experience and are more likely to be universal, complex metaphors blend primary metaphors and cultural convictions and assumptions together and, hence, are culture-specific. Complex metaphors differ from one culture to another since cultural information may differ from one ambience to another (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003, p. 257; see also Yu, 2008 for discussion on metaphors, body and culture).

Grady (1997b, p. 288) asserts that primary metaphors "have the widest cross-linguistic distribution. Since they arise directly from experience – and in many cases, from the bodily experience of the world shared by all humans – they are more likely to be universal than the more complex metaphors which are combinations of them." Lakoff and Johnson (1999, p. 54) illustrate what is meant by primary metaphor by explaining that a dimensional metaphor such as MORE IS UP is embodied in three ways. First in terms of our embodied functioning in the world, we witness many cases in which we systematically see MORE is associated with UP. Second, the body's sensorimotor system constitutes the source domain from which the metaphor is drawn. Finally, the correspondence between the source and target domains of the metaphor is established in the body via neural connections. Other primary metaphors based on bodily experience include PURPOSES ARE DESTINATIONS and ACTIONS ARE MOTIONS, which are likely to be universal since we, as humans, have almost the same bodily and mental structure and we live in similar environments (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003, p. 257).

As mentioned above, complex metaphors blend primary metaphors and cultural assumptions. Lakoff and Johnson (1999, p. 60–61) explain that a complex metaphor such as A PURPOSEFUL LIFE IS A JOURNEY is made up of the cultural convictions PEOPLE SHOULD HAVE PURPOSES IN LIFE and PEOPLE SHOULD ACT SO AS TO ACHIEVE THEIR PURPOSES added to the body-based primary metaphors PURPOSES ARE DESTINATIONS and ACTIONS ARE MOTIONS.

The distinction between primary metaphors and complex metaphors is utilized in this study to explain various aspects of the convergence and divergence of some metaphorical structures in the data. It is worth noting here that all the primary metaphors referred to in the data analysis section (section 3) are based on Grady (1997 a) unless cited otherwise.

The current study is worth attempting since, to my knowledge, no work has been done on comparing English and Arabic euphemistic expressions within the Conceptual Metaphor Theory. Literature on either conceptual metaphor or Arabic and English death euphemism is much and varied but linking both is not attested. Previous work has only focused on euphemistic strategies and the linguistic aspects of euphemism and hedging but failed to address the conceptual aspects of euphemistic metaphors of death, particularly in Arabic. The current work also introduces fresh data from Arabic that has never been dealt with in previous works on the topic. In addition, English and Arabic are two languages that belong to two

different language families and two different cultural affiliations, so it is worthwhile investigating how both languages conceptually flesh out the euphemism of death.

2. Data and Methods

The study is based on a pool of data collected from 5 works in both languages (2 for English, 3 for Arabic). The primary source for English is R.W. Holder's work published in 2002, *How Not to Say What You Mean: A Dictionary of Euphemisms* (3rd Edition). This is a comprehensive work that draws on a number of dictionaries, books, quotations from various people, and live interviews and encounters with common people and famous writers.   The other source is Hugh Rawson's *Dictionary of Euphemisms and Other Doubletalk*. This work includes many euphemistic expressions elicited from various sources, which makes it an encyclopedic book, fit for our purposes of detecting the overall euphemistic conceptual image. This work consists of a number of euphemisms that have been used in famous books and newspapers. It comprises a good record of people's private talk *(e.g. The White House Transcripts, by Richard M. Nixon, et al., introduction by R. W. Apple, Jr., Bantam Books, 1974)* and excerpts from The *New York Times*; therefore, this source is a good representation of modern euphemistic expressions in English.

The English data is mainly adapted from Holder's work; however many examples found in Holder's are also repeated in Rawson's work. Data specifically adapted from Rawson's, not found in Holder's is referred to as (RN); the other English data is Holder's.

Since Arabic has no specialized dictionaries of euphemism, the researcher had to go through some sources other than dictionaries to make a corpus of euphemism. The Arabic data includes works that, despite being written in Classical Arabic some centuries ago, still vividly offer euphemistic expressions that are commonly and widely used in Modern Standard Arabic till now; euphemistic expressions in those sources that are no longer used are excluded from the data. The first work is *Al-kinayah wa T-tareed* [Metonymy and Hedging] authored by Abu-Mansour Ismail Ath-Tha'aliby, a renowned Arabic philologist (born 350 AH. died 428 AH). It was first compiled in 400 AH/1009 AD and then later revised and edited by many scholars; the edition used in this study was edited by Faraj Al-Hiwaar in 1995 and published by Dar Al-Maarif Liltibaaa wa N-nashr, Suusa, Tunisia. The book is a compilation of quotations from various sources including allusions, metonymies and euphemistic expressions. Again the data elicited from this source is still used in Modern Standard Arabic; all data found archaic in the source is excluded.

The second source is *Al-muntakhab min Kinayaat Al-ʕudabaa wa ʔisharaat Al-bulaghaa* [A Selected Collection of the   Metonymies of   Men of Letters   and Allusions of Rhetoricians] authored by the renowned scholar and literary theorist of the Arabic language Abdul-Qahir Al-Jurjani (died 1078 AD.). The book was first published in 1908 in Cairo, Egypt by Dar As-sa'ada Publishing House and was edited by Mohammed Badr-uldeen. The book is a collection of metonymies and allusions in prose and poetry made by renowned poets and writers. The metonymies and allusions mentioned in the book are arranged under different headings and include a good number of euphemistic expressions in various fields. As mentioned above, the euphemisms elicited from this work are still in currency and

common in Standard Arabic; outdated expressions are excluded.

The third reference in Arabic is Ibrahim Al-Yaziji's *Nujʕat Al-raaʾid wa Shurʕat Al-waarid fi L-mutaraadif wa L-mutaawarid (The Spring of the Seeker in Synonyms and* Associations) (1985) (3rd ed.).The book is a relatively modern Arabic thesaurus that includes synonyms and expressions arranged under various thematic headings. The book includes a wealth of expressions that are commonly used on different occasions including death.

The three Arabic sources are referred to in the analysis part as **JUR** (Data from Al-Jurjani), **YA** (Data from Al-Yaziji), and **TH** (Data from Ath-Tha'aliby). The translations of the expressions adapted from these works are all mine. It should be noted that the translation given is literal (Lit.) so as to make the euphemistic expressions as close as possible to the original while still making sense in English.

The word "Arabic" used in the data refers to the Modern Standard Arabic (MSA), a version of Arabic used in the Arab countries in written as well as some spoken contexts, e.g. books, magazines, newspapers, radio, television, etc. Being of considerable prestige, this language is used more often than not in formal spoken contexts such as religious sermons, political speeches and court proceedings. It is also used in death euphemisms, since Arabic often resorts to standard expressions, such as the ones used in the data, rather than to colloquialisms.

The main reason the researcher collected data from the sources above is that their encyclopedic nature fits the purpose of the study, which is to capture the overall metaphorical conceptualization image of death euphemism in both languages. Reading the generic nature of conceptual metaphors requires reliance on panoramic works.

Given the qualitative orientation of this work and its conceptual nature, the methodology employed is based on the descriptive-comparative method and content analysis. Data for this study was collected from the above sources, where a complete survey was made for each of these works focusing only on what relates to death euphemism; a total of 442 euphemistic expressions were collected (192 Arabic expressions and 250 English expressions) and thematically classified into topics that represent generic conceptual metaphors. The data elicited is dealt with within the framework of Conceptual Metaphor Theory as set forth by Lakoff and Johnson (1980, 2003) which methodologically provides a useful tool that analyzes the metaphorical structure of different domains of knowledge and explain how the mapping process unfolds for the euphemistic expressions (cf. introduction part). Although an earlier work has been done on death and life domains in English (Lakoff and Turner, 1989), this study takes a fresh look at death in English with particular emphasis on euphemistic terms and in comparison to Arabic.

3. Data Analysis

Based on the data collected, the following section analyzes the conceptual metaphors that represent death euphemism in both languages. It is strikingly amazing to see that both languages almost reflect identical metaphors to avoid death. The following metaphors have been detected and will be analyzed: DEATH IS A BETTER LOCATION, DEATH IS LIFE,

DEATH IS A SUMMONER, DEATH IS PAYING A DEBT, DEATH IS THE FINAL DESTINATION, DEATH IS A JOURNEY OF DEPARTURE, DEATH IS LOSS, DEATH IS REGROUPING AND JOINING, DEATH IS SURRENDER AND SUBMISSION, and DEATH IS SLEEP.

3.1 DEATH IS A BETTER LOCATION

The euphemistic substitutes for death in both languages conceptualize death as a "*BETTER LOCATION*", that is death is represented as a 'place' in which someone is 'better' than he/she currently is. In English, death is depicted as a "better country", "better state", and "better world". It is actually a move to a "happy dispatch", a "happy release" where you can occupy a "happier seat"; it is even "happy hunting grounds". English euphemistically delineates death as some sort of "exchange", where you "exchange this life for a better" and "take refuge in a better world". In that 'better' existence, "troubles in this world are over" and it is "peace at last" and you are "relieved of your sufferings".

In Arabic, a dead person is also envisaged as existing in a "better" situation in terms of being favored by Allah (God), as we see in the euphemistic metaphor "ʔistaʔθara l-laahu bih" (TH) (Lit. Allah favored him). The meaning of "betterness" is sometimes embodied in the sense of Allah's "selecting" the dead person to be to near to Him, and this meaning is repeated over and over, as in: "ʔiSTafaahu l-laahu lijiwaarih" (YA) (Lit. Allah selected him to be near to Him.); "ʔixtaara lahu l-laahu maa ʕindah" (YA) (Lit. Allah has chosen for him what He has); "ʔasʕadahu l-laahu bijiwarih" (TH) (Lit. Allah pleased him by bringing him near); "naqalahu l-laahu ʔilaa daari riDwaanih wa maħalla γufraanih" (TH) (Lit. Allah moved him to the dwelling place of His favor and the abode of His forgiveness); "naqlahu l-laahu ʔilaa daari karamatih" (YA) (Lit. Allah has selected for him to move into the House of his Honor); "ʔixtaara l-laahu lahu n-nuqlata min daari l-bawaari ʔilaa maħalli l-ʔabraar" (TH) (Lit. Allah has selected for him to move from the abode of perishing to the abode of the pious). Even the last moments of death are seen as a pleasure: "kutibat lahu saʕaadatu l-muħtaDar" (TH) (Lit. He has been destined to the pleasure of dying). Death in Arabic is, then, a transition to a "better" state.

The euphemistic effect generated by the conceptual metaphor here is based on replacing the target domain, the hateful word of death, by a source domain expression representing a "better state" condition, or, to use Lakoff's and Johnson's terms, the source domain, (better state), is mapped onto the target domain (death). The euphemistic mitigating effect, therefore, is generated by mapping the source domain onto the target domain.

The observed similarities that we see here emanate from the primary metaphor STATES ARE LOCATIONS shared by both languages and are reported in the cognitive literature to have universal application where we see the state of death is reinterpreted in spatial embodiments: ""better world", "better country", "happy hunting grounds"; Arabic has the expressions "daaru karaamatih" (Lit. the House of his Honor); maħallu l-ʔabraar" (lit. the abode of the pious). The complex metaphor in this section blends the bodily primary metaphor with the subjective experience of each culture. However, the differences lie in the specifics of the source domain of complex metaphor DEATH IS A BETTER LOCATION. While Arabic and English

generically euphemize death conceptually in terms of being a "*BETTER LOCATION*", the emphasis for the Arabic specific metaphor lies in being close to Allah, while the English metaphor focuses on a better state in terms of being more peaceful, relief of suffering, and reposing.

3.2 DEATH IS LIFE

The collected data also reveals that death is euphemistically expressed as being "*LIFE*". This is attested in English via the euphemistic expressions "life assurance", "life cover", "life office", "life policy". Death is generally associated with going below earth, being buried and consumed by worms; however, the euphemistic touch refers to life in "up" terms. It is not strange to see death as movement towards an "up" position where heaven is associated with the heavenly kingdom of God. This metaphor is detected in English, where death is rendered as a "higher state (of existence)" and "upstairs"; experiencing death is to "remain above ground" and to be in a heavenly world where you can be "in heaven", "in Abraham's bosom" and "in the arms of Jesus". As for Arabic, death is sometimes seen as a form of life; those who fall martyrs are never to be called 'dead' because according to the Quranic verse *walaa taħsabanna lla ðiina qutiluu fi sabiili l-laahi amwaatan bal ?aħyaa?un ʕinda rabbihim yurzaquun* "Think not of those who are slain in Allah's way as dead. Nay, they live, finding their sustenance in the presence of their Lord" (The Quran, Surat Aal-Imran, verse 169; translated by Abdullah Yusuf Ali, 1938). Moreover, a dead person is envisaged as having gone "up", as reflected by the euphemistic expression "rafaʕahu l-laahu ?ilayh" **(TH)** (Lit. Allah raised him (the deceased) to Him).

The new state of death is living in a new location, which is seen as another form of life. This is in tandem with the primary metaphor STATES ARE LOCATION. The euphemistic effect is brought about by considering 'death' to be another location where life is resumed. English seems to delineate more attributes and specifics of life so that guarding against death is sketched in reverse terms as "*life* assurance", "*life* cover", *"life* office","*life* policy". The euphemistic significance of death is not regarded as being earthly life but as an "up" life. English represents going up through different angles, "upstairs" "above ground", and portrays in more detail who the deceased will be up with: "in Abraham's bosom", "in the arms of Jesus". Arabic only refers to the deceased person as living in a higher type of life, and the "up" concept is embodied merely via the verb "rafaʕa" "raise" without offering further detail. Although the description of the other life in the Garden is illustrated more often elsewhere in the Arabic religious writings, death euphemistic expressions focus on life as euphemism for death only in general terms. The difference between the two languages, therefore, seems to lie in the metaphoric range, i.e. the detailed versus scanty delineation of the specifics of the complex metaphor.

3.3 DEATH IS A SUMMONER

In some cases the source domain of "the call" is mapped onto that of "death" in order to relieve the horrifying effect of uttering the word of death. Mentioning death is masked, while the expression of "summoning" is revealed. Numerous references to this have been used in

English so that death itself is "the call" and "calling a soul". The dead person is said to have been "called", "called away", "called home", "called to higher service"; in the end, a person has to inevitably "answer the call". We see a similar pattern in Arabic, where death is euphemistically replaced by "call": "duʕiya   faʔjaaba" (JUR) (Lit. He has been summoned and he answered the call); "labba nidaaʔa rabbih" (YA) (Lit. He answered his Lord's call.)

The complex metaphor of DEATH IS A SUMMONER is based on the bodily primary metaphor CHANGE OF STATE IS CHANGE OF LOCATION; the act of summoning calls for somebody to move to another location, and it is seen as being a regular step that everybody has to undergo. However, cultural assumptions differ in terms of the specifics of the summoning act. While 'call' in English is construed in terms of illustrating the where the soul should go (i.e., "called away", "called home", "called to higher service"), Arabic focuses on the initiator of summoning, e.g. "labba nidaaʔa rabbih" (Lit. He answered his Lord's call), and answering the order, e.g. "duʕiya faʔajaaba" (Lit. He has been summoned and he answered the call). Furthermore, for the complex metaphor "DEATH IS A SUMMONER", English focuses on numerous features of this call. While Arabic employs the generic terms, "duʕiya" "called" or "nidaaʔ" "a call",   English adds more specifics to the metaphor showing the nature of the call, "calling a soul", and its place and function, "called home", and "called to higher service".

3.4 DEATH IS PAYING A DEBT

Death effect is sometimes relieved through mapping the source domain "debt" onto the target domain "death". English has metaphorical expressions that euphemistically replace death by "debt"; someone who died is euphemistically said to pay something: "pay nature's debt", "pay nature's last debt", "pay the supreme sacrifice", "pay the supreme price". Death is the time when "bonds of life being gradually dissolved". Death is sometimes seen as a debt the others owe us; due date is a time when you "cash in your checks", "cash in your chips".

In Arabic, mentioning death is also avoided and replaced by "debt", so that the source domain of the metaphor (i.e. debt) is mapped onto the target domain of death. Debt is introduced in Arabic as being "naħb" (debt) as in "qaDaa   naħbah" (**JUR**) (Lit. He paid off his debt) and "ramaahu l-laahu bidaynih" (**JUR**) (Lit. his debt is due according to Allah's decree).

The complex metaphor in this section is induced by the primary metaphor EVENTS ARE ACTIONS, based on the correlation between events and interaction. Death (event) is seen as an inevitable debt that has to be paid (action). However, the complex conceptual metaphor is culturally given more account in English. It is not just debt, but it is "nature's debt"; the price to be paid is "supreme"; "checks" and "chips" are to be "cashed". Reference in Arabic is only to paying off one's debt: "qaDaa naħbah" (Lit. He paid off his debt); no further specifics are given about the debt.

3.5 DEATH IS FINAL DESTINATION

This metaphor involves mapping the perception of "final destination" onto that of "death", thus fulfilling the euphemistic function. The metaphor here is in tandem with the primary metaphors CHANGE IS MOTION and CHANGE OF STATE IS A CHANGE OF

LOCATION. The change from life to death is seen as a journey into final destination; it is a move from the life of here and now to the hereafter.

English encompasses a number of metaphors about death being replaced by the "end". Somebody on the verge of death is said to be "at the last day" , "at his last" ; to die is to "breathe one's   last", to reach "last resting place", and to experience the very "last" thing, e.g. "last round-up" "last trump" "the last call", " the last debt", "last journey", "last voyage". To die is to "cease breathing", "bring one's heart to its final", "come to a sticky end", to "finish", to "cease to be", to "pause", to "expire", "fade away"; death is "the end" and "the end of the road". A dead person is euphemistically said to be "written out of the script", "off the voting list", and "off-line".

The euphemistic metaphor "end" is also rich in Arabic. It encompasses so many expressions; someone who died is said to have "qaDaa" (YA) (Lit. ended), "?adwaa" (YA) (Lit. finished); a dying person is described also as "ħaana" (YA) (Lit. his right time has come), "qaDaa ?ajalahu" (YA) (Lit. He has completed his appointed lifetime), "?inqaDaa ?ajaluh" (YA) (Lit. His lifetime is over), "taSarrama ?ajaluh" (YA) (Lit. His lifetime is cut off), "taSarrama ħablu ħayaatih" (YA) (Lit. The rope of his life is cut off) (YA), "?inqaDat ?ayyamuh" (YA) (Lit.His days are over), "?inqaDat muddatuh" (YA) (Lit. His term is over); "?inqaDat ?anfaasuh "(Lit. His breaths are over) (YA), "?istawfaa ?anfaasah" (Lit. He completed his breaths", "?istawfaa ?ukulah" (YA) (Lit. He exhausted his livelihood), "?istawfaa ðama?a ħayaatih" (YA) (Lit. He exhausted the thirst of his life)," ðahaba ?ilaa mathwaahu l-?axiir" (Lit. he went off to his last resting place). Death is sometimes seen as a point in time that everybody must get to, hence the euphemistic term "ħiin" (appointed time). The term "ħiin" is profusely used in the data. Someone who died is "?adrakahu ħiinuh" (YA),"wafaahu ħimaamuh" (Lit. His appointed time overtook him),"balaγa l-waSiyyah" (Lit. He reached the time when his will (inheritance will) has to be enforced),"ħalla bihi ?aSdaqu l-mawaaʕiid"(YA) (The most trusted time overtook him). Arabic sometimes refers to the failure of the body organs at the final stage of life to avoid mentioning death, as illustrated by "laʕaqa ?iSbaʕah" (JUR) (He has licked up his finger; "?iSfarrat ?anaamiluh" (JUR) (Lit. His fingertips have yellowed).

As we see for this metaphor, the cultural influence on the primary mapping is quite clear. While emphasis is laid equitably in both languages on the idea of 'lastness', English particularly focuses on death as being the "last" thing and as being removal from a "list". Arabic, on the other hand, focuses on the entity being expired:"?ajal" (lifetime), "ħabl" (rope)," ?anfaas" (breaths) , "muddah" (term), "?ayyam" (days), and the physical symptoms of death as in "laʕaqa ?iSbaʕah" (Lit. He has licked up his finger), and "?iSfarrat ?anaamiluh" (Lit. His fingertips have yellowed).

3.6 DEATH IS A JOURNEY OF DEPARTURE

 The current corpus clearly shows that death is sometimes delineated in English and Arabic as a journey of departure. In English, someone who dies is said to "leave", "depart", "depart this life", "leave the building", "leave the land of the living", "quit", "quit cold", "quit the scene", "quit breathing", "take leave of life", have the "last journey", and the "last voyage"; a dead

person is euphemistically declared to be "no more", "no longer with us". Arabic also euphemizes death as being a journey of departure; a dying person is someone who "maDaa lisabiilih" (YA) (Lit. went his own way), "laħiqa man γabar" (YA) (Lit. caught up with his predecessors), "ðahaba fii sabiili l-quruuni l-xaaliyah" (YA) (Lit. went the way of the people of the old centuries).

The complex metaphor here seems to be motivated by the primary metaphor CHANGE IS MOTION and CHANGE OF STATE IS A CHANGE OF LOCATION. Moving from life to death is seen as an inevitable journey that everyone has to undertake, which softens the horrifying effect of mentioning death.

We also see here a difference in focus for the complex metaphors DEATH IS A JOURNEY OF DEPARTURE based on cultural assumptions; while English focuses on the "leaving" event, Arabic lays special emphasis on "sabiil" (Lit. way) and catching up with one's predecessors "man γabar" (predecessors), and "?al-quruunu l-xaaliyah" (the people of the old centuries).

3.7 DEATH IS LOSS

In English and Arabic, death is softened as being a game; death effect is mitigated, being looked upon as a game lost, a natural result of practising sports in real life. A dead person is someone who is "knocked out"; "struck out", "takes the last count". A dead person is "out of the game" (or "running"); "his race is run" (or" ran the good race"); "take the last (or long) count"; "throw in the sponge", "throw sixes", "throw up the cards"; death itself is the "end of the ball game". In Arabic death is also a game lost to fate; someone who died is depicted as being hunted in a hunting sport:"?aʕlaqahu ħimaamuh" (YA) (Lit. His fate caught him); "?iħtabalahu ħimaamuh"(YA) (Lit. His fate hunted him with a rope).

The loss metaphor in this section is induced by the primary metaphor LIFE IS HEAT IN THE

BODY; DEATH IS LOSS OF IT (see further discussion in Özçaliskan, 2003, p. 297). Losing

one's game is losing the heat in your body and this reflects the act of perishing. We can see here also the role of culture in terms of range and focus. The complex metaphor of DEATH IS LOSS is pictured in English in imagery of sports and games such as boxing and wrestling: "knocked out", "struck out", "takes the last count"; running: "out of the running";"his race is run". Moreover, the metaphorical image reflects the signs of loss: "throw in the sponge", "throw sixes", "throw up the cards"; no such particularities do we find in the Arabic euphemistic metaphor of loss, where the focus on loss is reflected only in terms of being hunted or caught.

3.8 DEATH IS REGROUPING AND JOINING

This conceptual metaphor is common in English and Arabic. In English, the experience of somebody's death is delineated in light of being "gathered to his fathers", "gathered to his ancestors"; "gathered to God", "gathered to Jesus"; to die is to be "with your Maker" (RN), "with God" (RN), "with Jesus", "with the Lord" (RN). The coronation of the experience of death is to "meet your Maker", "meet the Prophet" (RN) "join the (great) majority" (RN), and

finally to be "in the arms of Jesus"(RN).

Arabic has a number of metaphorical expressions that embrace the same concept of REGROUPING AND JOINING. In Arabic, a dead person is someone who "laqiya rabbah" (YA) (Lit. met his Lord), "?afDaa ?ilaa rabbih" (YA)(Lit. went off to his Lord), "?inSarafa ?ilaa jiwaarai rabbih" (YA) (Lit. went off to be near to his Lord); "inqaTaʕa ?ilaa jiwaarai mawlaah" (YA) (Lit. went off to the neighborhood of his Lord); "laħiqa bil-laTiifi l-Xabiir" (YA) (Lit. joined the Subtly Kind and the All-Aware).

The complex metaphor as reflected in the expressions above is motivated by the primary metaphor CHANGE OF STATE IS A CHANGE OF LOCATION. Changing from life into death is seen as a move to a new location where being separated from life company is changed into another location where you can be in new company. However, in terms of the complex metaphor shared by both languages we can also detect some differences in metaphoric range. Reference to "REGROUPING AND JOINING" to avoid uttering death   is multiple in English; a dead person may come together with: "God", "his Maker", "Lord", "his fathers", "his ancestors", "Jesus", "the Prophet", "the (great) majority". Joining in Arabic is only to Allah, whose attributes are multiple in the Arabic data for this conceptual metaphor: rab, mawlaa (Lord), ?al-laTiif, ?al-xabiir (the Subtly Kind and the All-Aware).This is in accord with the Islamic monotheistic dogma.

3.9 DEATH IS SURRENDER AND SUBMISSION

Death is euphemized in both languages as an inevitable event to which one has to surrender. This concept is common in English euphemistic expressions; a dying person is euphemistically said to "give up the ghost", "yield up the ghost" (RN),"resign his spirit", "give up his life", to be "beyond help"; death is also seen in terms of hanging up one's living items: hanging up "hat", "dinner-pail", "mug", "spoon"; and laying   down one's utensils and tools: "lay down one's knife and fork" (RN), "lay down one's pen" (RN),"lay down shovel and hoe" (RN). The idea of giving up and surrendering is observed in the Arabic expressions, too, e.g."?aslama r-rawħa ?ilaa baari?ihaa" (Lit. He gave up his soul to its Creator), and "?istaslama liqaDaa?i l-laah" (Lit. He surrendered to God's destiny).

Since surrender is a type of giving something up and what is given up is no less than one's 'soul' whose residing seat is the body, this calls up the primary metaphor of BODY IS A CONTAINER. Differential metaphorical range between English and Arabic manifests itself also in the metaphor DEATH IS SURRENDER. Surrender is more elaborated in English than Arabic; while it is generically expressed in Arabic as being surrender to Allah or His fate, it is asserted in English more exhaustively, enumerating the worldly things given up at the event of death, e.g. hat, dinner-pail, mug, spoon and laying knife, fork, pen, shovel and hoe.

3.10 DEATH IS SLEEP

The complex metaphor here is guided by the primary metaphor INACTIVITY IS SLEEP which is motivated by the correlation between stillness and slumber**.** Death effect is mitigated by replacing it by sleep; so, we find in our data that in English the event of   death   is alleviated by being replaced by   expressions such as "sleep", "sleep in Davy Jones's

locker","sleep in one's leaden", "sleep in one's shoes", "sleep away", "slumber", and "close one's eyes". This euphemistic metaphor is attested in Arabic with the use of the verb "yarqud" (sleep), which is illustrated by   the two common expressions "yarqudu fii salaam" (Lit. sleep in peace), and "raqada raqdatahu l-?axira" (Lit. He slept his last).

The same cultural difference in metaphorical range can be detected here also. Sleep image is more detailed in English: "sleep in Davy Jones's locker", "sleep in your leaden", "close your eyes", "sleep in your shoes". Arabic, on the other hand, only refers to sleep using the verb *yarqud* (lie) in terms of being "the last", e.g. "raqada raqdatahu l-?axiirah" (He slept his last).

4. Summary and Conclusion

This study has investigated conceptual euphemistic metaphors of death in English and Arabic. It has been observed that those conceptual metaphors almost match in both languages. In both languages, the target domain (death) is euphemized in terms of being BETTER LOCATION, LIFE, SUMMONER, PAYING A DEBT, THE FINAL DESTINATION, JOURNEY OF DEPARTURE", LOSS, REGROUPING AND JOINING, SURRENDER AND SUBMISSION, and SLEEP However, the difference in metaphorization of death euphemism between the two languages does not lie in the generic-level primary conceptual metaphors but in the emphasis, details and range of the specific-level complex metaphors. Although the conceptual component of the metaphor is almost the same, i.e. referring to a particular concept, the difference lies in the specifics, i.e., the attributes of the metaphorical image and its cultural connotations as reflected by the focus of the complex metaphor and its range. This implies that the difference seems to lie in how language and culture shape the metaphor rather than its generic orientation.

The above result is in agreement with Kovecses' (2005) view that metaphors tend to be universal and near-universal at generic level; emphasis and attributes in our data are referred to in Kovecses (2005) as specific-level metaphors which show differences cross-linguistically and cross-culturally. Evidence from the above comparative analysis data suggests that the English and Arabic share the generic (primary) euphemistic conceptual metaphors in mapping the source domain (euphemistic metaphors) onto the target domain (death), which is a natural result given the embodied nature of the   primary mappings (Grady 1997a; Lakoff and Johnson, 1999); the only metaphorical difference lies in the specifics of   cultural differences as well as the differences emanating from differential emphasis laid on certain aspects of the metaphorical image.

The data also substantiates Grady's claim (1997a) about the universality of primary metaphors for all human languages. As we see from the analysis above only a small group of primary metaphors (STATES ARE LOCATIONS, CHANGE OF STATE IS CHANGE OF LOCATION, CHANGE IS MOTION, EVENTS ARE ACTIONS, LIFE IS HEAT IN THE BODY, DEATH IS LOSS OF IT, BODY IS A CONTAINER, and INACTIVITY IS SLEEP) are the raw material for the complex metaphors detailed in the study.

Based on the discussion above, this work leads us to conclude that the metaphorical difference between Arabic and English as regards death euphemism does not reside in the

body-based primary conceptual orientation, but in the specific metaphorical emphasis and detail realizations of the complex metaphors which , being blends of primary mappings and cultural connotations, are expected to show variation.

The fact that the two languages share common conceptual metaphors in euphemizing death indicates that fear of death is not only deeply instilled in the human nature, but ways of avoiding its mention seem to be also universal. We, as humans, try every possible way to mitigate the experience of death.

Despite conceptual resemblance in both languages, the cultural particularities manifest themselves unmistakably at the specific-level metaphorical structure. We can note references to the English/western culture regarding economic practices: life policy, life cover; Christianity: "in Abraham's bosom", "in the arms of Jesus", "supreme sacrifice", "gathered to his fathers", "bonds of life"; and political practices: "off the voting list", "off-line". Eastern culture manifests itself in referring to traditional economic activities, e.g."?iħtabalahu ħimaamuh"(YA) (Lit. His fate hunted him with a rope (to catch with a rope);"taSarrama ħablu ħayaatih" (Lit. The rope of his life is cut); typical Islamic terms are profusely used in the Arabic data: *Allah, rab, llaTiifi l-xabiir* (the Subtly Kind and the All-Aware (YA); *baari?* (Creator), *?ajal* (lifetime), *ħiin* (appointed time), *ħimaamuh* (fate), *maniyyah* (fate) *daaru l-bawaar*.

Our findings clearly demonstrate that religion plays a crucial soothing role as regards death euphemism in both languages. Religious allusions exist in many of the specific metaphors in both languages. A lot of specific metaphors in the study draw their consolatory power from the religious belief that this life is only ephemeral and temporary and that death is not necessarily the end of everything; there is always hope in the hereafter. Death is presented as a "BETTER" situation than life, where you join the kingdom of heaven in its sublime existence; after all, it is a "JOURNEY" that you have to travel and you are only answering an inevitable "SUMMONING CALL". Interestingly, the corpus of the study shows that direct religious expressions are by far more common in Arabic than English. While 36.97 % of the Arabic data refer directly to religion (71 out of 192 expressions), only 16 % of the English data do so (40 out of 250 expressions), an indication of the conservative nature of the Eastern/Islamic communities and their frequent resort to religion in confronting crises.

This research has highlighted the potential of the Conceptual Theory of Metaphor and cognitive linguistics' model to account for the euphemistic patterns used to cushion the blow of death, and provided additional support for the universality of some conceptual metaphors, which was also supported elsewhere (Nyakoe, 2012; Matsuaki, 1995; Kovecses, 1990; Barcelona & Soriana, 2004). The study shows clearly that conceptual metaphors of death euphemism in Arabic and English lead to similar significance and effect.

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LIST OF THE PHONEMIC SYMBOLS USED IN THE STUDY

I. CONSONANTS

b   voiced bilabial stop

t   voiceless dental stop

T   voiceless (emphatic) dental stop

d   voiced dental stop

D   voiced (emphatic) dental stop

k   voiceless velar stop

q   voiceless uvular stop

?   voiceless glottal stop

j   voiced palatal affricate

ʕ   voiced pharyngeal fricative

ɣ   voiced velar fricative

f   voiceless labio-dental fricative

th   voiceless inter-dental fricative

ð   voiced inter-dental fricative

ð̱   voiced (emphatic) inter-dental fricative

s   voiceless dental fricative

S   voiceless (emphatic) dental fricative

z   voiced dental fricative

ʃ   voiceless palatal fricative

x   voiceless uvular fricative

ħ   voiceless pharyngeal fricative

h   voiceless laryngeal fricative

r   voiced dental trill

l   voiced lateral dental

m   voiced bilabial nasal

n   voiced dental nasal

w   voiced bilabial glide

y   voiced palatal glide

II. VOWELS

i   short high front unrounded vowel

ii   long high front unrounded vowel

a   short central unrounded vowel

aa   long low central unrounded vowel

u   short high back rounded vowel

uu   long high back rounded vowel