

TIME, LIFE AND DEATH METAPHORS IN SHAKESPEARE'S SONNETS: THE LAKOFFIAN APPROACH TO POETIC METAPHORS¹

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ABSTRACT. *The main purpose of this paper is the study of the applicability of the mechanisms for the interpretation of poetic metaphors proposed in Lakoff and Turner (1989) and Lakoff (1993) to the analysis of a particular corpus of poetic metaphors. After an overview account of the cognitive theory about poetic metaphors, according to which these are extensions of the conventional metaphoric system, it follows the practical analysis of the metaphors for time, life and death in Shakespeare's Sonnets.*

KEYWORDS. *Cognitive linguistics, metaphor, Shakespeare.*

RESUMEN. *El propósito de este artículo es estudiar la aplicación de los mecanismos de interpretación de metáforas poéticas propuesto en Lakoff y Turner (1989) y Lakoff (1993) al análisis de un corpus concreto de metáforas poéticas. Tras ofrecer una visión general de la teoría cognitiva sobre las metáforas poéticas como extensiones del sistema metafórico convencional, pasamos al análisis práctico de las metáforas de tiempo, vida y muerte en los Sonetos de Shakespeare.*

PALABRAS CLAVE. *Lingüística cognitiva, metáfora, Shakespeare.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, metaphors have been understood as figures of speech, devices used in rhetorical style. It has long been thought of as the figure par excellence through which the writer can display creativity². Resulting from this view and up to the 20th century, the study of metaphor was restricted almost only to literary metaphors. Nevertheless, during this century, new perspectives on metaphor have emerged that include the analysis of metaphors from the everyday language. Some expressions that would not be considered metaphorical by the traditional theories are now taken into account. New views on the

nature of metaphor³ are given, among others, by Richards, Black, Martinich, Sperber, Wilson, Searle and Grice. Besides, a new conception of metaphor arises during the 70s as a result of the attention paid by a group of linguists led by George Lakoff to the organization of conceptual systems. The cognitive model differs in some fundamental respects from traditional accounts and also from the modern accounts we have already mentioned.

This group of linguists consider metaphor as a mechanism that works in everyday language, that creates and, at the same time, shows our way of understanding reality.

In *Metaphors We Live By* (1980), Lakoff and Johnson claim that all our abstract conceptualizations rest upon such metaphorical extensions from basic conceptualizations. They depart from the traditional account of metaphor as having merely an ornamental function by claiming that the main function of metaphor is the understanding of difficult, abstract or not clearly delineated concepts⁴. Its primary function is the cognitive role of understanding one concept in terms of another.

Hence, metaphor is not the result of the poetic imagination, it does not belong to the extraordinary language of literature, as traditionally thought. On the contrary, metaphor is used in our everyday life since our conceptual system is basically of a metaphorical nature⁵. As Lakoff (1993) claims, “metaphor is fundamentally conceptual, it is the main mechanism through which we comprehend abstract concepts and perform abstract reasoning.”

For Lakoff (1987, 1992, 1993), metaphors are mappings across conceptual domains, in which, each mapping is a fixed set of ontological correspondences between entities in a source domain and entities in a target domain. In other words, we conceptualize one mental domain in terms of another. What is transferred by a metaphor is the structure, the internal relations or the logic of the cognitive model.

Moreover, metaphors are conventional, they are part of the conceptual apparatus common to all members of a culture, and systematic as there is a fixed correspondence between the structure of the domains. This conventionality of metaphors seems to be at odds with the imaginative and idiosyncratic nature of poetic metaphors. Nevertheless, from the cognitivist perspective, the author’s creativity is fully at work indeed. It is devoted to the elaboration of complex metaphors upon the basic metaphorical system. Lakoff claims that “poetic metaphor is, for the most part, an extension of our everyday, conventional system of metaphorical thought” (1993: 205).

Consequently, we should understand poetic metaphors in relation to metaphors in ordinary speech since “the study of literary metaphors is an extension of the study of everyday metaphors”(Lakoff 1993: 203).

2. FROM CONVENTIONAL TO NOVEL POETIC METAPHORS

Invention is not originality. [...] The structure of invention, and of particular classic and successful literary inventions, may be wholly unoriginal, or may have a dominant unoriginal aspect that serves as the floor upon which its contingent

originality plays. [...] The unoriginal is normally the dominant active matrix in any original achievement. Originality, far from being autonomous, is contingent at every point upon the unoriginal structures that inform it. (Turner 1991: 51)

According to cognitivists, the metaphors that appear in literary works should not be taken as paradigmatic; in fact, new literary metaphors are seen as just extensions of the basic metaphors that structure our cognition. There is a huge network of metaphorical extensions⁶.

Therefore, for the study of any kind of metaphor, it is first necessary to get acquainted with the basic metaphorical system. As Lakoff (1993: 205) asserts, "knowledge of the conventional system is needed to make sense of most of the poetic cases".

We will thus, explore this conventional system upon which poetic metaphors are presumably based.

When cognitive linguists talk about metaphors, they refer, not to the linguistic expressions, but to the cognitive mappings they represent. These mappings are tightly structured, asymmetric, partial and based on daily experience.

Since there are two types of mapping, conceptual and image mapping; there are also two types of metaphors: conceptual and image metaphors.

There are levels of specificity in conceptual metaphors depending on the level of schemas they map. There are generic-level and specific-level metaphors. In Lakoff and Turner's words: "Generic-level schemas have the power of generality, that is, the power to make sense of a wide range of cases. But they lack the power of specificity. Specific-level schemas are both concrete and information-rich" (Lakoff and Turner 1989: 165). Nevertheless, these are not separated individual levels. In fact, they are closely related since specific-level metaphors are instances of generic-level metaphors. Therefore, we can say that the cognitive metaphorical system is hierarchically organized.

Generic-level metaphors have got neither a fixed specific level target nor a source domain. Moreover, there is not a designated ontological mapping of a list of slots in the source into a target. The event-structure metaphor, the generic-is-specific metaphor and the great chain metaphor are the generic-level metaphors on which a great range of specific-level metaphors are created.

Generic-level metaphors are particularized by the *specific-level metaphors*. Most of the specific-level, also called basic, metaphors derive from them, they are specifications of generic-level metaphors⁷.

According to Lakoff and Johnson (1980), basic metaphors can be of three different types according to the nature of the mapping. They can be orientational, ontological or structural.

- Orientalional metaphors are those metaphors that are based on spatial orientations such as up/down, behind/ beyond, centre/periphery, near/far.... HAPPY IS UP; SAD IS DOWN are examples of orientational metaphors.
- By means of ontological metaphors we understand events, activities, emotions, ideas ... as entities and substances according to our experiences with physical

objects. INFLATION IS AN ENTITY and THE MIND IS A MACHINE are some of the examples of ontological metaphors given by Lakoff and Johnson (1980: 27-28).

- In structural metaphors, “one concept is metaphorically structured in terms of another” (Lakoff and Johnson 1980: 14). They are metaphors based on a set of ontological correspondences. The source domain is structured into slots and this same structure is mapped into the target domain. The well-known example of structure metaphor LOVE IS A JOURNEY, consists, according to Lakoff (1993: 207), of the following correspondences.

Source domain: JOURNEY Target domain: LOVE

- The lovers correspond to travellers.
- The love relationship corresponds to the vehicle.
- The lovers’ common goals correspond to their common destinations on the journey.
- Difficulties in the relationship correspond to impediments to travel⁸.

In contrast to the metaphors we have already seen, image metaphors do not map conceptual structures, but images. These map only one image onto one other image by mapping the structure of one domain, conventional mental image, onto the structure of another. They are one-shoot metaphors (Lakoff 1993: 229).

Nevertheless, both conceptual and image metaphors preserve image-schematic structure. That is what Lakoff and Turner call the Invariance Principle: the image-schema structure of the source domain is projected onto the target domain in a way that is consistent with inherent target domain structure.

The novel metaphors of language, including the poetic ones, are extensions of this conventional system. There is not room in cognitive theory for the writer’s “genius”. The poetic work is just a calculated technique of creating new more complex metaphors taking as basis the conventional ones: “Great poets, as master craftsmen, use basically the same tools we use; what makes them different is their talent for using these tools, and their skill in using them, which they acquire from sustained attention, study and practice” (Lakoff and Turner 1989: 11).

The unconscious, automatic metaphors are consciously complicated and elaborated by the poet. Poetic thought uses the mechanisms of everyday thought, but it extends them⁹, and combines them in new ways.

According to Lakoff and Turner (1989: 67), four are the mechanisms that the writer can use in order to create new poetic metaphors based on the conventional specific-level ones: extending, elaborating, composing and questioning.

1. Extending: to take a conventionalized metaphor and extend it.
2. Elaborating: the nonconventional elaborating of schemas by filling in slots in unusual ways.
3. Composing: there is more than one conventional metaphor for a given target domain.
4. Questioning: the challenging of conventional metaphors.

Lakoff (1993 : 237) proposes three different mechanisms for the interpretation of novel poetic metaphors: "There are three basic mechanisms for interpreting linguistic expressions as novel metaphors: extensions of conventional metaphors, generic-level metaphors and image-metaphors. Most interesting poetic metaphors use all these superimposed on one another".

We will analyse the metaphors for time, life and death in Shakespeare's *Sonnets* in order to look for instances of metaphors resulting from the application of these mechanisms on the conventional basic metaphors we all use daily.

Hence, we will first analyse the examples of the poetic metaphors created upon the generic-level system; then, we will study the extensions –a term that includes: extending, elaborating, composing and questioning– of conventional, or specific-level metaphors; as well as some of the image-metaphors for time, life and death in Shakespeare's *Sonnets*.

3. TIME, LIFE AND DEATH METAPHORS IN SHAKESPEARE'S *SONNETS*. THE POETIC COMPLEXITIES

The concepts of time, life and death are relevant to the understanding of Shakespeare's *Sonnets*. They are highly personified almost getting the status of characters. The *Sonnets* show, among other things, the possibility of beating death by means of the literary creation that "lives the 'executor to be'" (4, 13-4)¹⁰. Life is seen as the most precious possession and time and death as the agents that spoil it.

One of the main difficulties in this analysis is the discrimination among the different mechanisms we have mentioned above, specially extending and elaborating. Most of the metaphors we will study superimpose more than one of these mechanisms and that is why we will see instances of composing along our analysis of extending and elaborating. Therefore, we will only describe in detail some of the metaphors in which composing takes place.

3.1. *Generic-level metaphors*

A. EVENTS ARE ACTIONS exists explicitly "to change events to actions, often by making non agents into agents" (Lakoff and Turner 1989: 82). These agents usually take human features.

Youth and beauty are the properties of life that cease to exist in the passage of time, and time is seen as the agent that causes their disappearance. Turning, thus, the event into an action with an agent: time.

Time and death are understood in the *Sonnets*, not as events but as agents that provoke the effects of time passing and death. Both of them are widely personified in Shakespeare's works. In the following examples time is seen as a living agent, as the entity responsible for the effects of the passing time.

(1) Yet do thy worst, old time (19, 13)

(2) For never-resting time leads summer on / To hideous winter... (5, 5-6)

- (3) And make time's spoils despised everywhere.
Give my love fame faster than time wastes life. (100, 11-2)
- (4) Time doth transfix the flourish set on youth,
And delves the parallels in beauty's truth,
And nothing stands but for his scythe to mow. (60, 9-11)

Through an added metonymy the active role of time is represented by the hand:

- (5) His cruel hand (60, 14)
- (6) Time's injurious hand (63, 2)
- (7) When I have seen by time's fell hand defaced
The rich proud cost of outworn buried age. (64)

B. STATES ARE LOCATIONS. The abstract concepts of feelings, emotions and states are conceptualized in terms of concrete objects situated at a determinate point or location. From this follows that LIFE IS PRESENCE HERE, based on the image-schema of a bounded region with an interior and an exterior. The state of being alive corresponds with being in here, that is the interior of the bounded region, that is life. Consequently, being dead is being out of the bounded region that is, out of here, as we can see in the following example:

- (8) And nothing 'gainst time's scythe can make defence
Save breed to brave him when he takes thee hence. (12. 13-4)

Besides, states can be locations in a path. If we conceptualize life as a path with an infinite number of possible locations, states move from one location to another as life passes. In the example below (9) infancy and maturity are different locations in the life path.

- (9) Nativity, once in the main of light,
Crawls to maturity... (60, 5-6)

In *Metaphors We Live By*, Lakoff and Johnson mention the metaphors ALIVE IS UP, DEATH IS DOWN based on the vertical path image-schema. The experiential bases they find for this metaphor is that when dead, people are physically lying down.

Some examples of these metaphors can be seen in the *Sonnets*.

- (10) When I do count the clock that tells the time,
And see the brave day sunk in hideous night; (12, 1-2)
- (11) My life [...] sinks down to death (45, 7-8)
- (12) Now stand you on the top of happy hours (16)

C. CHANGES ARE MOVEMENTS. If states are locations, it is a direct consequence that changes of state are movements, that is, changes of location. Thus, we can analyse one of the already seen metaphors as based also in the conceptual mapping: CHANGES ARE MOVEMENTS.

- (13) Nativity, once in the main of light,
Crawls to maturity... (60, 5-6)

Here, nativity moves towards maturity. This metaphor includes also the path image schema, and the metaphor LIFE IS A JOURNEY. It is what Lakoff and Turner call

“composing”. Nevertheless, its primary sources are both the generic level metaphors STATES ARE LOCATIONS and CHANGES ARE MOVEMENTS.

A similar example is the one below, in which the change from one state to another is a movement and, by extension, a journey.

(14) ...when his youthful morn
Hath travelled on to age's steepy night (63, 4-5)

This is again a case of extending and composing. It is an extension of CHANGES ARE MOVEMENTS, and the composing of the specific-level metaphors LIFETIME IS A DAY and LIFE IS A JOURNEY.

D. DIFFICULTIES ARE IMPEDIMENTS TO MOTION. The journey towards the end of life is for Shakespeare in his *Sonnets* a steep one. We have just seen the journey to “age's steepy night”, but there are also some other instances of extensions of DIFFICULTIES ARE IMPEDIMENTS TO MOTION, as for example,

(15) And having climbed the steep-up heavenly hill,
Resembling strong youth in his middle age. (7, 5-8)

The angle formed by the hill entails a great difficulty for someone who is walking towards the top of it, it is a great impediment to motion. Moreover, the use of the verb “to climb” implies some effort. Through this metaphor, life is conceptualized as a journey full of difficulties, and by extension, as a steep hill.

3.2. *Specific-level metaphors*

3.2.1. *Extending & elaborating*

EXTENDING: The novel extension of the metaphor to include elements otherwise not mapped. (Lakoff and Turner 1989: 71)

ELABORATING: The imaginative filling in of special cases. (Lakoff and Turner 1989: 71)

The extending and elaborating mechanisms have in common the addition of conceptual content to the conventional metaphors. The former by mapping additional slots; the latter by filling in slots within the same schema in unusual ways.

This common feature of added conceptual content, which distinguishes them clearly from composing and questioning, allows us to analyse examples of both of them simultaneously.

3.2.1.1. *Metaphors for time*

A. TIME IS A CHANGER. As a result of the agency given to time by the generic-level metaphor EVENTS ARE ACTIONS, we can conceptualize time as the agent that provokes the effects of the event “time passing”. It belongs to our cultural knowledge that, as time passes, the world, including ourselves, changes. The conjunction of

EVENTS ARE ACTIONS and our knowledge of the world has as a result the specific-level metaphor TIME IS A CHANGER. The inevitable event of growing from infancy to youth and the disappearance of beauty are seen as the action of the agent time in the following instances.

(16) Time doth transfix the flourish set on youth (60, 9)

(17) ... who his spoil of beauty can forbid. (65, 12)

If we add by extension or elaboration new information about the nature of the change provoked by time, we understand time as maybe a thief, reaper, devourer, destroyer... Life, or some periods of life such as youth, are possessions. Their disappearances are losses for the individual.

A.1. TIME IS A THIEF. Time can be personified in the figure of a thief. Life, youth and beauty are seen as precious possessions, and time is conceptualized in terms of a thief, someone who steals these possessions and makes them disappear from the owner's point of view.

(18) Yet doth it (time) steal sweet hours from love's delight. (36, 8)

(19) (time) Stealing away the treasure of his spring. (63, 8)

A.2. TIME IS A REAPER¹¹. "The additional knowledge-structuring that characterizes the change in the time-as-a-reaper metaphor is metaphorical: it comes from the basic metaphor PEOPLE ARE PLANTS, one aspect of which is that PROPERTIES OF PEOPLE ARE PLANT PARTS." (Lakoff and Turner 1989: 41) In the next quotation from the *Sonnets*, youth, a property of people, is seen as a plant, as a "tattered weed". According to this metaphor, youthful appearance will be, like the weed, reaped by the passing time.

(20) Thy youth's proud livery, so gazed on now,

Will be a tattered weed, of small worth held. (2, 1-4)

We have already seen how time's agency is represented by time's hand through a metonymy. Here, time is conceptualized metaphorically as a reaper and it is represented metonymically by his scythe.

(21) And nothing 'gainst time's scythe can make defence

(22) So, thou prevene'st his (time's) scythe

The passing of time may provoke the disappearance of some of people's properties as well as the complete disappearance by death. In the first example we saw of the TIME IS A REAPER metaphor, it was youth that was thought of in terms of a weed, and as a consequence, only youth is tattered. Nevertheless, there are also instances in which it is life that is conceptualized as the plant to be mowed. The total disappearance of something, that is, death, is then understood as 'time-mowing', as in the following example:

(23) ... nothing stands but for his (time's) scythe to mow. (60, 12)

A.3. TIME IS A DEVOURER / TIME IS A GLUTTON. Lakoff and Turner note in *More than Cool Reason* (1989: 42) that the time-as-a-devourer metaphor is commonly used by Shakespeare. In *The Rape of Lucrece* he refers to time as the "eater of youth" and in *Love's Labor's Lost* as "cormorant devouring time". This metaphor also derives from the metaphor's EVENTS ARE ACTIONS and TIME IS A CHANGER, and our commonplace knowledge. When something is eaten, it ceases to exist; therefore, time can be understood as the agent that devours life, or some aspects of life such as youth.

(24) Devouring time, blunt thou the lion's paws, (19, 1)

The devouring time is also, by extension, conceptualized, as in the next example, in terms of a glutton. To understand time in terms of a glutton instead of merely a devourer or simply eater, implies that time not only eats life but also enjoys doing it, it is greed that characterizes the nature of the effects of time.

(25) Pity the world, or else this glutton be:
To eat the world's due, by the grave and thee. (1, 13-4)

A.4. TIME IS A CONQUEROR. Time is understood by means of this extended metaphor as a conqueror that besieges youth's beauty so as to capture it. If some of your possessions are conquered, it ceases to be yours. Time conquers your beauty and you lose it.

(26) When forty winters shall besiege thy brow
And dig deep trenches in thy beauty's field, (2, 1-2)

A.5. TIME IS A TYRANT. A tyrant is someone who has absolute power over other people, and who uses this power cruelly and unjustly. By means of this extended metaphor the concept of time acquires all those features.

(27) Those hours that with gentle work did frame
The lovely gaze where every eye doth dwell
Will play the tyrants to the very same (5, 1-3)
(28) ... bloody tyrant, time (16, 2)
(29) ... fearing of time's tyranny, (115, 9)

B. TIME MOVES. In "The contemporary theory of metaphor", Lakoff considers two different systems in the event structure, one based on locations and the other on objects. This duality is also applicable to time metaphors, especially to the TIME MOVES metaphor. According to this, we can find either that it is the object that moves with respect to fixed times, or that it is time that moves with respect to the object that is fixed. While in the *location system*, change is motion of the thing-changing to a new location or from an old one, in the *object system*, the thing-changing doesn't necessarily move. Change is instead the motion of an object to, or away from, the thing-changing. (Lakoff 1993: 225)

We have already seen an example of the location system,

(30) And having climbed the steep-up heavenly hill,
Resembling strong youth in his middle age. (7, 5-8)

Middle age is fixed at the top of the hill, it is the object the one who moves with respect to the location, it moves towards the top of the hill.

Nevertheless most of the time-moves metaphors in the *Sonnets* belong to the object system.

(31) Against this coming end you should prepare, (13, 3)

The object is at some point and time moves towards it. Thus, it is an OBJECT DUAL EVENT STRUCTURE METAPHOR. The individual is at some point of the path and time moves, death moves.

(32) Make glad and sorry seasons as thou fleet'st,

And do whate'er thou wilt, swift-footed time (19, 9-10)

(33) ... what strong hand can hold his swift foot back (65, 11)

(34) So do our minutes hasten to their end (60, 2)

It is time that moves in the *Sonnets*; moreover, it moves very quickly.

3.2.1.2. *Metaphors for life*

A. LIFE IS A JOURNEY. Life is conceptualized in terms of a journey, with a starting point –birth–, and a final destination –death–. This metaphor is based on the image-schema of a path.

(35) ...when his youthful morn

Hath travelled on to age's steepy night (63, 4-5)

(36) ... what strong hand can hold his swift foot back (65, 11)

B. A LIFETIME IS A YEAR. A lifetime is a span of time. As such, it can be understood metaphorically in terms of other conventional spans of time, such as a year or a day. The beginning of a lifetime, that is, youth, would correspond with the first months of the year, or with spring and even summer. Consequently, the end of life would correspond with winter.

(37) Thou art thy mother's glass, and she in thee

Calls back the lovely April of her prime; (3, 10-1)

(38) Then let not winter's ragged hand deface

In thee thy summer er thou be distilled. (6, 1-2)

(39) This time removed was summer's time (97, 5)

C. A LIFETIME IS A DAY. A lifetime is also understood metaphorically as a day. A day goes from morning to night as life goes from infancy to old age. Thus, morning is youth, and night, the end of the day, is the end of life, death.

(40) ...when his youthful morn

Hath travelled on to age's steepy night. (63, 4-5)

(41) In me thou seest the twilight if such day

As after sunset fadeth in the west,

Which by and by black night doth take away,

Death's second self, that seals up all in rest. (73, 5-8)

- (42) When I do count the clock that tells the time,
And see the brow day sunk in hideous night;
When I behold the violet past prime,
And sable curls ensilvered o'er with white; (12, 1-4)

In (42), the "past prime" corresponds with day and the "curls ensilvered o'er with white", that is, old age corresponds with night.

- (43) Where wasteful time debateth with decay
To change your day of youth to sullied night; (15, 10-12)

D. LIFE IS A FLUID (IN PEOPLE'S BODIES). In the LIFE IS A FLUID metaphor, the body corresponds to a container, and the life of the body corresponds to the fluid in the container. Thus, the intensity of life corresponds to the amount of life in the container (Lakoff and Turner 1989: 19).

The fluid may disappear gradually by flowing out of the container (body) until nothing is left. That is the way the passing time in life is understood. Shakespeare uses in the *Sonnets* two different verbs to describe the loss of life through the metaphor LIFE IS A FLUID: "to drain" and "to distil". The former means the disappearance of the fluid little by little; the latter means that the liquid is heated until it evaporates. Both of them imply a progressive loss of the fluid that corresponds with the progressive loss of life:

- (44) When hours have drained his blood (63, 3)
(45) Then let not winter's ragged hand deface
In thee thy summer ere thou be distilled. (6, 1-2)

By using the passive and the verbs "drain" and "distil", the author is by extension adding an agent that provokes the loss of fluid. Thus, the loss of fluid, of life is not voluntary; it is deliberately taken out by an external agent.

E. LIFE IS WAR WITH TIME/DEATH. This is one of the most widely used metaphors in the *Sonnets*. The passing time and its final effect, death, are seen as the enemy against whom we must fight. The following are examples of extensions of this conventional metaphor that add to it new specific information. The vocabulary of war is abundant:

- (46) And all in war with time for love of you,
As he takes from you, I engraft you new. (15, 13-14)
(47) But wherefore do not you a mightier way
Make war upon this bloody tyrant, time.
And fortify yourself in your decay. (16)
(48) For such a time do I now fortify
Against confounding age's cruel knife (63, 9-10)
(49) Against the wrackful siege of battering days. (65, 6)
(50) You hast passed by the ambush of young days
Either not assailed, or victor being charged. (70, 9-10)

FLIFE IS A PRECIOUS POSSESSION. Life, or some parts of life like youth, may be conceptualized in terms of a precious possession that may be stolen or wasted. This

metaphor is thus coherent with the time-as-a-thief metaphor. Consequently, the passing time is understood both as a thief and as someone who wastes life.

- (51) Stealing away the treasure of his spring (63, 9)
- (52) Give my love fame faster than time wastes life (100, 12)
- (53) ...wasteful time (15, 10)

G. LIFE IS LIGHT, LIFE IS FIRE. The life-as-light metaphor provides a cognitive schema of life cycle that starts with light and ends with darkness at the moment of death. This metaphor is coherent with the metaphors LIFETIME IS A DAY and LIFE IS FIRE. We have already discussed the former. With respect to the latter, we could say that it can be considered as an extension of LIFE IS LIGHT, as it adds the slot of a progressive action. Fire extinguishes little by little until light and heat disappear. Therefore, lifetime is metaphorically understood as the progressive loss of life till there is complete darkness and coldness in death.

- (54) In me thou seest the twilight of such day
As after sunset fadeth in the west,
Which by and by black night doth take away,
Death's second self, that seals up all in rest. (73, 5-8)
- (55) Than on the ashes of his youth doth lie
As the death-bed whereon it must expire (73, 10-13)

3.2.1.3. *Metaphors for death*

The concepts of time, life and death are so closely related that many of the metaphors for life and death derive directly from the metaphors of time. Moreover, some death metaphors are also implied in some life metaphors and vice versa.

Hence, the DEATH IS LOSS OF FLUID metaphor is implied in the life-as-fluid metaphor; DEATH IS GOING TO A FINAL DESTINATION and DEATH IS THE END OF THE JOURNEY are related to LIFE IS A JOURNEY; DEATH IS A REAPER derives from the life-as-reaper metaphor; DEATH IS AN ADVERSARY is related to LIFE IS A WAR AGAINST TIME and DEATH IS DARKNESS is coherent with LIFE IS LIGHT.

We will not stop here to discuss them as they are implied in the metaphors we have already commented on. Nevertheless, some other metaphorical conceptualizations of death can be found in the *Sonnets*.

A. DEATH IS A CONQUEROR. As it happens with time, death is also converted into an agent by means of the EVENTS ARE ACTIONS metaphor. Thus, the event of dying is transformed into the action of the agent death.

In the *Sonnets*, death is conceptualized in terms of a conqueror.

- (56) To be death's conquest and make worms thine heir. (6, 14)
- (57) The prey of worms, my body being dead,
The coward conquest of a wretch's knife (74, 10-11)

B. DEATH IS DEPARTURE. This metaphor makes use of the basic metaphor STATES ARE LOCATIONS and LIFE IS PRESENCE HERE. A change of state, from being alive to being dead, corresponds to a change of location. And if life is being here, "dead" must be "being out of here".

Besides, CHANGE OF STATES ARE MOVEMENTS so the movement that describes the change of location from here is departure.

(58) Though I, once gone, to all the world must die. (81, 6)

(59) But be contented when that fell arrest
Without all bail shall carry me away (74, 1-2)

(60) No longer mourn for me when I am dead
Than you shall hear the surly sullen bell

(61) Give warning to the world that I am fled
From this vile world with vilest worms to dwell. (71, 1-4)

This last example (61) is an extension of the conventional metaphor time is departure. The verb "to flee" adds to the metaphorical understanding of death the slot of voluntary movement, and the slot of a negative place from which to depart.

3.2.2. *Composing*

The formation of composite metaphors in which two or more conventional metaphors are joined together in ways that they ordinarily would not be. (Lakoff and Turner 1989: 71)

Metaphors in the *Sonnets* are rarely isolated but they are closely related with some other conventional metaphors that appear simultaneously in the same line or stanza forming a composite metaphor.

We will only give some of the instances of composite metaphors we can find in the *Sonnets*.

A. STATES ARE LOCATIONS + CHANGES ARE MOVEMENTS + LIFE IS A JOURNEY + DIFFICULTIES ARE IMPEDIMENTS TO MOTION

(62) And having climbed the steep-up heavenly hill,
Resembling strong youth in his middle age, (7, 5-6)

In this first example, life is understood as a journey towards the top of the mountain (LIFE IS A JOURNEY). Youth is at the bottom of the mountain, whereas middle age is at the top of it (STATES ARE LOCATIONS). Therefore, the movement from the bottom to the top means the change of state from youth to middle age (CHANGES ARE MOVEMENTS). Nevertheless, life is not easy; this movement finds impediments, the angle of the mountain implies a great difficulty and so does the verb used: "to climb" (DIFFICULTIES ARE IMPEDIMENTS TO MOTION).

B. DEATH IS A REAPER + DEATH IS AN ADVERSARY + STATES ARE LOCATIONS + CHANGES ARE MOVEMENTS + LIFE IS BEING HERE + DEATH IS DEPARTURE.

(63) And nothing 'against time's scythe can make defence
Save breed to brave him when he takes thee hence. (12, 10-14)

In these lines, death is understood in terms of both a reaper - that is why it is characterized metonymically by the scythe (DEATH IS A REAPER) - and as an adversary. The metaphor DEATH IS AN ADVERSARY allows us to conceptualize death as something we must defend ourselves against.

The metaphors STATES ARE LOCATIONS and CHANGES ARE MOVEMENTS make us understand life as presence here and death as not being here. Death is metaphorically conceptualized as the movement from inside to outside. It is departure from here.

C. LIFE IS A JOURNEY + STATES ARE LOCATIONS + CHANGES ARE MOVEMENTS + LIFE IS A DAY + DIFFICULTIES ARE IMPEDIMENTS TO MOTION

(64) ... When his youthful morn
Hath travelled on to age's steepy night, (63, 4-5)

In this passage, life is understood in terms of a journey (LIFE IS A JOURNEY) from youth to old age. Youth and old age are thus seen as locations (STATES ARE LOCATIONS), and the movement from one to the other is a change (CHANGES ARE MOVEMENTS). The journey to old age is described as "steepy" and, as we have already seen in (62), that implies that it is not an easy movement, life is not easy (DIFFICULTIES ARE IMPEDIMENTS TO MOTION).

Moreover, life is also conceptualized in terms of a day that goes from morning to night (LIFE IS A DAY). Youth is seen as morning and old age as night.

D. TIME MOVES + TIME IS A THIEF + LIFE IS A PRECIOUS POSSESSION

(65) Time thievish progress to eternity (77, 8)

We may find a composing of metaphors even in a single line. In this example, time is seen as something that moves (TIME MOVES). It belongs to the object dual system. In opposition with most of the metaphors based on TIME MOVES in the *Sonnets*, here life does not end at the moment of death, here time moves beyond death to eternity.

Time is understood as, not only something that moves, but also as a thief (TIME IS A THIEF). That implies that life is a precious possession, since it is worth being stolen (LIFE IS A PRECIOUS POSSESSION).

E. TIME IS A CHANGER + TIME IS A REAPER + TIME IS A KILLER + LIFE IS A PRECIOUS POSSESSION + TIME IS AN ADVERSARY

(66) And make time's spoils despised everywhere.
Give my love fame faster than time wastes life;
So, thou prevent'st his scythe and crooked knife. (100, 11-4)

In (66), time is understood as the agent that spoils everything (TIME IS A CHANGER). According to Shakespeare, the passing of time makes things and people change and lose the good qualities of youth. That is why time is seen as a changer and as someone who wastes life. Therefore, life is seen as a precious possession that can be wasted (LIFE IS A PRECIOUS POSSESSION).

Besides, the time-as-an-adversary metaphor produces a conception of time as something you must try to prevent. Time is here conceptualized as two different kinds of adversary through added metonymies: a reaper, represented by the "scythe" and a killer, represented by the "crooked knife".

3.2.2. *Questioning*

Explicit commentary of conceptual metaphors and the offering of an alternative. (Lakoff and Turner 1989: 71)

Little can be said about this mechanism in the *Sonnets*. Shakespeare seems to follow closely the conventional metaphorical system. Even in the extensions of the basic metaphors he does not go far away from the convention. And although he may extend, elaborate and compose them, he does not tend to question or challenge these basic conventional metaphors. In fact, we could not find any instances of questioning.

This device, which may be more used, for example, in surrealism, is not useful in the interpretation of Shakespeare's metaphors in the *Sonnets*. Shakespeare proves to be, here at least, "conventional" in his metaphorical understanding of time, life and death.

3.3. *Image metaphors*

In image metaphors, a source image is mapped onto a target domain to create an image in the target domain. The mapping between conventional mental images also involves the mapping of some evaluative elements and specific attributes such as colour or quality. Lakoff and Turner claim that "such image-mapping prompts us to map our evaluation of the source domain onto the target" (1989: 92). Besides, they add the details that could not be added in a conceptual mapping.

These metaphors are "less conventional" than conceptual ones as we will see in the examples below. Conventionality here rests in the "Invariance Principle", according to which image metaphors follow the schematic structure that conceptual ones do.

We will analyse some of the examples of image metaphors for time, life and death that we find in the *Sonnets*.

(67) When forty winters shall besiege thy brow
And dig deep trenches in thy beauty's field. (2, 1-2)

In this passage, the effects of the passing time, the appearance of wrinkles in our foreheads is seen as the battlefield full of trenches.

(68) O, carve not with thy hours my love's fair brow,
Nor draw no lines there with thine antique pen. (19, 10-11)

This time, wrinkles are seen as the lines drawn by a painter.

(69) Like as the waves make towards the pebbled shore,
So do our minutes hasten to their end, (60, 1-2)

Here, the movement of life towards death is metaphorically seen as the movement of the waves towards the shore.

The images chosen by the author are not arbitrary in any case. Wrinkles can be seen as trenches or lines. Trenches are deeply cut into the ground, as wrinkles are; and they are basically lines.

By means of these image metaphors, Shakespeare provides the reader with more information and details about the target image. The use of trenches in (67) is coherent with the idea that during life we are in war with the passing of time and its effects, and this image metaphors allows us to include all this detailed knowledge in our understanding of it. Besides, the image of the battlefield full of trenches is mapped onto the image of the forehead that represents metonymically the body, the physical part of people spoilt by the passing time. Therefore, by means of this metaphor, the plain shape of a battlefield is mapped into the shape of our forehead.

In the second image-metaphor (68), the details are not so abundant as in the first one. Here the effects of old age are seen as the work of an omnipresent painter who carves or draws lines in our foreheads.

The last example is more enlightening than the first two ones. In it, the image-schema of path is the basis in both the source and the target images. The end of the path is represented in the pebbled shore (source image) and death (target image). The fact that the shore is full of pebbles instead of rocks, for example, makes us view the movement of the waves as smooth and quiet. Death is understood not as something that breaks in but as something that comes progressively.

4. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

As we have seen throughout this paper, metaphors for time, life and death in Shakespeare's *Sonnets* can be fruitfully analysed from the Lakoffian cognitive perspective. We have interpreted the poetic metaphors in the *Sonnets* following the three mechanisms proposed by Lakoff and Turner (1989): as departing from generic-level metaphors in the first place, as extensions of conventional specific-level metaphors, and finally as the novel image metaphors.

The metaphors for time, life and death in the *Sonnets* have proved to be originated in the basic conceptual metaphorical system we all share and use in our everyday language. Nevertheless, these metaphors go beyond conventionality and reach their originality by means of three out of the four mechanisms exposed by Lakoff and Turner in *More than Cool Reason*: extending, elaborating and composing.

Resulting from this analysis we can list the main conventional basic metaphors on which all metaphors for time, life and death in the *Sonnets* depend. These are the main conventional metaphors found in our analysis:

TIME, LIFE AND DEATH METAPHORS IN SHAKESPEARE'S *SONNETS*

TIME	LIFE	DEATH
-TIME IS A CHANGER* -TIME IS A THIEF* -TIME IS A REAPER* -TIME IS A DEVOURER* - TIME IS A CONQUEROR - TIME IS A TYRANT -TIME MOVES*	-LIFE IS A JOURNEY* -LIFETIME IS A YEAR/DAY* -LIFE IS A FLUID* - LIFE IS WAR WITH TIME/ DEATH -LIFE IS A PRECIOUS POSSESSION* -LIFE IS LIGHT* -LIFE IS FIRE*	-DEATH IS LOSS OF FLUID* -DEATH IS GOING TO A FINAL DESTINATION* -DEATH IS A REAPER* -DEATH IS AN ADVERSARY* -DEATH IS DARKNESS* - DEATH IS A CONQUEROR -DEATH IS DEPARTURE

It is important to point out the discovery of four new conventional metaphors that had not been identified before this study but that are widely used by Shakespeare in the *Sonnets*. These metaphors are: TIME IS A CONQUEROR, TIME IS A TYRANT, LIFE IS WAR WITH TIME/DEATH and DEATH IS A CONQUEROR.

As a final conclusion, we would say that the metaphors for time, life and death in the *Sonnets* are a proof of the conventional bases of poetic metaphors and their analysis shows the applicability of the interpretative mechanisms that Lakoff and Turner proposed.

NOTES

1. Financial support for this research was provided by a Consejería de Educación del Gobierno de La Rioja grant (BOR. 32/1999).
2. For a brief summary of the main theories on metaphor along history: Preminger & Brogan (1993).
3. For a more complete review of the major contemporary views see the introduction in Johnson (1981), and the chapter on metaphor in Johnson (1987: 65-150), in which the theories by Black, Searle and Davidson are described.
4. "Metaphorical thought [...] is simply commonplace and inescapable. Abstractions and enormously complex situations are routinely understood via metaphor. Indeed, there is an extensive, and mostly unconscious, system of metaphor that we use automatically and unreflectively to understand complexities and abstractions" (Lakoff 1992: 463).
5. "They (metaphors) do not merely report preexisting, independent experience; rather, they contribute to the process by which our experience and our understanding (as our way of 'having a world') are structured in a coherent and meaningful fashion [...] And it is by virtue of this metaphorically imposed structure that we can understand and reason about the relevant abstract entities" (Johnson 1987: 98).
6. In *More than Cool Reason* (1989), Lakoff and Turner discuss the phenomenon of the complex poetic metaphors and their obliged dependence on basic conventional metaphors. And Mark Turner gives a wide account of the applications of cognitive theory to the analysis of literature in *Reading Minds: The Study of English in the Age of Cognitive Science* (1991).
7. Some of the correspondences in the event-structure metaphor are among others: States are locations, changes are movements, causes are forces, purposes are destinations ... (Lakoff 1993: 220). The GENERIC IS SPECIFIC metaphor "allows us to understand a whole category of situations in terms of one particular situation" (1989: 165). This metaphor appears widely in proverbs. Finally, the Great Chain Metaphor is based on our commonplace notion of the hierarchical order of things.

8. Kövecses adds another correspondence to this metaphor: "The road covered is the progress of the love relationship" (1986: 8).
9. Lakoff already notices the possibility of extending conceptual metaphors and briefly discusses it in *Metaphors We Live By*.
10. All quotations are taken from the following edition: Shakespeare, W. 1994. *The Oxford Shakespeare: the Complete Works*. Oxford: Clarendon Press. And the number of sonnet and lines are marked parenthetically in the text.
11. This metaphor is deeply analyzed by Turner and Fauconnier (1995).
* These conventional metaphors appear listed in Lakoff and Turner's index of metaphors (1989: 221-23).

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