

## Evaluating Metaphors for Time: Moving Ego, Moving Time and Primary Metaphor

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### 1. Introduction

- Aim:**
- To evaluate the claim that Moving Ego and Moving Time constitute primary metaphors
  - To provide criteria for evaluating whether putative conceptual projection mappings constitute instances of primary metaphor
- Thesis:**
- Moving Ego and Moving Time constitute instances of Compound NOT primary metaphor
- Questions arising:**
- At what level of generalisation should conceptual projection mappings be stated?
  - What is the relationship between concepts and (the conceptual structure associated with) words?
  - What is the psychological reality of conceptual projection mappings at differing degrees of generality (or specificity)?

### 2. Primary vs. Complex Metaphor

**Primary metaphors:**

- Motivated by virtue of recurrent correlations in experience
- Universal (i.e. not culture-specific)
- source and target equally basic (although relate to distinct kinds of experience)
- experiences related are relatively “simple”

**Complex Metaphor:**

PERSISTING IS REMAINING ERECT

ORGANIZATION IS PHYSICAL  
STRUCTURE

THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS

### 3. Moving Time and Moving Ego

#### Moving Time

- (1) a. The time for action has arrived
- b. The deadline is approaching
- c. Christmas is coming up on us
- d. The Summer has just zoomed by
- e. Time flies when you're having fun

#### Moving Ego

- (2) a. We're coming up on Christmas
- b. We're getting close to the start of the new year
- c. We passed the deadline
- d. We've reached June already

### 4. Evaluating Moving Time and Moving Ego as instances of Primary Metaphor

#### i) The problem of unelaborated Time

#### ii) The problem of Cultural concepts

##### Moving Time

- (3) a. The holiday season passed quickly this year
- b. My favourite part of the piece is coming up
  
- (4) a. We're getting close to the start of the school year
- b. She is past her prime

#### iii) The problem of complex concepts

##### a) *Distinct Meanings*

- (5) a. The time for action has arrived
- b. The time to start thinking about irreversible environmental decay is here [Lakoff and Johnson 1999]
  
- (6) a. Time flies when you're having fun
- b. Time drags when you have nothing to do
  
- (7) a. The young woman's time [=labour/child-birth] approached
- b. His time [=death] had come
- c. Arsenal saved face with an Ian Wright leveller five minutes from time [BNC]
  
- (8) a. [T]ime, of itself, and from its own nature, flows equably

without relation to anything external [Newton]

b. Time flows on forever

*b) Mapping Gaps*

(9) a. ?Christmas is falling [Grady 1997]

b. ?We're moving down to Christmas

*c) Failure to Predict Specific Elaborations*

Moment Sense

(10) ?The time for action has flown/spun/turned around/flowed

(cf. The time for action has come/arrived/reached us, etc.)

Matrix Sense

(11) ?Time is flowing towards us

(cf. Time flows on forever)

Protracted duration Sense

(12) ?Time raced by

(cf. Time stood still)

Temporal Compression Sense

(13) ?The time seemed to stand still

(cf. The time seemed to go by in a flash)

TEMPORAL LEXICAL-CONCEPT	MOTION EVENT	EXAMPLES
1. (Magnitude of) Duration: i) 'protracted duration'	Slow motion	<i>drag, move slowly, etc.</i>
ii) 'temporal compression'	Stationariness Rapid motion	<i>stand still, stop, freeze, etc. move fast, fly, whiz, zoom, etc.</i>
2. Temporal Matrix	Imperceptible motion Non-terminal motion	<i>disappear, vanish, has gone, etc. flow, move on, go on, etc.</i>
3/4. Temporal Moment/Temporal Event	Deictic/terminal motion	<i>come, arrive, approach, get closer, move up on, etc.</i>

Table 1: The Elaboration of Temporal Lexical concepts in terms of Motion Events

d) *Grammatical Distinctions*

Mass Noun	Count Noun
<p><b>“Matrix” sense:</b> Talmy’s (2000) <i>state of boundedness</i>: “[w]hen a quantity is understood as unbounded, it is conceived as continuing on indefinitely with no necessary characteristic of finiteness intrinsic to it.” (Ibid.: 50).</p>	<p><b>“Moment” sense:</b> can undergo determination by the/a</p>
<p><b>“Magnitude of Duration” senses:</b> Talmy’s (2000) notion of <i>state of dividedness</i> refers to a quantity’s internal segmentation. A quantity is composite or (internally) discrete if it is conceptualized as having breaks, or interruptions through its composition. Otherwise, the quantity is conceptualized as (internally) continuous.” (Ibid.: 55).</p>	<p><b>“Event” sense:</b> can only have a specific interpretation; can only be premodified (e.g., by an NP), i.e., cannot undergo determination by the/a. Premodified by a genitive NP with possessive enclitic –’s, or by an attributive possessive pronoun.</p>

Table 2: Grammatical distinctions between putative temporal lexical concepts

## 5. Conclusion

- There are a range of distinct temporal concepts associated with the linguistic examples used to support a primary metaphor account of Time
- Moving Time and Moving Ego constitute compound rather than primary metaphors

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