The Conceptual Metaphor of Death in Thai

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Euphemisms

- **English**
  
  ‘pass away’, ‘has gone to heaven’, ‘go to west’ ⇒ death as a departure

- **Spanish**
  
  ‘El sueño profundo’, which means the deep sleep

  ⇒ death as a rest

  ‘Descansar en paz’, which means rest in peace death as a rest
This research aims at analyzing conceptual metaphors of death as reflected in metaphorical expressions used by Thais.
SCOPE OF THE STUDY

- The memorial funeral books printed during 1978 – 2007
- There is a total of 30 books.
THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

- The conceptual metaphor theory developed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980)
RESULTS

- DEATH IS A LOSS
- DEATH IS A JOURNEY
- DEATH IS THE END
- DEATH IS A REST
- DEATH IS A LIGHT EXTINGUISHMENT
- DEATH IS THE FINAL ACT
- DEATH IS A RELEASE
- DEATH IS A DEFEAT
- DEATH IS HAPPINESS

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Examples of metaphorical expressions of death

- DEATH IS A LOSS
  - sin jay
  - loss the heart

- DEATH IS A JOURNEY
  - pay dii
  - go well

- DEATH IS THE END
  - naathii sùt tháay
  - minute last
  - last minute

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Examples of metaphorical expressions of death

- DEATH IS A REST
  làp   taa   phák khaay
  close eyes rest body
to close the eyes and rest the body
- DEATH IS A LIGHT EXTINGUISHMENT
  dàp
  to extinguish
- DEATH IS THE FINAL ACT
  pìt    chàak chiiwít
  close scene life
to close the curtain of life
Examples of metaphorical expressions of death

- **DEATH IS A RELEASE**
  phon      thúk
  release sufferings (Dukkha)
  to release from sufferings

- **DEATH IS A DEFEAT**
  yɔɔm phêe tɔɔ phrá yaa mát cù ráat
  to be defeated by the God of Death

- **DEATH IS HAPPINESS**
  pɛɛn sùk
  be    happy
  to be happy
CONCLUSION

viewpoints of Thais toward death:

positive viewpoints:
- DEATH IS A REST
- DEATH IS A RELEASE
- DEATH IS HAPPINESS

negative viewpoints:
- DEATH IS A LOSS
- DEATH IS A JOURNEY
- DEATH IS THE END
- DEATH IS A LIGHT EXTINGUISHMENT
- DEATH IS THE FINAL ACT
- DEATH IS A DEFEAT

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Some conceptual metaphors of death in this study are also found in other previous studies.

The conceptual metaphors which is found specifically in Thai culture is DEATH IS A RELEASE.

The conceptual metaphors of death are both universal and culture-specific.

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DISCUSSION

- The basis of Thai people’s thought: partial animism
- Thai people’s belief about *karma*, good deeds or merit;
  *dukkha*, sufferings; heaven, hell and the God of Death
REFERENCES


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